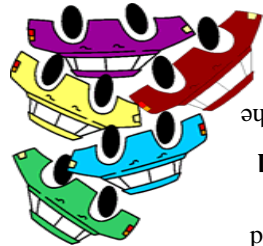


<b>Board of Directors</b>	Judy Snyder, Esq. <i>President</i>
	Allison Cook <i>Secretary/Treasurer</i>
	John Hunter
	Diana Royce Smith
	Shawn Pater
	Linda Mitron
<b>Key Acorn Staff</b>	
	Matt Eldred <i>Executive Director</i>
	Kathy Azevedo <i>Program Director</i>
	Tara Plasio <i>Assistant Director</i>

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and help children in the  
Boulder area.

**About our organization...**  
The Acorn School for Early Childhood Development is a non-profit organization, tax-exempt under section 501 (c)(3) of the IRS code. Donations and bequests are welcomed and are tax-deductible. All contributions directly support the school's works, helping us to continue providing high quality child care services to children from diverse ethnic and socio economic backgrounds, while supporting our efforts to raise the standards in the field of Child Care/Early Childhood Education on a national level.

  
**The Acorn School**  
for early childhood development  
2580 Iris Avenue  
Boulder, CO 80304



**"The creation of a thousand forests is in one acorn."  
-Ralph Waldo Emerson**



# The Acorn School

for early childhood development

## Community Newsletter Summer 2008

"The mission of The Acorn School 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

I want to take this opportunity to welcome you to The Acorn School Newsletter. Whether you are a current family at Acorn, a former family, friend, or a champion for early childhood education, we thank you for being a part of The Acorn Community.

As I am completing my fourth year as the Executive Director at Acorn, I can honestly say that I feel very blessed to be a part of this community. I feel very fortunate to have such a supportive Board of Directors and a group of parents who genuinely care about the quality of care that your children receive. In addition, we live in one of the few counties in Colorado that has a comprehensive plan for Early Childhood Education systems and resources. It is truly a good place to be.

You will see the support and excitement for The Acorn School throughout this newsletter. The recent completion of our 5-year Strategic Plan, full enrollment, low-teacher turn-over, and financially sound operations are just a few ways that show Acorn is moving forward.

For over thirteen years now The Acorn School has prided itself on advocating for higher standards in the field of child care by modeling high quality early care and education programs. I hope that you will see as you read this newsletter that we are continuing that tradition of setting the bar high for standards in early childhood! With our NAEYC accreditation, 3-Star Qualistar rating, and other quality assurance programs we are a part of, I feel confident that The Acorn School will continue to be a place that we can all feel good telling our friends, neighbors, and community about.

I would ask that you remember The Acorn School as a local 501 (c) (3) organization. Whether in your workplace or in your personal giving, I can't think of a better way to invest in the future of our children than supporting this great school. I encourage you to ask about the various fund raising options we have at Acorn, from the car program to grocery scrips. Together we can all make a difference.

Sincerely serving children,  
Matt Eldred

### Kindness & Love

The Acorn School's Preschool II class has been working on the alphabet this year, and has come up with some very unique lessons for teaching certain letters, but none as creative and heart-warming as the letters K and L. Hear it from the teachers', Suzy Evans and Nicole Korpusik, perspective:

"It all started with the alphabet. We were thinking of fun ways to help the kids with letter recognition. When we began talking about the letters "K" and "L" we created a "Kindness and Love" jar for the classroom. Whenever any of the children did something kind for one of their friends, they got to put a penny in the jar. In 3 weeks, we had 75 cents; 75 kind acts among twelve 3-4 year olds. Pretty amazing! We decided we would ask for "matching" contributions from the parents in our classroom and then donate the collected amount to Children's Hospital. In total we raised \$257 and are happy to send this contribution to the children at Children's Hospital in Denver.

We have now decided to make the "Kindness and Love" jar a permanent fixture in our classroom and make a donation every year. The kids are thrilled to see how their kindness to one another has encouraged others to help children in need."

The donation may be minimal in terms of the dollar amount, but the lessons it hopefully instills in our preschoolers will be a life-long commitment to helping others. We are very proud of our Preschool II children and have learned so much from them through the "Kindness and Love" jar.



## News from the Board of Directors

We are a very new Board and have enthusiastically embraced the recent strategic planning process that culminated in Acorn's Strategic Planning Session that took place April 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>. The turn-out at the Session was very impressive, boasting attendees from all of the critically important early-childhood-education organizations in Boulder County. Attendance of these people at Acorn's Strategic Planning Session made clear that Acorn is a big player in this town thanks to the hard work of the staff at Acorn, and your executive director, Matt Eldred. Our willingness to participate and lead in the areas of curriculum and advocacy were praised and I was very proud to be a part of such a well-respected organization.

An interesting statistic that was shared with the group at the Session follows: There are approximately 3500 births in Boulder County per year and only 500 licensed child-care spots for those babies. This makes crystal clear the need for accessible, quality child-care, which is the basis of Acorn's Mission Statement.

**"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."**

Help us help Matt and the staff at Acorn further our Mission by participating in any way you can in the implementation of the Strategic Plan. This is your chance to not only become involved in your child's life and school, but the larger early-childhood education community in Boulder. Feel free to contact me or any other member of the Board if you have questions, comments or ideas.

Thanks, Judy Snyder - President of the Board of Directors

## Important Upcoming Dates

### MAY

- ◆ 11th-Mother's Day
- ◆ 15th-PIP Meeting
- ◆ 26th-Memorial Day- NO SCHOOL

### JUNE

- ◆ 14th-Father's Day
- ◆ 22nd-Garage Sale & Acorn Family BBQ

### JULY

- ◆ 4th-Independence Day- NO SCHOOL
- ◆ 10th-PIP Meeting
- ◆ 19th-Spring Clean-up

### AUGUST

- ◆ 10th-Graduation
- ◆ 15th-Move-up Day- NO SCHOOL
- ◆ 18th-New School Year

### Spotlight on Board Member – Shawn Pater:

-Board member since November 2007, Married to Carla Carino We have two children currently attending Acorn (Juni in the infant room and Jaico in Preschool I).

I was born in Pittsburgh, PA, but have lived in Boulder since 1991. I am excited to be a part of the Acorn tradition and really enjoy the experience that my children are getting with the Acorn faculty and the school philosophy/approach. Being on the Board inspires me to make more of a commitment to support the Mission and Vision of Acorn. I hope that my participation will help Acorn grow and prosper, along with the reward it will bring to me personally. I hope to get to know the parents, children, and faculty on a more personal level in the near future.



## The Acorn School Strategic Plan

On April 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> nearly 40 people including Acorn staff, administration, board members, parents, and community stakeholders came together to ask the question, "Where does The Acorn School need to be in the next five years?" With Gail Hollander facilitating her 2<sup>nd</sup> Strategic Plan with The Acorn School, we looked at successes from the previous Strategic Plan, did an environmental scan looking at the needs and trends in Early Childhood Education in Boulder County, assessed strengths and weaknesses of Acorn, and began the process of creating core goals and objectives for the next five years.

The Goals that will guide The Acorn School for the next five years are:

- **Accessibility** -Create an environment that is accessible and welcoming to anyone, where balance and diversity are maintained.
- **Advocacy** -Raise awareness of need for high-quality Early Childhood Education in Boulder County to influence public opinion and policy.
- **Capacity** -Replicate one other center with capacity of 60-65 kids that meets our environmental guidelines and philosophy.
- **Parent Partnerships** -Parents understand what high-quality Early Childhood Education is and take responsibility to become involved and invested to make it happen at Acorn.
- **Environmental Sustainability** - Practice and teach environmental sustainability.
- **Health** - Every family has access to prevention and treatments for physical, mental, and emotional health and development.
- **Staff Development** - Attract, retain and continuously improve the capabilities of committed, high-quality professionals.
- **Finances** - Have adequate funds to fulfill all the other goals.

### Timeline

**NOVEMBER 2007**  
Construction, Phase I  
**Complete**

**WINTER 2008**  
Fundraising - **Underway**

**MARCH 2008**  
Planting and maintenance of  
playScapes - **Underway**

**SUMMER 2008**  
Design and construction of  
Phase II

**WINTER 2009**  
Fundraising

**MARCH 2008**  
Maintenance of playScapes

**APRIL 2009**  
Design and construction of  
Phase III

**SPRING 2010+**  
Maintenance

## ACORN'S PLAYGROUND

### OBJECTIVES:

- Address safety issues and design/build all areas to conform with ASTM safety standards
- Complete the project in phases that would coincide with funding over the course of a few years
- Develop landscaping and increase natural elements
- Reuse existing materials when possible
- Provide a variety of play opportunities that include: water, sand, paths, musical instruments, play structures, rocks, climbing, practical life, riding toys, movement and rest
- Add storage and design spaces that encourage the storing of small toys and riding toys
- Limit maintenance requirements
- FUN, FUN, FUN



### BUDGET:

- Design and development of master plan and construction documents for Phase I, \$4800
- Construction - Phase I, \$18000
- Spring, 2008 planting and maintenance, \$2000
- Design redevelopment and construction documents for Phase II, \$3000
- Construction - Phase II, \$30000
- Spring, 2009 maintenance, \$1400
- Design redevelopment and construction documents for Phase III, \$2500
- Construction - Phase III, \$20000

## Parent Stories

### Play Grounds

Play Grounds Café in North Boulder was opened in January by Kenny Foster and Kari Swensen, parents in Acorn's Mixed-Age class. Play Grounds is a haven for both parents AND children. It is a modern café integrated with a kids' play-space that offers classes and special events. Play Grounds offer a full adult and kids menu.

It's a place to eat, sip, and relax in adult size chairs; a place where kids can be themselves and explore, construct, imagine, and collaborate safely among the play installations. Play Grounds also offers a variety of music and story-time events.

Their playSpace was designed by the Sawhorse Gang, the same company that is designing Acorn's great new playground.

Congratulations Kenny and Kari, we wish you the best in your business endeavors. Check out the website for more information, [www.playgroundscafe.com](http://www.playgroundscafe.com)



### EcoFlame



Eco-Flame Colorado, a newly founded company dedicated to the state-wide distribution of eco-friendly fireplaces (fuelled by denatured ethanol) was recently started by Pau Torruella and Ingrid de Iraola, parents in Acorn's Mixed Age classroom. Eco-Flame is Colorado's exclusive distributor of these innovative fireplaces.

Pau and Ingrid started the company in January, excited about the opportunity of providing its clients with an environmentally friendly architectural experience.

The *EcoSmart* fireplaces provide a state-of-the-art alternative to natural gas and wood-burning fireplaces, and do not require any ventilation system or a gas connection. This allows for easy relocation of the fireplace to fit your décor or comfort needs.

Let's congratulate Pau and Ingrid and support them in their new business. Check out the website, [www.ecoflameco.com](http://www.ecoflameco.com), for more information.