

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Jan 25 In house Registration Begins
Jan 30 Joe McDermott Concert 10:00
Feb 4 Registration Open Forums
Noon and 2:30
Feb 7 Chinese New Year Celebration
Feb 11 The Farm Yard visits 10:00 – 12:00
Feb 18 Teacher Workday: no school
Feb 29 Room 5 fieldtrip to Laurie Auditorium
Mar 17 – 21 Spring Break

UPCC EXPLORATIONS

Earlier in January, **police officers and McGruff**, the crime fighting dog mascot, visited with the children to tell them about safety. The end of January offers a time for all the classes to visit with a familiar friend as **Joe McDermott** returns for what always promises to be a laughter filled morning of song, dance and silly antics. Have you ever wondered what an elevator would sound like on a guitar? Come to Joe's concert on Wednesday, January 30th at 10:00 in the sanctuary to find out.

On February 7th, Valerie Thompson (mother of Melanie in room 4) will talk to the children about **Chinese New Year** that their family will be celebrating this year. She has worked with the staff on planning a meaningful morning with even a Chinese New Year Parade with a traditional dragon, crafts and snack of tangerines and egg rolls for the children. With the stock show and rodeo coming soon to San Antonio, our animal friends from "**the Farm Yard**" will also visit on Monday, February 11 so the children can see the animals up close without having to walk through the endless rows of barns at the stock show. The downstairs classes will see the animals at 10:00 and the upstairs classes will visit the "farm yard" at 11:00.

A FEW REMINDERS

In keeping with the UPCC nutrition policy and the needs of all children, we ask that families not send "sweet treats" (cupcakes, cakes, candy) for birthday celebrations or holidays such as Valentine's. The teachers have been asked to return the sweets to the families sending the items. If a family desires, but not at all required, they may send developmentally appropriate treats such as stickers, small bags of snack crackers, straws, or even pencils for preschoolers.

There are also as many ways to recognize birthdays without cakes. Birthdays can be celebrated with a child's favorite snack, such as fruit, string cheese, bagels or even chalupas. Some families opt out of the food and donate a book, puzzle, or other item to the classroom or playground in honor of their child. As the need for tuition assistance is always present, donations to the Children's Center Scholarship fund can be made at any time in recognition of your child's birthday or in honor of a special person in the life of your child.

REGISTRATION TIME AT UPCC

Ok we admit it – our registration forms can lead to confusion as we offer multiple types of schedules in attempt to meet the many different needs of the families. Don't be shy with your questions! Call or stop by the UPCC office to visit with Cindi or come to one of the Registration Forums on Monday, February 4th at noon and 2:30. **Registration forms and fees are due February 8**, after which date Open Registration begins for those on our waiting and mailing lists. Be sure to tell your friends to call the office before February 8th if they would like to receive registration materials for the 2008 summer program and 2008 – 2009 school year.

ON YOUR MARK, GET SET, AND GO!

We are in a **MAD DASH** to the **APRIL 12TH** finish line.....our **GOAL**: all gold medals for the **2008 UPCC Family Picnic, Silent Auction and Raffle**. We need your **TIME, TALENT, and hey, some of your treasure would help too, to pull off the UPCC Olympic Games**. If you have the right stuff, please contact **Anastasia McKenna, UPCC Board Parent Volunteer coordinator at 930-7967, or our 2008 Picnic Chairs: Caroline Mabery and Roxanna Knapp to JOIN OUR WINNING TEAM!!** As Nike would say, **JUST DO IT!!** Our little Champs need your help and support.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

We are so excited that 7 of our 15 full time staff will be attending college classes this semester as they further their education in early childhood education. This is incredible! Chris Barbosa and Eileen Molina received grants from the City of San Antonio and Smart Start for Teachers to attend classes for their CDA (child development associate credential) this spring and summer at San Antonio College. The grant pays for all of the expenses for them to attend classes for the spring and summer semesters, including substitute teachers while they are away at class on Wednesday afternoons. Nellie Flores, Rose Ann Martinez, and Phyllis Shaw continue working on their AA degrees in child development at San Antonio College while Cindy Calvo-Garcia has returned to SAC this spring to also finish up her AA. Cindi Catlin continues working on her post-graduate certificate in leadership with online courses at Pacific Oaks.

All of the staff continue to attend workshops despite most of them already having earned their required 20 hours in continuing education in early childhood each school year. Gretchen Johnston attended a session on the legal issues in child care in early January. On January 26, UPCC hosted a diversity training for all of the programs involved with the Cultural Friendship Exchange through the Jewish Community Center. On February 8, Cindi Catlin will attend a session on team building and coaching. Chris Barbosa, Cindy Calvo-Garcia, Blanche Garza, Gretchen Johnston, Eileen Molina, Mary Rivera, and Sandy Stout, and Viviana Wehmeyer plan to attend the annual SAAEYC annual conference on Saturday, February 9. During the workday on February 18, all staff will attend a training on working with young children with asthma.

BRANCHING OUT

Many of the UPCC staff continue to branch out beyond the playground gates and serve as mentors to other early childhood professionals in the San Antonio area. This spring, Janet Martinez in Room 3 and Sandy Stout in Room 7 will both supervise student

teachers in their last semester of child development classes at San Antonio College this spring. Working with the student teachers offers a wonderful opportunity for the classroom to have another adult with early childhood training and many have become substitute teachers and regular staff for us once they finished their coursework - Cindy Calvo-Garcia, Janet Martinez and Viviana Wehmeyer were student teachers at UPCC prior to joining our staff.

Cindy Calvo-Garcia, Phyllis Shaw and Sandy Stout have agreed to be “early learning experts” with the San Antonio Public Library Little Read Wagon program. They will lead make and take literacy workshops for teachers and in turn earn literacy materials for their classrooms.

NAEYC ACCREDITATION

UPCC has been reaccredited and we’ve displayed our new certificate, but our work with accreditation does not in any way end. We’ll continue our daily commitment to maintaining the standards of high quality care as well as continue to make improvements in our program based on those standards and the feedback we received in our accreditation report from NAEYC. Parents are welcome to ask for a copy of the report that was also provided to all staff and the Children’s Center board.

Cindi Catlin also continues to serve as SAAEYC accreditation chair and facilitate the monthly Accreditation Support Group, which she has done since 1990. The group consists of directors in all stages of NAEYC accreditation – from just gaining information, to those in the immersed in the stages of initial accreditation or reaccreditation and those that have achieved their reaccreditation. Oftentimes, directors and their staff come spend additional time after the meetings to look at the UPCC classroom and program portfolios when they begin working on their own portfolios as well as touring the classrooms and playgrounds. With the higher demands of the new procedures and criteria, the accreditation support group has become an invaluable resource for directors and programs in the San Antonio community.

Jan/Feb 2008

