

CATERPILLAR LAB COLLABORATION



Sam Jaffe explains caterpillar behavior to students in the Professional Development course.

One of July's high points was our collaboration with **SAM JAFFE** and the **CATERPILLAR LAB**. Sam's work in bringing native caterpillars—in all their stages of development and activity—to children and adults is remarkable beyond description. His mission is to illustrate the life cycles in nature through sharing these remarkable creatures with others in many settings. For more information and photos visit samueljaffe.com.

LEVEL II GRADUATES



July marked the first graduation of our new Level II Professional Development program. Six graduates completed the 13-month low residency program this summer. Leading their studies was our newest core faculty member **JANENE PING**, a master kindergarten teacher at the Hawthorne Valley Waldorf School and gifted puppeteer.

Congratulations to our 2014 graduates!
HIROMI NIWA, New York
ROXANNE ANTHONY, Pennsylvania
MINA KOYAMA, New York
ELSA ARENAS, New York
TRICE ATCHISON, Massachusetts
KRISTIN LANGLEY, Kentucky

SOPHIA'S HEARTH IN AUSTRIA

Susan Weber represented Sophia's Hearth in Vienna in October as a member of the international circle of Waldorf early childhood teacher educators. Fifty colleagues teaching early childhood educators in Thailand, China, Israel, New Zealand, Romania, Russia, Ethiopia, South Africa, Scandinavia, the United Kingdom, Brazil, North America, France and Germany gathered to share experiences and to explore their work together.

SPRING FESTIVAL MARK YOUR CALENDAR!



As you begin to plant bulbs for spring and put your garden to bed, it is time to mark your calendar for a very special spring 2015 event. On Friday, May 15, we will welcome renowned Manhattan floral designer **EMILY THOMPSON FLOWERS** for a very special floral design demonstration.

MOVING ON TO KINDERGARTEN

This summer was bittersweet as we said farewell to several children who have been with us since the childcare program opened in 2010. Time passes quickly with children, and never was it more evident than when we wished these children we met as infants good luck in Kindergarten!



Time flies: the first group of toddlers in our childcare program as they were in 2010; now children off to kindergarten!

Sophia's Hearth Family Center

sophiashearth.org 700 Court St., Keene, New Hampshire 03431

Board of Directors

Rebecca Podniesinski
President
 Shannon Winn
Vice President
 Kirsten Archibald
Secretary
 Myra Rebillard
Treasurer
 Julie Davenson
 Courtney Deal
 Caro Dellenbaugh



The Early Childhood Teacher Education Center at Sophia's Hearth

Winter Workshops, Summer Programs

Creative Discipline – Reframing Discipline Using Sensory Strategies
 DECEMBER 6, 9AM - 3PM
 WITH Jane Swain

Supporting Integration of the Primitive Reflexes
 JANUARY 10, 2015, 9AM - 3PM
 WITH Jane Swain

Application of Spacial Dynamics® Therapeutic Practices in the Early Childhood Classroom
 MARCH 7, 2015, 9AM - 3PM
 WITH Jane Swain

A Look Ahead to Summer 2015
A New Cycle of Games from Wilma Ellersiek
 WITH Lynn St. Pierre and Nancy Macalaster
Puppetry Arts for Festivals
 WITH Janene Ping
Celebrating Festivals with Children the Year Round
 WITH Betsi McGuigan
Gardening with Children
 WITH Cordelia Lane

400-hour Teacher Education Course in Waldorf Early Childhood Education
 Level I and Level II begin July 2015
 visit sophiashearth.org for more info



For details and on-line registration, visit sophiashearth.org

Sophia's Hearth Family Center
sophiashearth.org 603.357.3755
 700 Court St., Keene, NH 03431

Non-Profit
 US Postage
PAID
 Wht Riv Jct, VT
 Permit No. 73

fall 2014 at S H F C *childhood* a newsletter for friends and family of Sophia's Hearth Family Center



Cynthia Core

Dancing With Joy ▲

Each morning, students and teachers in our professional courses gather with instructor Jane Swain to start the day with movement. During the week of July 7-11, 2014, it was folk dancing with fiddler Randy Miller. The Early Childhood Teacher Education Center at Sophia's Hearth draws early childhood educators from all over North America. This summer there was more to dance about as we were recognized as a developing member of WECAN (see story inside).

In This Issue

- Exploring Lullaby with Nancy Macalaster
- Sophia's Hearth Early Childhood Teacher Education Center joins WECAN
- Bringing a connection to St. Paul's School

You are invited to share your thoughts and questions. Please email us at info@sophiashearth.org

IN PRACTICE

Exploring Lullaby In Early Childhood Education

By ANN WRIGHT

AS AN ACTIVELY INVOLVED grandmother, Nancy Macalaster, who directs the family programs at Sophia's Hearth, began to notice that she had strong emotions when singing certain lullabies to her grandchildren that she had heard sung as a child. One lullaby in particular had been sung to Nancy by her grandmother.

Curious, Nancy began to think about what songs, especially lullabies, nourish in us. To deepen her understanding of what she offers through lullabies and lap and gesture games in her parent-infant and parent-child classes, Nancy began a three-year fellowship in infant-parent mental health at the Infant-Parent Training Institute of Jewish Family & Children's Services of Greater Boston.

Using the songs and interactive games of gifted speech and drama teacher Wilma Ellersiek, whose work has found a warm reception within Waldorf early childhood education, Nancy focused on what feelings and emotions unfold as teachers share these songs and games with parents, and how

"Mother is the sculptor who shapes her baby with her voice."

-- Sally Goddard Blythe

this deepens what they bring to their work. Nancy asks, "I love these games. I use them a lot, but I wondered—what's living in me when I offer them?"

While teaching early childhood development professionals at Sophia's Hearth in July, Nancy used videos and photos from her parent-child classes to explore how lullabies build the relationship between parent and infant, and what role memory plays in connecting the child to its familial history.

Worldwide, others are looking at the role of lullabies. In an on-going study with multi-cultural families at a London maternity hospital, Sally Goddard Blythe and Colwyn



Nancy singing in the parent - child class.

Trevarthen found that certain tones in the voices of mothers, and the way they offer lullabies to their babies, is universal. Brain research shows that some songs can trigger a reaction similar to that created by familiar smells, and there is a strong link between language, pre-verbal cooing and being sung to.

Nancy has noticed that the value she puts on sharing songs in her group work is different than it was before she began her fellowship. Her explorations are deeper. Dr. Peter Hobson, author of *The Cradle of Thought*, which examines how thinking develops in infants, has said, "Engagement with others has taught this soul to fly." Nancy has a new awareness when working with young families: that the connection we feel through lullaby—with those from our past and in our present—allows our soul to fly.

Early Childhood Teacher Program Joins WECAN!



Graduates bring puppets to life.

By SUSAN WEBER

WE ARE DELIGHTED to share that the Early Childhood Teacher Education Center at Sophia's Hearth has been formally invited to join WECAN, the Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America, as a developing teacher education institute.

This recognition is a direct result of years of program development and refinement that have included building a diverse and gifted faculty and welcoming professional students from many states and countries. This is a long hoped for recognition from WECAN.

We now have new responsibilities and opportunities. Our students will receive a new recognition for their completion of 400 hours of study in two levels, and their certificates will now read, "This training/certificate is recognized by the International Association for Steiner/Waldorf Early Childhood Education."

Our graduates join the worldwide circle of Waldorf early childhood educators who are part of a collegueship devoted to supporting the dignity of and respect for childhood and the family. Located in over 60 countries throughout the

Level II Scholarship Fund

THE LEVEL II Professional Development Course would never have been possible without the generosity of special donors to the scholarship fund created for that new group of students.

Among those resources is the Dorothy Macalaster Fund, created in memory of Dorothy and her lifelong devotion to early childhood education. This fund is one of the crucial resources that meets the ongoing need for the tuition assistance that our adult students require. We are most deeply grateful to these special donors and the \$17,000 in assistance that their gifts made possible.

world, there are nearly 2,000 programs serving children from birth to seven years of age in a wide variety of settings.

We celebrate the accomplishments of this pioneering group during their course of study here at Sophia's Hearth! They are serving families and young children at the Waldorf School of Louisville, The Philadelphia Waldorf School, the Great Barrington Rudolf Steiner School and the Mountain Laurel Waldorf School. As individuals, they are pioneering new practices and creating new educational possibilities in varied settings within their communities.



Level II students exploring circle work for the kindergarten.

IN PRACTICE

Bringing a Connection to St. Paul's



Melyssa Paul

MELYSSA PAUL, head teacher at the Infant Toddler program at St. Paul's School in Concord, New Hampshire, attended her first professional development course at Sophia's Hearth with no knowledge of Waldorf, Steiner, or Pikler concepts.

"I came into the course a little worried about being accepted—the majority of the others attending had some connection to Waldorf education. However, from the moment we started I felt welcomed. My colleague and I were embraced completely; our thoughts and experiences valued. If I'd been able to, I could have stayed all summer!"

That first year, one of the most important things Melyssa left with was the importance of slowing down and self-reflection. "Reflecting on who I am as a person, as a parent, as an educator, as a parent-educator and thinking about what I do and how I do it. This wasn't something I was used to.

Melyssa Paul brings her Sophia's Hearth experiences to the Children's Learning Center at St. Paul's School, Concord, NH. She works with a mixed age group, from infant to 3 years.

I was used to getting through the day rather than being in the day. Being genuine in everything I'm saying and doing with the children, their families and my colleagues is probably the biggest piece that I've taken away from Sophia's Hearth. This alone would have made that first week worthwhile, but I also came away with new ideas and information to share. It was immensely valuable."

As a result of returning to Sophia's Hearth, Melyssa says she better recognizes and understands what she's learned about children's development and primitive reflexes. "In my slowing down, I'm able to share so much more with parents about what I observe in their child, and I can support them in enjoying where their child is now; that there's no need to rush their child's development." She says that parents' biggest questions are, is my child normal? is this as it should be? am I doing a good job? In response, she can say, "Absolutely. You're there for your child. You care about your child. There's no need to rush through their developmental stages."

"I'm able to share so much more with parents about what I observe in their child."

Melyssa describes some parents as eager to get their children up and walking at 12 months. She's learned that if we let development happen on its own, in the appropriate manner, you may not see a child begin to walk until 15 to 18 months. "That's okay; it's normal. I've been able to empower parents with a confidence that allows them to enjoy where their child is in his or her development. I feel like I'm a whole different person, supporting parents in a different way. They know I'm watching, observing and teaching them."

"Being with yourself before you can be there for someone else, knowing I can sit in a workshop with Jane or Susan and take something different away each time—I can never get enough. It's so valuable. I'm always ready to go back for more. It's a wonderful experience."