



# Fairville Friends Newsletter September 2012



On September 20th and 21st, we celebrated International Day of Peace. We created stepping stones for our new Peace Garden and held Meeting outside in the garden to mark the occasion. Please look for our stepping stones—they will be installed in the garden entryway very soon. Peace to all!



Welcome to a new school year! We are happy to have your family as part of our community and look forward to watching your child begin or continue his/her school journey. Each year, during the first three weeks of school, the teachers ask me to lead our morning Meeting. This serves multiple purposes: First, it allows the teachers to sit with the children and establish routines for Meeting that will carry through the year. Second, it affords me an opportunity to learn the name of every child in the school, which is an important step toward my goal of developing a personal relationship with each child.

Meeting very quickly becomes a treasured part of the day. Singing with the children, reading a favorite story, allowing the children to answer queries related to our reading and those precious few moments when we “bring down the silence” helps all of us to get centered and ready for school. While wiggles (and occasionally giggles) are part of our Meeting, there is also plenty of learning taking place: we practice attentive listening, silent reflection, taking turns and finding our voices. We also participate in simple celebrations of birthdays or other events that

strengthen our bonds as a school community.

This week the staff and I will begin taking turns leading Meeting. I look forward to listening to books and queries chosen by my colleagues and to experiencing, along with your children, all that Meeting will offer this year.

I am grateful that you have chosen Fairville Friends for your child’s early years of schooling, and I look forward to sharing many wonderful moments with your family throughout the year.

Warmly,  
Sharon

*We gather as a community for songs, stories and a brief period of silence every weekday morning between 9:00 and 9:20.*

*Please feel free to join us!*

### The Gift of Goodbye

This year I have the unique perspectives of teaching in the Firefly Room near the front of the building and helping with 12:15 dismissal outside. I see, hear, or take part in tearful goodbyes in the morning and witness the reunions four hours later. Learning how to say goodbye to your child may be the hardest part of parenting so far. As a teacher, I tell parents to offer a quick, confident, "I love you! See you after lunch and outside time! Goodbye!" and save the tears for the parking lot. Many of you say "Easier said than done!" It may be helpful for you to know that I had to learn how to do it, too! My daughter is a FFS alum and on her first day of school, she had a vice grip on my ponytail and cried when I told her goodbye. I peeled her fingers off, handed her to her teacher, left the room--and then I cried. The teacher AND Mom part of me knew she was absolutely 100% ready for Fairville, but following my own advice was difficult and emotional. The Head of School looked into the classroom at my request; my daughter was sitting beside her teacher, happily playing with play dough. When I told my child goodbye with confidence, I was sending her the message that the school I picked for her was a safe place. I was sending her the message that I knew she would be okay and that people other than myself could comfort her. I was sending her the message that even through tears I knew she would recover and have fun. I was telling her that goodbyes can lead to positive outcomes. I also sent the message that she could be independent and learn new things.

At dismissal, some hellos are tearful in the beginning of the year and this is confusing to parents, especially when teachers are telling you that your child is smiling in between drop off and pick up. Here is what your child may be trying to tell you...

- Did you know these teachers expect me wear my shoes the ENTIRE school day?
- I fell on the playground. I was ok, but I wanted you to know about it.
- I wanted to play with another child and couldn't figure out how.
- I'm tired. I had fun, but I am TIRED!
- Did you know the teachers expect me to share toys ALLTHE TIME at Fairville?
- My teacher taught me to put on my jacket all by myself, but why can't she hold it for me like you do? By the way, I'm still really proud of myself.
- The only reason I wanted to come here was for the taxi, and I did not get to spend my entire morning in it like I had planned.
- Do you know that...I LOVE YOU!

Last year, a child and mom in my room were having difficulty separating in the morning and mom was dreading every drop off. All the other children in the room were fine and mom was frustrated. I told mom to stick with a goodbye routine for six weeks and she would see the results. I told her goodbye is a gift you give to your child, and yourself for that matter. This gift lasts a lifetime. So unwrap the gift of goodbye everyday, and after six weeks you may be greeted with the gift of hello..."Hi Mom, I had a GREAT day!"

Meaghan Schiller  
Firefly/Ladybug Teacher

*We have resources available at Fairville that offer advice on helpful ways to say goodbye to children. If you would like more tips on successful goodbyes, please speak with your child's teacher. Thanks!*

### What should my child wear to school?

We love to see children come to school dressed for active, messy play. We paint, play with play-doh, cook, and go outdoors in all kinds of weather, including rain and snow. Sturdy shoes and durable, washable play clothes are the best school attire. Please remember that your child will need rain gear (coats and boots) and, later on, snow gear (hats, mittens, snowpants, boots) every day that there is wet grass or snow, either on the ground or in the forecast.

At Fairville we ask parents to avoid sending children to school in tee shirts and other apparel with "super-hero" motifs or logos or current fad commercial movie and television theme wear. Military-themed clothing (fatigues, camouflage) are also discouraged as they are counter to Quaker philosophy.

If your child comes home with a smear of paint, glue or mud on their clothing, you will know that they were actively involved in learning-- and having tons of fun!



## Events Calendar

- October 8 School Closed for Faculty Inservice  
Fairville Families meet at Ramsey Farm 10:30 am
- October 21 Fall Festival 3 - 5 pm
- November 9 Open House for Prospective Families 9 am

## In the Classrooms.....



The Ladybug's first theme was "Getting to Know You". They read books about starting school, friendship, sharing, and feelings. After getting comfortable in the classroom, the Ladybugs started learning about bears! They read many bear books, played counting games with bears, and learned some new bear songs.



In the Bumblebee room the children are learning school routines and getting acquainted. They started the year by reading friendship and peace stories, then began learning all about fall! They read many seasonal books and spent time looking for signs of fall all around the campus.



Feeling safe and nurtured is an important goal for these first few weeks. In the Firefly room the children are learning names, making friends and becoming comfortable in the classroom. They are learning how to use and how to take care of their classroom "tools" by participating in games and art

projects and by singing simple songs.



The Grasshoppers are playing games designed to help them learn the names of their classmates and to help them feel safe and comfortable in the classroom. The Grasshoppers proved that they are a kind and generous class by spending time making an adorable ladybug house for their little friends in the Ladybug class. The Ladybugs are thoroughly enjoying playing in it! The Grasshoppers have also expressed an interest in quilts. They read a variety of books about quilts and made a paper name quilt to hang in the hallway. They plan to weave the quilt theme throughout their year.



The butterflies started the year much like their friends in other classes: they got to know one another, read peace books, and then began their first classroom unit, a study on colors and shapes.

## BLOGS

Have you checked your classroom blog for information and photographs related to classroom happenings? If there isn't an entry on your classroom blog, one should be posted very soon!

## Fairville's Scholarship Fund

Did you know that Fairville Friends has a scholarship fund? We use this fund to provide substantial financial support to a family who, without our support, would not be able to provide their child with a Fairville Friends education. This helps to diversify our school and strengthens our bonds with the broader community.

When you make your Annual Giving pledge this year, you will be able to earmark some or all of your donation toward the replenishment of Fairville's Scholarship fund. Please consider donating to the fund this year—we thank you in advance for your generous support!



## In the Classrooms (continued).....

They made interesting shape pictures (notice them in the hallway) read books about shapes and colors, and had a shape show and tell. The Butterflies will also be mixing colors, doing some graphing, and making a shape book as part of this unit.



The Kindergarten began the year by sharing their hopes and dreams for the school year. They referred to their hopes and dreams to help develop rules for their classroom, rules that will allow them to take care of themselves, their room and each other. The class shared stories of summer trips to the ocean and made ocean creatures to hang from the classroom ceiling. They are nature investigators and have spent time outside choosing a class tree that they will continue to observe throughout the school year. Of course the Kindergarten students are also learning the skills they will need to become readers, writers and mathematicians. We are proud of how much they have accomplished in just a few weeks!



## OPEN HOUSE

FRIDAY

NOVEMBER 9TH

9 AM

BRING A FRIEND TO FAIRVILLE FOR A TOUR AND TO OBSERVE OUR CLASSROOMS IN SESSION

RSVP TO THE OFFICE AT 610-388-1268

WALK-INS WELCOME

## School Wish List

Small Soccer Nets

Sturdy Hula Hoops

24" Giant Fun Gripper Soccer Ball

Commercial Exhaust Fan for the Kitchen

(All donations to Fairville Friends School are tax deductible)

## Tricycles and Scooters Coming Soon!

We expect our tricycle shed to arrive sometime this week! Once the shed is securely in place, we will be opening up the bike trail to riders, starting with the oldest classes first. ALL bike riders must have helmets in order to ride. Please look for a message from your classroom teacher regarding bike riding opportunities for your child's class. Happy trails!