


May 2005

# montviews

## Spring Things



The children of Montview made friends in April with some creatures that would paralyze many of their parents with fear. A scorpion, cockroaches, a tarantula and a millipede all came to Montview along with "The bug lady" as Tiffany Fourment of the Wild Bear Nature Center in Nederland is known. Tiffany helped the children learn what the creatures ate and where they would live in the wild, such as the desert or the rainforest. The kids then got the chance to observe and draw the creatures. "We learned that they are our friends," said teacher Nancy Weaver. The children also discovered that these creatures were safe. For example, the scorpion did not have a stinger. Tiffany allowed children who felt comfortable to touch the cockroach. "They were very big and the children were so proud that they were so brave," Nancy said. One of the favorites was the baby hissing cockroach. "It really entranced them to have real creatures here," Nancy said. "They were just delighted to draw the bugs. They adored the whole experience."

## Carnival is Coming!

Come one. Come all to the annual Montview Carnival. Join us for a fun-filled day of moon bouncing, cookie decorating, play dough squishing, cake walking, hamburger eating and much, much more! Rain or shine. Saturday, May 7, 2005, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Bring friends and your smile.

Julie Morelli-Duea, Carnival co-chair

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## MONTVIEWS

Montviews is published monthly by the Montview Community Preschool and Kindergarten

1980 Dahlia Street  
Denver, Colorado 80220-1239  
303-322-7296

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# from our director

## THE WONDER OF BUGS

Do cockroaches really spit? What would you wear to school if you had as many legs as a millipede? Will I be poisoned if I touch a tarantula? Interesting questions and all part of the discovery process.

As many of you know, we had a visit from the "bug lady" last week. She brought with her a Madagascar spitting cockroach, a millipede, a tarantula and a couple of other creatures. The children were entranced. While some were reluctant to touch the creatures, all took advantage of the opportunity to draw the bugs and all were enthusiastic about the experience.

After 30 years of working with young children, I still get excited when I see their enthusiasm for a new experience. I also see these times as an opportunity to reflect on how children learn.

Media, including television, videos and the internet provide us a wealth of information and lavish photos of nature. And yet, nothing can duplicate the experience of seeing a tarantula first hand. Did you know they are furry? Did you know they make great pets?

I'm concerned with the increased academic push in our schools that we are depriving our children of the chance to participate in "hands-on" learning. Reading a book or watching a video cannot duplicate the experience of touching a cockroach. Here at Montview, we will continue to provide opportunities to see the world through all of our senses: taste, touch, sight, smell and sound.

## THANK YOU TO PARENT COMMITTEE

As the year draws to a close, I want to take this opportunity to thank parent committee for all of their hard work. Charlie Bruce provided leadership and our auction committee chairs, Ann Davis and Jenni Rodriguez succeeded beyond our wildest dreams. The playground chair, Chris Crawford and indoor committee's chair Gary Stark, kept things repaired, clean and in working order. Kim McGrigg took us in a new direction with our finances. Erin Green got the minutes done in a timely fashion. Susan Jenkins and LeeLee Newcomb pulled off a successful Scholastic book fair. Melissa Darzins kept the library in perfect shape. Louann Sakala and husband John Joram managed the grocery certificate sales. Inger Schiller and Audrey Dellgren trained the parent participation people and Amy Crockett reorganized our childcare. Heidi Van Sickle, the queen of spreadsheets, oversaw financial aid and Jenn Bouchet carried out an organized and fair admissions process. Susie Gessert provided treasure bags for the staff during conference weeks. Rachel Morscher and Julie Morreli are busy with plans for our spring carnival and Aimee LaPerriere-Hunt tracked down all the health and immunization records. Lea Ann Reitzig attended all those long Governing Commission meetings and is now stepping up to serve as president of parent committee. And last, but not least, Katie McCrimmon oversaw the committee and did much of the work that provided up with this magnificent newsletter. And Angie Lee worked her design magic to make the newsletter a visual masterpiece.

Take just a moment and think about the dollar value of all the work done by these amazing people and their committees. Now you know why Montview is such a wonderful place.

*Abby*



Cover: Saint James Salsberry in Nancy Weaver's M,W  
Young 3s class checks out a rose-hair tarantula. Photo by  
Cyrus McCrimmon.

### Meeting a Cockroach in Carole Robertson's Class

Left to right: Justin Reese, Megan Hilbert and Lily Martin  
learn about a Madagascar cockroach, one of the creatures  
that Tiffany Fourment brought to Montview. Photo by  
Cyrus McCrimmon





# news from the classroom

## Quilting a Vision of Home

By Katie Kerwin McCrimmon

**H**ome is a vital, emotional harbor for children. And in Kathy Bruce's afternoon class this spring, the children have created an extraordinary project depicting their homes: a quilt. Thanks to parent, Jen Heth, who is a quilter, the children each had a chance to create their vision of home through pieces of fabric.

The children started with a little homework. They sat outside their homes with their parents and noticed as many things as they could. How many windows were there? Was the roof pointy or flat? Were there trees or flowers in front? The children then brought their observations to school where Kathy worked with them individually on pictures of their homes. She read their lists of observations to the children, then they would draw what their home looked like.

Kathy loves to have the children create art from their observations, rather than a universal idea of what something should look like. So, for instance, she will sometimes set up a vase of flowers and ask the children to draw what they see. Their vision of a bouquet of tulips will be very different than an adult's classic drawing of a flower with petals.

The houses that the children drew were equally unique. Jen took it from there. She decided to work with iron-on fabric so the children could create a collage of material to represent all the shapes of their home. And they could see the results right away.

"The kids picked the pieces. They are absolutely beautiful," Kathy said. "We would get houses that were in some way unique to each child and would have something special. One child put a porch swing on his house. He cut some special pieces. It's floating over to the side of the house. I was trying to lead him about where to put it, but he was adamant about it being where it was."

Jen ironed the fabric shapes onto the backing right in class so the children could make sure their square looked just right. She then took each child's creation home and stitched the fabric to the backing. Each child will get to take home an 18-inch square.

For Kathy, teaching is a wonderful creative outlet.

"I love being in the presence of children. I'm in a place in my life where I'm exploring my own self as an artist," Kathy said. A busy mom of a 17-year-old and a 10-year-old, she doesn't have the luxury of spending her day in an art studio. But, with the children in her class, she gets the joy of being as a creative as a pre-schooler.

"It helps me go back to that place when I was a child. The way kids think is more natural and creative and expressive. It's more right brain."

Kathy is also a big fan of teaching children how to keep a journal of their art and ideas. This is a technique that any parent can borrow. It's a great way to give summer adventures a new spin. Kathy finds that journaling comes easy to young children when they are on field trips. She loves to take them to places like the Botanic Gardens, Ocean Journey or for a simple walk on Forest Parkway.



"Each child has a journal. They can write in it or draw in it, whatever they want," Kathy said. "I think journaling is a really important life skill. It's a very powerful tool. You can write what you want. Preschool isn't too young to start."

Kathy recalls a particularly lovely moment when a class of hers was transfixed by a tank of turtles and fish at the aquarium. She has come to learn that young children don't like to keep a journal in order. They simply open the book and start drawing or writing there. So, she tries to mark the date and let them do it their way.

"There's so much that children at this age can do. It's more than play-dough and crayons. We do a lot of that. But they can do a lot more."

Above: Quilt from Kathy's pm class.

Photo by Sophia Floyd.

St. Patrick's Day in Kathy's afternoon class—reading a note from the leprechaun

Photo by Sophia Floyd.



# Wild Mouse Dazzles Jeanne's Class

By Katie Kerwin McCrimmon

**H**ave you ever met a finger puppet who can surf or play the organ? Well, the children in Jeanne Mate and Mandy Koskinen's M,T, Th. p.m. class are smitten with a little lady named Fingermouse who has been dazzling them with her adventures from Montview's secret hideaways to her surfing spot in Santa Barbara, California.

Fingermouse is Jeanne's special assistant. Jeanne started at Montview as a parent more than 35 years ago, then became a teacher and director of the school. Jeanne is an avid puppeteer known for the spellbinding shows she's been doing for 20 years. She loves bringing Fingermouse along on home visits because even the most shy children warm up to the little puppet. In Jeanne and Mandy's class, Fingermouse has sparked wild speculation about her whereabouts. And she frequently leaves the kids in giggles.

It all started with an inadvertent adventure. One day, Jeanne opened Fingermouse's little box and she was gone. The children came up with wonderful guesses about where she was. They had seen a hole in the hall-

Fingermouse. They found her with church organist, Barbara Hulac, who let the children play the organ.

At spring break, Fingermouse indulged one of her passions: surfing. She told the kids she was headed to Santa Barbara (where Jeanne's sister lives) for vacation. She sent back a postcard saying she had to dodge a hungry cat and giant waves, both of which wanted to swallow her up.

Things didn't get any calmer when Fingermouse returned from vacation. The children were reading Jack and the Beanstalk when the tiny mouse disappeared again. The children hunted far and wide on the playground, looking for signs that the giant had scooped up their little friend. Perhaps Fingermouse had made herself invisible to dodge the giant. Or, maybe she had gotten eaten. Finally, Fingermouse reappeared at the top of the beautiful beanstalk the children had made outside their classroom. For a while, the stubborn little lady wouldn't come down. But finally, she reappeared on an art easel. She appears to be back for now. But when Fingermouse gets the itch for travel, you can't stop her.

For Jeanne, watching the children spin tales about Fingermouse has brought sheer delight.

"I'm just so fascinated at their wonderful imagination. They can fantasize on all this stuff. To them, she's real. They know she's a puppet, but they talk about her as if she were alive," Jeanne said.

"I have so much fun being with the kids and seeing all the incredible ideas they come up with."

The children are now embarking on a medieval adventure. No doubt, Fingermouse will show up in the turret of their castle or will don a knight's armor and ride across the room on a white horse.

## Parent Committee Needs You: Openings for 2005-06

Thank you to the 2004-05 Montview Parent Committee. All your volunteer efforts are very much appreciated by the Montview families, staff and students! We certainly have had a very successful year and value everything our committees have done. Parent jobs contribute to the wonderful environment our children experience at Montview and also keep our tuition costs down.

You may ask, "What is Parent Committee?" It's a group of 25 Montview parents who meet the second Tuesday of each month at 7pm at the school. Free childcare is provided, so it's a fun break from the kids too!

These parents each chair committees including Auction, Carnival, Childcare, Circle of Friends, Grocery Certificates, Indoor Maintenance, Library, Newsletter, Participation Parents, Playground and Special Events. They meet to discuss school events, admissions, parent and teacher concerns, budgets and hear updates from Abby. And they vote on tuition increases and other business throughout the year. It's a great way to connect with other Montview parents and families. I have thoroughly enjoyed my role as Governing Commission Rep this year and look forward to the role of President next year.

Please consider a position on Parent Committee to help make a difference at Montview Community Preschool and Kindergarten. Open positions include Auction Co-Chair, and Newsletter Co-Chair (both editor and designer). Fulfill your "cooperative" part of Montview with a Parent Committee position!!!

Please contact Lea Ann Reitzig 303-333-2753 or [lea\\_ann\\_reitzig@cognence.com](mailto:lea_ann_reitzig@cognence.com) to learn more about Parent Committee.



way leading to the classroom they share with the Young 3s. And they decided it was a mouse hole with a fancy staircase leading to secret passages below. They started drawing pictures and brainstorming about items they could put by the hole to lure Fingermouse back. Finally, she re-emerged and told the children of her great adventure in the church kitchen, which is full of wonderful snacks and many other mice.

Then, Fingermouse disappeared again. This time, she left a note saying she had gone to play the organ. The children fantasized about a special tunnel that led to the organ. And one day, they got to go look for



Above: Emerson Alexander, Greta Gessert and Katy Boehm

Below: Finger mouse playing the church organ

Photos by Mary Lauth



L-R: Luke Schachter, Kelly Wulf and Kyle Whitbeck with others in a tent, during their Night Class. Photo by Edie Buchanan

By the children in Edie & Betty Jo's Class

We had a Night Class. We came in our pajamas and we brought our flashlights. We played in a Ladybug Tent. Sophie visited and she brought the tent. (Sophie is now in the kindergarten class at Montview.) We made pizza for our dinner and Archie and Ryan's moms cooked it for us. We went on a hunt for the Pot of Gold. The Montview Leprechaun sent us a note that Betty Jo almost threw away and it told us about the Pot of Gold. It said we should follow the shamrock clues to the Pot of Gold.

So, we took our flashlights and we searched for the shamrocks to go the right way on the trail. The pot of Gold was behind that "minister thing" near the piano. We found the gold and stickers and we all got some!

Then, we came back to our classroom and we ate the pizza and we had green milk and green water to drink! The Leprechaun even turned the toilet water green! We had popsicles for dessert.

Then, we went outside in our pajamas and coats and we took our flashlights. The playground was dark in some places. Nobody else was there. They were sleeping in their beds. Then, we had Story Time. Then we went home and went to bed.

**The End.**

**"A ship is safe in port. But that's not what ships are for."**

**—Anonymous.**

## Get Out There

Ride horses. Dig a garden. Savor the Sunflowers.

The Urban Farm at Stapleton

By Susan Jenkins

Imagine a place where chickens roam freely, a giant pig basks in the sun and a child-sized farm house beckons one to play. Imagine a place where sunflowers stretch to the sky and vegetables grow bountifully. Well, imagine no more. The Urban Farm, located at 10200 Smith Road (just southwest of the intersection of Havana and Smith Road), is situated in a remote corner of the old Stapleton Airport Grounds. Enter through the unassuming and rather institutional-looking building at the east end of the parking lot and come out into an almost barren landscape that leads to animal enclosures and gardens to explore.

The Urban Farm offers many opportunities for exploration. Families are welcome to come on Saturdays from 10 am to 1 pm and get their hands dirty during the "Saturday Gardener" program. Currently no admission fee is required. But donations are always welcome. Additionally, the Urban Farm offers several unique, hands-on classes for children ages 4 and up. These include monthly workshops in the children's garden, where the child-size plots are cultivated in a specific theme, be it the "Spaghetti Dinner" garden where tomatoes, basil, squashes and wheat are all grown to a pumpkin patch where the kids can grow their very own pumpkin. Another popular class is Storybrook Farm, an emerging literacy program incorporating children's stories with hands-on activities at the Farm. And if that were not enough, there are the horses. The Urban Farm offers horsemanship lessons for children as young as 4 years of age during the summer, incorporating not only horseback riding, but a whole horse education from learning proper horse terminology to proper grooming techniques. Children learn about tack for riding and "mucking" (that's cleaning up after the animal in layperson terms). The Farm also offers birthday party packages. For complete details, please see the website at [theirbanfarm.org](http://theirbanfarm.org) or call 303.307.9332 for a mailer.

# Living in the Moment:



## How to enjoy your child now, not stress out about what's next

by Kim Neal, Sharon Prairie's T,Th. a.m. class.

**I** never embraced the idea of "living in the moment" much until the day I had my son, Colton. Our life before him almost seems like a blur of constant going and doing, but not being.

Colton was not a surprise. He was worked at, planned for, summoned...with the power of prayer and the incredible science of In-vitro fertilization.

Colton arrived on schedule and, of course, was the most amazing, beautiful creature to enter our lives. No book—and believe me I read many—could have predicted the joy we experienced. That moment is forever seared in our hearts.

That day, my husband and I discovered how intensely we could love and how we had been blessed...and how much we wanted to, "stay in the moment."

Colton is now 3 and loving his time at Montview, but we've been so surprised at how fast all this is moving. Yes, everyone warns you about this in the first year. But, it can sometimes alarm you about how quickly things start to progress. And, if you let it get to you, there is so much pressure to provide your child with a raft of enrichment activities.

Children seem to visibly grow like some sort of cornstalk right in front of you, crackling into life as they run off to pre-school and so soon, Kindergarten. Whoa! Slow down. I recently noticed Colton is already growing little hairs on his legs. Hair on his legs. Personally, I want someone to put the brakes on all this growing.

We were equally surprised at how bittersweet all this is. I don't want him to grow up. I just want him to settle down and stop kicking the back of my seat in the car.

As parents, we often delight if our child has an exceptional skill and wonder whether that talent, if nourished properly, could blossom into a successful career. But I have seen how this hope can turn into a pressure that becomes too heavy a burden for a young child to carry. How our dreams and unrealistic expectations create mounting tension for our children.

Of course, we all want the best of everything for our children. But my husband and I try to remember that it is Colton who must generate his dreams. He will probably shift from one dream to another as he grows and matures. By investing too much of ourselves in our children, we can rob them of the fun of being young.

In the end, my husband and I believe that nothing can beat simply playing with our child. Many of his motivations come because of his bond with us. Why overload our children with so many structured activities that it robs them of the chance to daydream? We need to allow our children—and ourselves—to participate in activities simply for ... the joy of the moment.

We have such power as parents, but we also know that the parenthood journey is both amazing and stressful. Be blessed and happy on your path. The promised land could lie right in your own backyard.

The other day, while I was working on this story, I came across this very insightful quote: "To be astonished is one of the surest ways of not growing old too quickly."

To that, I say, Amen.

Above: Left to Right: Wren Kelman, Harrison Seremet,

Ryer Lauth, Emma Coughlin and Reed Fricke from Jeanne Mate's class take newly-made butterflies for a visit to the magical rainforest in Edie and Leigh Ann's classroom.

Below: Elsa Buhr looking at bugs through a magnifying glass.

Photo by Katie Thompson

## Young Scientists Blossom in Katie Thompson's W,F p.m.

