

Arlington Family Connection

supporting children six and under and those who care for them



Volume II, Issue 3 * June 2003



Arlington Family Connection is growing!

by Jennifer Opp and Margaret Potter

All of us on the Board of Directors are pleased to share with you our plans for the future and invite you to join a committee, or simply get involved in an Arlington Family Connection (AFC) activity that interests you.

The structure of our Board of Directors has changed so that it can grow in size as our organization grows. The newly restructured Board consists in part of a six-member Executive Committee who is responsible for strategic and financial planning. This Committee will work together with the Board in directing and executing the work of AFC.

We anticipate that the new structure will allow for more members to become involved on various levels of the organization. All AFC meetings are open to the entire membership and we encourage people to come and share your talents and interests with the group. Please contact any Board member for more information on meeting dates and times.

We have lots of exciting ideas for AFC's future and are actively seeking candidates for our Board of Directors to help with this vision. Please contact any one of us if you are interested in working on the Board or would like to chair a committee, or if you have ideas for new projects. Our contact information is listed on page two.

In our restructuring, we also have formed two additional committees: Community Service Committee (CSC)

and New Parents Welcoming Committee (NPWC). As a brand new committees, we will start out by defining our goals and developing our ideas and we encourage interested members to get involved. Please contact Margaret Potter for CSC or Dianna Dixon for NPWC. Getting

involved with Arlington Family Connection is a fun way to meet other parents in your community and to work on an interesting and rewarding project.

We are also planning a fall speaker series featuring talks and workshops on topics of interest to parents of young children. If you have an idea for a topic, please contact any

member of the Board.

The Board of Directors appreciates the ongoing support of our members and the greater Arlington community. We look forward to expanding our offerings and becoming a more integral part of our community.

The members of the Arlington Family Connection Board of Directors are: Jennifer Opp, President; Margaret Potter, Vice President and Chair of Community Service Committee; Diane Hebert-Farrell, Clerk; Dianna Dixon, Vice-President and Chair of Events Committee and New Parents Welcoming Committee; Justine Lynch, Treasurer; and the newest addition to our Board, Melissa Spiers, Membership Chair.

AFC

Board of Directors

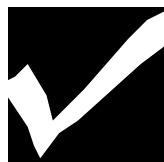
Vote 'Yes' for the Override on June 14

Submitted by *Together for Arlington*

Like many other towns in Massachusetts, Arlington is experiencing a severe fiscal crisis, with an expected budget shortfall next year of about \$8 million. The causes include steep increases in costs for health insurance, special education and pensions, as well as an expected \$3.2 million drop in state aid, some of which was first committed to Arlington, then withdrawn by the State.

Without an override, Arlington will be forced to make deep cuts in the school system, libraries, public safety,

senior programs, public works and other town services. By voting Yes on June 14, communities members can help ensure Arlington remains a safe town with good schools, libraries and emergency services, and programs that serve all our citizens responsibly.



For more information, contact:
Together for Arlington
(781) 648-2838
www.arlingtonoverride.org
info@arlingtonoverride.org

Table of Contents

Page 2	Board of Directors Information Membership Form
Page 3	Opinions and Perspectives
Page 4	Members' Contributions
Page 5	The Natural Connection Kindergarten Connections
Page 6	Fun Places to go with Kids Ongoing Activities
Page 7	Budget Cuts to Affect Schools Ongoing Activities, cont. Marketplace Webwatcher
Page 8	Save the Dates

News from the Board

The AFC Board of Directors would like to introduce its newest member: Melissa Spiers. We are thrilled Melissa has chosen to work with Arlington Family Connection and we look forward to working with her.

Melissa graduated from Penn. State University and worked in Texas, New York, and California before marrying in Pennsylvania and having two boys, Tomas, 5, and Andy, 3. Melissa and her family moved to Arlington in February, 2002. After careers in publishing, advertising and pharmaceutical sales, Melissa is now a full-time Mom.

Melissa has a great deal of volunteer and non-profit experience. She volunteered with the Los Angeles Youth Group, and a community center in Pennsylvania, which served the needs of children with cancer. She worked with senior citizens in Texas at a retirement center and was a mentor to a young girl with spinabifida. She currently is a member of the Junior League of Boston where she works with Haitian girls at a charter school in Cambridge focusing on issues of self-esteem and nutrition. Next year she will sit on the foster care review board. Melissa's board experience was as secretary of Millbrook Farms Association in Pennsylvania. Welcome, Melissa!

Thank You for Work Well Done

The Board would like to express its thanks to two outgoing members: Judy Petrie and Toni Langerman. Judy helped found AFC and served on the Board for two years. She contributed many resources to the website and we appreciate her hard work.

Toni Langerman served for two years on the Board and she faithfully edited our newsletter. We appreciate the contribution she made to the group.

We wish Judy and Toni well in their future endeavors.

For more information about AFC, please contact any of the following members of the Board of Directors:

Jennifer Opp (781) 648-4314
jennifer.opp@verizon.net

Dianna Dixon (781) 643-6851
dianna_dixon@hotmail.com

Diane Hebert-Farrell (781) 641-4516
kevanddi@verizon.net

Margaret Potter (781) 641-0260
mpotter@alum.wellesley.edu

Justine Lynch (781) 648-0006
Lynchfam4@attbi.com

Melissa Spiers (781) 777-1363
mspiers@attbi.com

Arlington Family Connection
PO Box 150
Arlington, MA 02476

AFC Membership Form

If you are interested in becoming part of an active, growing network of parents, professionals and other community members who care for young children, then membership in Arlington Family Connection (AFC) is for you. AFC offers educational seminars, social events, a web site, playgroups, a monthly newsletter and a guide to local preschools. To become a member, complete the form below, and send it in along with your check for \$12 to cover your annual membership fee. After February, pay \$6. All memberships renew in September.

Please make checks payable to:
Arlington Family Connection
PO Box 150
Arlington, MA 02476

Please print clearly. Date: _____

I am a: Parent: _____ Grandparent: _____
Educator: _____ Health Care Provider: _____
Child Care Provider: _____ Other: _____

Name: _____

Spouse/Partner's Name: _____

Address: _____

E-mail: _____

Phone: _____

Please list your children (if applicable)

Name	Gender	Date of Birth

School District (circle one): Bishop Brackett Dallin
Hardy Peirce Stratton Thompson

Would you like to be on an AFC committee?
(check all that apply)

Play groups _____ Publicity _____ Speaker Series _____
Newsletter _____ Fundraising _____ Social Events _____
Resource Booklet _____ New Parent Outreach _____
Activities _____ Community Service _____ Other _____

This membership is a gift from: _____

To celebrate: _____

Editorial policy

The Arlington Family Connection (AFC) newsletter is published monthly except for a joint issue in July/August. The newsletter is free with membership. Articles published in the AFC newsletter are the views of the respective authors and do not necessarily represent the views of AFC.

Childcare, healthcare and legal information is provided for informational purposes only. It is not intended as a substitute for medical or professional advice. Always consult your own healthcare provider for any decisions relating to your child's well being.

Copyright remains with the individual author where a byline is given. All other materials are copyright Arlington Family Connection, 2003. Permission is granted to reproduce articles for which copyright is held by AFC provided appropriate credit is given and no fee is charged.

The AFC newsletter accepts submissions from AFC members on issues relevant to families with children six and under. The editorial board reserved the right to refuse submissions for any reason. Send submissions to: afcnwsltreditor@hotmail.com.

Opinions & Perspectives

This Father's Day, Remember: Dads are More than Second-string Moms

by Jeff Drake, Founder of Successful Parenting, Lexington, Mass.

Many new dads have been there: the baby is crying and crying and *crying* and no amount of rocking, soothing or pacing the halls seem to provide any comfort. The instant daddy puts baby in mommy's arms, however, the cooing sounds begin. Mom and baby are delighted in one another and dad feels like a failure: I'm not a good parent, my baby doesn't want me.

This Father's Day, remember: of course you're a good parent, and baby needs you very much — you're just not mom. You're not designed to be. Babies benefit from having two distinct parents (and other significant caregivers) to help them grow and negotiate in an ever-unfolding world. This doesn't mean going back to rigid gender stereotypes that don't allow for working moms or nurturing dads—let alone recognizing the rights and needs of same sex couples, single parents or families who adopt. There are many ways to be a family.

I'm writing, however, to those dads who have trouble seeing the tangible role they are playing during that first year of life because baby's needs are at such a primal level. And that when baby is in distress she seems to seek out her most familiar form of comfort — the symbiotic

relationship with mom that has been going on since conception. In many families, (though not all as we read in *Ten Ways* on page 4 about a family in which 'Dada' has been the primary caretaker for his twins since early on) it seems that no one can compete with mom when baby is in distress.

But where does this leave dad? What, as fathers, are we supposed to do in these earliest stages?

It may not fit your picture of fatherhood: to do more cooking, shopping and caring for mom, but these caretaking measures help ensure mom is rested enough to meet baby's attachment needs. Baby will sense your presence, however, and as she becomes more ready to explore the world outside of mommy's arms, you will be that most familiar link. Mom may mean comfort and safety, but dad often can represent fun and exploration. And, you may just find that baby pushes herself to new challenges when you're around.

So take heart this Father's Day, dads. Don't be discouraged early on because it seems like baby prefers mom — baby needs you both, just in different ways.

Creative Memories

by Hilary Schultz

When I started my career in engineering ten years ago I thought that was it for me. I was the consummate career woman, traveling monthly to job sites and climbing the manager's ladder. But during my first managerial job at GE Aircraft Engines, I became pregnant with my first child. I just assumed I'd work, if not full time then part time. I couldn't imagine giving up my career. I thought I'd be bored or that I'd actually miss my job. Surprise — I ended up quitting my job and staying home altogether. And it was great, until my son started preschool two days a week and my husband said we wouldn't make it on one salary.

What to do? I could pull my son out of school and stay home five days a week, making him miss out on some opportunities and skills I thought would benefit him. I thought about going back to engineering part time, and actually landed a part-time job at a company, but after eight months I was sick of the corporate *yahoos* and being treated like a second-class citizen because I was part time. My husband sealed the deal when he said he was really stressed out with the schedule of having us both work.

So now what? How could I make ends meet and stay home? The answer was a home business, but what type?

I have a friend who has bugged me for years about starting my own business, but I had to find something I really loved and could make money doing. Direct sales

didn't interest me much because I didn't consider myself a salesperson and hadn't been impressed with any of the direct sales companies I'd come into contact with so far.

Enter Creative Memories, a direct sales company that is different. Creative Memories has a mission: to preserve the past, enhance the present and inspire the future, by preserving memories and memorabilia in quality albums that will last a lifetime. Creative Memories makes the highest quality photo preservation materials and I provide customized service in helping people not only start albums but actually complete them in minimum time.

This is the perfect job for me. I now love what I do, can stay home, set my own hours, *and* pay the bills. I have no plans to return to my career now. The other day I came across some engineering books that I readily tossed in the garage sale pile. I spend my non-working days with my son and make business calls during naps. I never commute and never have to deal with "the boss" — because that's me!

The work or not to work decision is hard for everyone. I believe there is no one solution that fits all, even if corporate culture changes and parents are given more credibility by company managers. This is the solution that worked for me. It makes me and my family happy, and in my book, that's all that matters.

Hilary Schultz and Creative Memories can be reached at sschultz@alum.mit.edu or (781) 777-1303.

Ten Ways to Get Bubble-Gum Out of Your Beard?

by Lila McNulty

On Mother's Day we were shopping at garage sales with our 10-month-old twins. Danny was babbling "mama-mamama." Clara looked at her brother firmly and said "Dada."

For Clara, "Dada" is her world. Since she stopped nursing at four days old, her father has been her primary caregiver – feeding, changing, entertaining, and comforting. (This worked out great for me, as her brother is still an enthusiastic nurser.) Laid off from his high-tech job, Jim became a stay-at-home dad when I went back to work when they were four months old. Two months later, he got a home daycare license and added two more kids to his roster.

Is our house like the new movie *Daddy Day Care*? Probably not. I haven't seen it, but I'm told Eddie Murphy is a reluctant caregiver and runs a pretty chaotic child care. Jim is a very laid-back and quiet person, with a calm and soothing child care style. There's activity – and when three little kids need to be changed, fed and played with it gets pretty noisy – but he calms them down quickly and without a fuss. I have never managed to take both children out of the house by myself, but Jim routinely takes at least three to the park, and sometimes runs errands at Radio Shack or Microcenter with our pair (got to start those little engineers early.)

I'm disappointed that movies like *Daddy Day Care* and *Mr. Mom* make fun of men who want to rear their children.

Sadly, our society has no other role models for stay-at-home dads or male child care providers. If a man wants to be an early childhood educator, there is only Arnold Schwarzenegger in *Kindergarten Cop*, leading children in marching practice one minute and shooting people the next.

In 1950, my father decided to stay at home to raise my sister and was told that it would "sap his moral fiber." He said it was the best job he ever had – and the hardest. The latest issue of *Parenting* magazine has an article called "The Truth About Fatherhood - What Your Husband Needs to Know." Why would fathers need to be told by their wives what fatherhood is all about? And why assume that only mothers read *Parenting*? As Jim pointed out, *Parenting* has an article about shaving, but it's just armpits. How about "10 Ways to Get Bubble-Gum Out of Your Beard"?

I recently saw a picture of Jim on the job. It shows Clara drinking a bottle in Jim's lap, while Danny stands at his knee drinking from another. Both children are happy, well-nurtured, loved – that's the truth about fatherhood. As Danny and Clara would say, it's not all about Mama-mama. On Father's Day and every day, Dada is a parent too.

For information on Jim McNulty's Papa Bear Day Care, contact: info@papabeardaycare.com.



I Bring Two Red Crates to the Store

by Melissa Lucius

Maybe you've seen me walking up and down the aisles at the grocery store: I'm the one with the two red crates in my cart. You know, the milk-crate type boxes/file holders that you can get at any office superstore? I've got the crates holding the groceries, and two-year-old Amanda sitting up front, asking for cheese samples at the deli and offering to pick out the fruit.

Imagine how much these crates simplify that trip to the grocery store. Instead of having to transport ten paper bags nestled inside ten plastic bags, some containing just one item per bag, from cart to car and from car to house, I breeze out of the store with two sturdy, red crates. In a flash, my groceries are loaded in the car, and in two seconds, I carry them into the house. The best part is that when I take the corners too fast on the way

home, the crates don't fall over, spilling the groceries all over the trunk.

It just got to the point where we were drowning in plastic and paper bags, and it made me crazy to throw them out. Of course we "recycled" them, but not using them in the first place is certainly easier on the environment than going through the whole process of recycling. I keep one crate nested inside the other, on the floor of the coat closet. The trick is to remember to take them along to the store, but by now it's become a habit.

It is convenient, but do you want to know the real reason I do it? It's for Amanda, and for her children, and their children, and their children. I guess I've just gotten a lot more environmentally conscious ever since

she came along. I feel like any little thing I can do to preserve precious resources will make it that much more possible for future generations to survive and thrive.

It breaks my heart to think that the Rain Forest is being paved over with asphalt and that some animal species won't even exist when Amanda is my age. I was more short-sighted before I became a mother, but now I take it as a personal affront when we consider drilling for oil in Alaska, or when we talk about converting green spaces to strip malls. I want to give Amanda the very best I can, and that includes a healthy world environment. Bringing crates to the store may be a drop in the bucket, but if we all make this little effort, it can really make a difference.

So, what color will your crates be?

The Natural Connection: *How green does your garden grow?*

by Dianna Dixon

I get (probably unreasonably) enraged when I see those little yellow signs – child and puppy X'd out – popping up on my lawn at this time of year. Our landlord arranges for landscaping work, and although I have asked that toxic substances not be put on the lawn of a house where a three-year-old resides, this year he forgot, and there they are again.

If these chemicals are not good for children and frolicking canines, how can they be safe for any of us, adults and planet earth included? I will admit up front that I am not a gardener, I am not lawn-proud, and I do not care to do this landscaping work myself. While really green gardening is a science, using some bugs to get other bugs and some flowers next to other flowers and so on, there are actually commercially available products and services that take no more work than the conventional strewing of pesticides and toxic fertilizer.

First the bad news, and some of these fertilizers are really bad news. A sample of 29 ordinary and widely-available fertilizers (including products by Scotts and Agway) was recently analyzed by Frontier Geosciences, a US EPA-accredited independent laboratory based in Seattle. A total of 22 toxic metals was found in the fertilizers, including arsenic and lead.*

You may be as surprised as I to find out how toxic metals get into backyard gardens: fertilizer products become contaminated when manufacturers buy toxic waste from industrial facilities to obtain low-cost plant nutrients, such as zinc or iron. However, along with the needed zinc and iron come arsenic, cadmium, chromium, lead and mercury.* (Note: this sort of “recycling” is not allowed by organic standards for bedding and fertilizer.)

Now the good news: local gardening services and suppliers do offer alternatives. Wilson's Farm carries a full range of organic lawn and garden products, from compost to peat humus to fertilizer to weed control, with prices similar to that of conventional products. I was

pleased to find out that Wilson's Farm (781) 862-3900 uses the “Integrated Pest Management” approach to growing, a very sensible method that uses many “green” techniques and pesticides only when absolutely necessary. Garden tours for adults start at 6:30pm on June 12th; tours for groups of children must be privately scheduled.

Mahoney's (781) 729-5900 in Winchester also carries organic gardening supplies, including fertilizer and seed. Russell's Gardening Center (508) 358-2283 in Wayland not only carries all products organic gardeners might need, they support and encourage all those interested in organic gardening. Even Bread & Circus carries a small quantity of organic compost and fertilizer by the prosaically named “Coast of Maine” brand. Pemberton

Farms & Garden Center (617) 491-2244 just down Mass Ave in Cambridge has a good supply of organic fruits and vegetables and a small selection of organic lawn/garden products.

* Information from Toxic Waste in Fertilizers by Andy Summa on www.redjellyfish.com

Websites: www.gardensalive.com
www.tvorganics.com
www.seedsofchange.com

Services:

Minuteman Landscaping—Natural choice since 1984 – Organic landscaping and lawn care (617) 782-7332.

Boston Tree Preservation—Organic health care for trees, shrubs and lawns at www.bostontreepreservation.com or (781) 729-0095.

Natural Tree and Lawn Care—This company uses organic products where available and applicable, and alternative measures elsewhere, e.g. spot-spraying rather than blanket spraying of pesticides, (888) 567-7200.

Dianna Dixon is a UK-trained and licensed homeopath practicing in Arlington.



Kindergarten Connections

If you have a child starting kindergarten in the fall and are interested in meeting other families in your school district this summer, please contact the following people:

Bishop: Jerri Newman (781) 641-9933 or jerrinewman@verizon.net

Brackett: Helene Newburg guaitch@yahoo.com

Dallin: Cathy DiFonzo (781) 648-9443 or cathydifonzo@hotmail.com

Hardy: Chris Foster (781) 646-9927 or fostercm@hotmail.com

Peirce: Lori Rogers-Stokes rogersstokes@hotmail.com

Stratton: Melissa Spiers mSPIERS@attbi.com (see playground playgroup schedule page 7)

Thompson: Beth Billings (781) 648-6270 or bethbil@yahoo.com

Fun Places to go with Kids: Fruitlands Museum in Harvard

by Jeff and Esmeralda Perkell

Only 40 minutes away in Harvard, Mass., this beautiful park museum is a wonderful place to spend a day with family. There's a wooded area with paths and dig sites, an Indian Museum, a farm house, a Shaker house, and a museum of American paintings. Their indoor/outdoor restaurant has wonderful mountain views and good food and wine at reasonable prices.

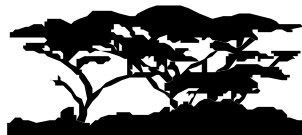
We've been there three times. The first was for an adult birthday party at the restaurant. The next two times we went with two 1-year-olds and a 15-year-old, and their parents. The kids didn't have much patience for the Shaker house and old farm house but liked the picture museum. Our teen was bored by the pictures but interested in the old homes.

We enjoyed it all. We brought lunch and spread our blankets on the lawn under an old tree – there's plenty of room for picnics in their grasslands.

The kids loved chasing a ball around after lunch; bringing outdoor toys was helpful. Strollers are fine on the pathways but not practical for the wooded walks. We tried a woodlands walk late in the afternoon but there were too many mosquitoes. If you want to take any of these trails, plan to come during mos-

quito nap time or bring repellent! There are two archeological digs on the trails, but we haven't yet seen them. There's also a gift store that the kids loved.

Fruitlands admission including all attractions is \$10/adult and \$2/child. For more information visit www.fruitlands.org.



On-going Activities

Groups

New Mothers' Drop-in Group: Thursdays, 10-11:30am, Calvary United Methodist Church, 300 Mass Ave. Free, nonsectarian, facilitated group. All new parents are welcome to attend with their babies. Sponsored by Jewish Family and Children's Services. Info: (617) 558-1278.

New Mothers' Drop-in Group: alternating Tuesdays, 9:30-10:30am, Henry Bear's Park, 685 Mass Ave. This is a free, informal drop-in group for new mothers with infants. For more information, please call (781) 646-9400. This group runs through the summer.

Working Mothers' Group: second and fourth Saturdays, 10-11:30am, Robbins Library Community Room. This informal group provides mothers, who are also working, with a place to meet and talk. Plenty of room to bring along your infant or toddler! For more information, email Pamela Harlem at pharlem@partners.org or call (781) 648-9034. Please note: this group will not run in July and August; email/call for info about September.

Older First-time Moms Group: third Wednesday of each month, 7-9pm, various Arlington locations. This is a social and support discussion group for first-time moms in their late 30s/40s in the Boston area. The group is free, but a \$1 donation is suggested. Call (781) 674-2029 for details. This group runs through the summer.

Grandparents Support Group: meets second Thursday of the month from 12-1:30pm for grandparents providing primary childcare for their grandchildren. Sponsored by the Arlington Youth Consultation Center. Call (781) 316-3250 for details and to pre-register. This group runs through the summer.

Arlington Fathers' Group: Tuesdays 7:30-9pm. Sponsored by Parents Helping Parents. This is a free support group for fathers who are feeling isolated, overwhelmed, or concerned about their anger toward their children. For exact location and more information, call (800) 882-1250. Group runs through the summer.

Classes

Cookie Dough and Turtle Art Home-based Class: Children cut out cookie dough upon arrival and later eat their creations! While cookies bake stories are read aloud, followed by two fabulous crafts. For 4- and 5-year olds. Thursdays from 3-4:30pm, May 29-June 19. Fee \$6/class for child with parent; extra fee for drop-off. Pre-registration required. To register and for class location, call Judith Sagan at (781) 643-1912.

Drop-in Outdoor Tot Doodle: Arlington Boys & Girls Club—Parent/child outdoor activity for children 15-36 months, including art, science, games and more. Tuesdays 10-10:45am (weather permitting) June 3-29 Fee: \$3/child.

Puddlestompers Monday Playgroup moves Outdoors! With the long awaited arrival of spring, the Puddlestompers Playgroup will meet at Magnolia Park Playground on Monday mornings from 10:15am-12:30pm. In the event of inclement weather (which may also mean too hot as the summer comes) we'll continue to keep the Fox Community Room as an option, and use it when necessary. (Note: no fee when outside; \$1/family when at Fox.) To get on the Puddlestompers Playgroup email list, contact julielucey@attbi.com or nina@matchups.com. For more info, call Julie (781) 641-0944 or Nina (781) 648-8533.



Children's Poetry Workshop with Elizabeth McKim. Friday, June 20, Fox Library, 10-10:45am. Ages 4-7 work in a small group to experience and create poetry. To register, call (781) 316-3198.

Just for Twos — Arlington Parks & Recreation (child does not need to be toilet trained) CODE 411801/SEC A1. This new program offers a potpourri of fun for two-year-olds without their parents. Children will enjoy a varied experience consisting of stories, games, crafts and creative movement. The activities are teacher directed. 9:30-11 am Thompson School Tuesdays and Thursdays – July 8, 10, 15, 17, 22, 24. Fee: \$60.

Kids Corner —Arlington Parks & Recreation Ages 3 – 6 (child must be toilet trained) CODE 421802. This program combines two of the more popular programs for young children at the same site. Youngsters will be grouped according to age. Games, crafts, outdoor play, walking trips, special events and water play will be offered. Snack will be provided. 9:00 am – 12 noon Thompson School Session I (SEC A1, June 23-July 3), II (SEC B1, July 7-July 18), III (SEC C1, July 21-August 1), IV (SEC D1, August 4-August 15) Fee: \$85 per session.

Arlington Parks & Recreation 422 Summer Street, Arlington, MA 02474 (781) 316-3880 www.town.arlington.ma.us/recnws.htm

Sing-alongs

Sing-along with Diane Taraz: second and fourth Friday of the month, 10-10:30am, Calvary United Methodist Church, 300 Mass Ave, admission \$1. For more information, see www.dianetaraz.com. Please note: no sing-along on the fourth Friday of August.

How will the Budget Cuts Affect Arlington Schools?

Superintendent of Schools Kay Donovan will speak about the budget cuts and the impact on Arlington's schools in a series of meetings throughout town. All community members who would like to learn more about what's at stake for our schools should plan to attend one of the following sessions:

Bishop School — 25 Columbia Road June 2 at 7 pm
Brackett School — 77 Eastern Avenue June 4 at 7 pm

Webwatcher

To reduce unwanted telemarketing calls, AFC member Andrea Novacky Congdon suggests contacting <https://www.madonotcall.govconnect.com> or calling 866-231-2255. Do it today and you'll notice a steep decline in calls by July!

Marketplace

Double baby jogger by Baby Trend, \$125. 3-years-old and used only once a week. Has a canopy and large bottom basket with 16 inch wheels, works wonderfully. Michelle Swaim (781) 648-2355.

Looking for a Child Life swing set or other comparable outdoor activity set. Call Kim at okilee1@juno.com or at (781) 777-1571.

Looking for a babysitter for 20-month-old, approximately 8-12 hours a week, mostly afternoons and early evenings. Call Kim at okilee1@juno.com or at (781) 777-1571.

Exersaucer for sale. Clean and in great condition with one toy; \$24. Call Judith at (781) 643-1912.

Robbins Library Tuesdays in June, 10-10:30am. Join Liz Buchanan or Sulinha for songs and singing games for infants and toddlers. Space limited by room capacity; tickets are distributed from 9am on the day of the event. Call (781) 316-3234 or visit www.robbslibrary.org for the July and August schedule.

Fox Library Friday, June 6, 10am. Preschool children of all ages are welcome to join with Liz Buchanan in songs and singing games.

Storytimes

Storytime at Henry Bear's Park 685 Mass Ave, Thursdays 11AM. Call (781) 646-9400 for more information.

Robbins Library stories for toddlers 18 months-3 years will be scheduled after June 14. Call (781) 316-3234 or visit www.robbslibrary.org.

Fox Library Wednesday, June 18, 7pm. Join in some "seaside fun" - fishy stories and craft for ages 3 and up.

Note: Due to pending budget cuts, some library programs may change. Please call ahead.

Bookclubs

The AFC Book Club usually meets the first Thursday of the month. Note: summer meetings will be June 5, July 17 and then not until September 4. The June book is *A Hope in the Unseen* by Ron Suskind. New members welcome. Info: Nancy Flynn-Barvick at barvick@attbi.com.

Movies

Movies at the Capitol Theater for caregivers with babies. Movies chosen weekly. Showtimes Mondays between 1-2pm, depending on the movie. Admission \$4.50. To join the email list, please contact Michelle Krawchuck at amichuk@mindspring.com.

Beyond Arlington

Cambridge

Cambridge River Festival Saturday, June 14 noon - 6pm. Celebrates the arts with international foods, crafts, children's activities and stage entertainment. Check out the children's "Creature Hero" tent. Info: (617) 349-4380.

Concord

Concord Youth Theatre presents *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*. Suitable for ages 4 and up. Saturday, June 7 at 4pm and Sunday, June 8 at 2:30pm. Tickets \$12 or \$8.50, depending on seat. Info: (978) 371-1482.

Lexington

New Mothers' Group Wednesdays, 10-11:30am, Beth Israel Deaconess & Children's Hospital Medical Care Center, 482 Bedford Street, Lexington. Meet other new moms and babies and talk about the joys and challenges of motherhood. This group meets for eight weeks and is free. Sponsored by The Parent Connection at the Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center. To register or more information, call Kristin Hicks at (617) 667-2229.

Medford

Babes in the Woods Tuesdays, 10-11:30am. Come for a walk at the Middlesex Fells, more than 2,000 acres of protected woods with hiking trails, ponds and wildlife. Alternate weekly between strolls and hikes. Kids of all ages welcome. Free. Information and schedule, visit www.fells.org/babes.html or call Rob at (781) 396-8994.

Winchester

Sing-a-long Come sing, dance and play music with musician Philip Bereaud! The Winchester Multicultural Network is sponsoring a sing-a-long for children on June 7th, 10am at the Griffin Center, 67 Shore Road. Part of Winchester's Town Day festivities and is geared toward children 0-4.

Starting Stratton Kindergarten this Fall?

To meet other families whose children will be starting Stratton kindergarten in the fall, please join us for any of the following Friday playground dates at 10:30am, weather dependent.

6/27	Stratton School Playground
7/4	No Group - 4th of July holiday
7/11	Spy Pond Playground
7/18	Dearborn School Playground
7/25	The Reservoir
8/1	The Reservoir
8/8	Menotomy Rocks Park
8/15	Sprinkler Park - Thompson
8/22	Robbins Farm Park

Info: Melissa Spiers at mspiers@attbi.com

Save the Dates!

Saturday, June 7

"Magic Castle Spring Fair", 10am-1pm, Arlington Heights Nursery School, 127 Lowell Street. Face painting, magical crafts and games galore! Dig for dragons and fish for treasures. Stay for lunch and enjoy all sorts of yummy refreshments. Rain or shine. Fair is a fundraiser for the non-profit school. Info: AHNS at (781) 646-8499 or Diane Stansbury at (781) 641-3864.

Sunday, June 15

"Spy Pond Friendly Garden Tour" featuring gardens in Arlington, 1-4pm. Map showing locations of the gardens to be published in the *Advocate* and posted on the town website, as well as descriptions of the approaches used (e.g., low chemical, low watering, native plants). Tour is self-guided; someone will be at each house to answer questions.

Sunday, June 15

The Friends of Robbins Farm Park (FORFP) will host its Annual Meeting, Field Day and Park Celebration, starting at 12:30pm. The Field Day, which will run from 1-3pm, is fashioned after games, events and tournaments held at the Farm decades ago and is open to kids and adults alike. Info: www.robbinsfarmpark.org.

Tuesday, June 24

AFC meets at Great Brook Farm and Dairy, 247 North Rd., Carlisle, at 10:30am. (Rain date: June 25.) Pack a picnic, bring the kids (all ages) and enjoy the duck pond, petting zoo, cows, and homemade ice cream! Enjoy acres of walking/hiking trails if you want to stay longer. Take Route 225 west from Lexington to the center of Carlisle. At the rotary, head north going in front of the convenience store/gas station. The farm is 2 miles

ahead on the right. Meet in the parking lot by the duck pond. Free, except for feed for the animals or ice cream. Info: Ruth Schmidt at ruthschmidt@att.net or 781-643-2362.

Wednesday, June 25

AFC Getting Connected Night

If you're a new member or interested in learning more about AFC, its members and leadership positions, please join us at 7:30pm at the home of Margaret Potter, 84 Irving St. Sip tea or wine and meet other parents who are working to make Arlington a better place for families. Learn more about joining one of the following committees: Community Service, Activities, Speaker Series, and New Parents Welcoming Committee. Info: Margaret Potter or Melissa Spiers (contact numbers on page 2).



Arlington Family Connection
PO Box 150
Arlington, MA 02476