

*The MISSION of the Acorn School for Early Childhood Development is to provide high quality, accessible, early care and education programs and to advocate for higher standards in the field of early childhood education.*

## Letter from the Executive Director

Happy New Year! It's amazing how time flies. 2009 is here and things are in full swing at Acorn. You have probably noticed changes around the school as you returned. Most notably, a new roof and skylights! These are all great signs of progress and the goal to continue to provide high-quality care and education programs for your children.

If 2009 is anything like 2008, it will be a banner year for the entire Acorn community. We have many plans in the works from continuing the Playground Improvement Project to moving forward with the 5-year Strategic Plan. The strategic plan casts the vision for future growth and the ability to serve more children and families with the same philosophy and vision that has guided Acorn through the years. Speaking of years, this year The Acorn School celebrates 15 years of service! We intend to celebrate with the entire Acorn community all year long. We have many plans this year for Professional Development, Parent Education, expanding our scholarship assistance program, and so much more. With the Strategic Plan as our guide, there will be many opportunities this year to get involved at Acorn. Your input and participation will be critical this year. Please give your feedback, respond to surveys, attend Parents In Partnership (PIP) meetings, and always feel free to pop-in and visit or volunteer in your child's classroom. We aim to make Acorn an extension of your family and hope that we exceed your expectations in providing the best care and educational program to your children in 2009.

Sincerely,  
Matt Eldred - Executive Director

## Important Upcoming Dates

### January

- 5th** - Back to School!
- 15th** - PIP Meeting
- 19th** - NO SCHOOL, MLK Day
- 27th** - Board Meeting

### February

- 5th** - New Year Potluck
- 14th** - Valentine's Day ♥
- 16th** - NO SCHOOL, President's Day

### March

- 5th** - PIP Meeting
- TBA** - Parent Education Workshop
- 23rd-27th** - NO SCHOOL
- Spring Break**

## Holiday Bazaar Wrap-up

The 3rd Annual Holiday Bazaar held on December 6th was a huge success! With over 30 vendors, the Photo Show, great entertainment, and Santa Claus, we were able to raise more than \$3500 for the school. This well exceeded our goal and will help us with the Playground Improvement Project this Spring! A big thanks to Karen Zeid and Linda Miron for chairing the event. We couldn't have done it without them. Of course we want to thank all the parents who volunteered. Lastly, I want to thank our two ladies in the office, Tara and Kathy, for the countless hours they put in organizing and planning this event. It was very smooth, and that comes with good planning and preparation. This annual event is now a staple for Acorn so mark your shopping calendar for this year's Holiday Bazaar, Saturday, November 21, 2009.

## Acorn's Feature Teacher

In January 2009, *Jennifer Carpenter*, one of the Lead Teachers in the Mixed Age room, was selected by to receive the Parents' "Feature Teacher" award.

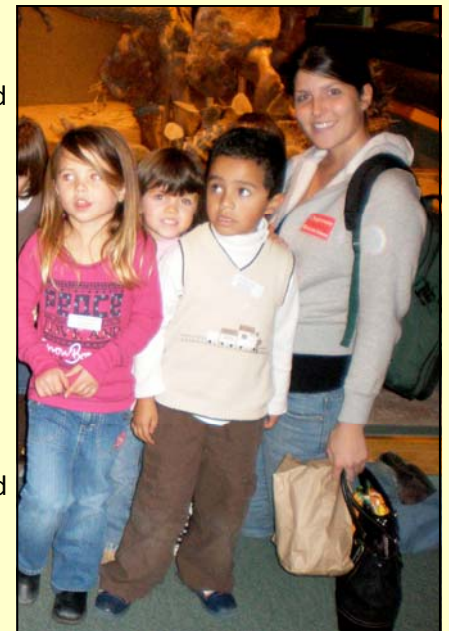
Jen was selected because...

- one can **feel** that she loves working with kids
- she treats all kids **equally**
- she is always **fair**
- she **never** loses her **temper**
- she is very **reliable**
- she **consistently** comes up with **creative ideas** for the Spiders' agenda and classroom decorations, and executes them (does anyone of you own that much camping equipment?)
- she **engages herself** and her family in the school, in her spare-time (she built the new cubbies for the Mixed Age classroom together with her father!).

Jen is Acorn's **Child Health Liaison**. In December Jen got engaged and had her 22nd birthday!

**Congratulations Jen - we love you and thank you for giving so much to our children!**

Nominated by Stefanie Pabst and Andreas Kramer (parents of Alex Kramer)



# Creative Curriculum in the Frogs Classroom

What a fun time to be a Frog! We are so excited about some of the projects we have been doing and some of the things we will be working on in the upcoming months. We are all growing up so fast, and learning new things everyday. We've had a lot of fun doing



yoga on cold days with the Mixed -Age class, and have learned a lot by doing music, holiday and cooking projects.



This month we will be working on numbers and colors. Most of the Frogs can count to 10 and know basic colors, so we will be expanding on that. We will also be working on fine motor skills with some cutting and pasting projects.

At the end of January we are planning a field trip to the library in conjunction with Martin Luther King Day. We will read books about dreams and talk about what we dream about. We will be taking the bus for the first time, and need parents to come with us. Please let us know if you can join us!

We will also be celebrating the Chinese New Year. We have a dragon parade planned, along with constructing paper lanterns, and making dumplings for a cooking project.

## Message from the Child Heath Liaison

Unsafe plastics have been a hot topic for a while now and I recently read an article with some helpful information. Plastics are usually made from polyvinyl chloride (PVC) and bisphenol-A (BPA).



These are sometimes found in baby bottles, teething, and the lining of canned powdered formula. Prolonged exposure to moisture, heat and chewing can release the chemicals stored in the plastics. Independent testing with baby bottles found that many infants may have been exposed to BPA at levels 40 times higher than the conservative definition of safety. When administered to lab animals they had a host of health problems from liver cancer to kidney and brain damage. The safest thing to do is purchase BPA and phthalate free child products. Glass and stainless steel bottles are available, as is powdered formula that isn't stored in plastic containers. There are more plastics available now that don't include BPA and are considered safe plastics as well. For a list of easy ways to determine if your plastics are safe or not contact Tara in the office.

## Acorn's New Roof

Pictured here are workers from Advanced Roofing Technologies installing the new roof for The Acorn School. This was a very intensive project as we had two different types of roofs that needed to be constructed to meet code. In addition we had custom skylights installed and will have new gutters in the coming months. A big thanks to the City of Boulder for their Development Block Grant to help with this project. Also, thanks to Advanced Roofing for their willingness to work with the necessary guidelines and paperwork that come with such grants.



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