

Arlington Family Connection

supporting children six and under and those who care for them



Volume IV, Issue 5 * July 2005
www.arlingtonfamilyconnection.org



Out and about for summer fun

There will be many occasions this summer to have fun with your kids while socializing with other Arlington Family Connection members. In addition to the AFC's annual pizza party, the Outings Committee has organized a circus trip and several playground events.

During the past few months, AFC has sponsored trips to Chip-In Farm in Bedford, where approximately 15 adults and 20 kids had a chance to feed the animals and sample treats from the store, and to Drumlin Farm in Lincoln, where eight adults and 10 kids had a chance to see the animals and enjoy a hay ride. On June 17, AFC members met at Parallel playground for a morning of outdoor fun.

■ This summer marks the 4th annual "Pizza at the Playground" event, Friday, Aug. 5 from 5:30 to 7:30 p. m. (Rain date is Aug. 12). The party will be held at Parallel playground, at the corner of Medford Street and Mystic Valley Parkway, near the Medford Rotary. (Please note this is a new location from previous years – the Spy Pond playground is unavailable due to construction activity.)

AFC will provide free pizza for members, families, friends and anyone else interested in exploring what the organization has to offer. This is also a good opportunity to renew memberships – all memberships renew in September for \$20 a year. RSVP with number



AFC kids enjoyed Drumlin Farm, above, and Chip-In Farm, below. More photos inside.



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Out and about for summer fun with AFC

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who plan to attend to Amy Speare at outings@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org or 781-646-5417.

■ On July 17, AFC is sponsoring a trip to see Circus Smirkus, at the Middlesex School in Concord. Circus Smirkus is a non-profit art/education organization that stages a touring youth circus, with performers between the ages of 10 and 18, in a big-top circus tent.

More than 20 AFC families have already purchased the 80 tickets that AFC had available. But, tickets for this performance, and others on the same weekend, can also be purchased at several nearby locations, including Catch A Falling Star toy stores in Lexington and Winchester. See www.circusmirkus.org/htm/sites/ma_concord.html for other ticket-sale locations.

In addition, Circus Smirkus will be performing July 19-21 in the Wellesley/Dover area; Aug. 6-7 in Revere and at other New England locations throughout the summer. See www.circusmirkus.org/htm/tour/tourschedule.html.

■ On Wednesday, July 20, AFC will have a Playground Fun outing at Skyline Park (Robbins Farm). In August, the playground outing will be at Beaver Brook Spray Park, on Trapelo and Waverly Oaks roads, on the Belmont/Waltham line; date to be announced in the August newsletter and e-bulletins.

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Editorial policy:

The **Arlington Family Connection** (AFC) newsletter is published monthly and is free with membership. Published articles reflect 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 for bylined articles. All other materials are copyright Arlington Family Connection, 2005. 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 reserves the right to refuse submissions for any reason. Send editorial submissions to: newsletter@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org; calendar

'What AFC means to me'

We've got a question for our members: What does AFC mean to you? Let us know why you joined AFC; what it's meant to you; what your expectations are for the future. Whether you're a long-time member, or someone who has just discovered AFC, we want to hear from you. We'll publish responses in the September issue. Write to: newsletter@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org

Celebrating the old-fashioned house party

By Bettina Velona

My daughter Nina is almost 6 years old and we have celebrated all her birthdays at home. This seems to be a dying custom. Most parties Nina gets invited to are outside the house. Venues like Chuck E. Cheese or the gymnastic center provide space, activities, cakes and goody bags.



We have Nina's parties at home because the intimacy of having her friends over makes the celebration more meaningful to us. It's part of what we do to connect with people. While Nina shares her world with a small group of friends, I get to know them and their parents better.

I am afraid that this spirit is muted in a culture of commercial parties that promise ever bigger and more elaborate entertainment.

Many parents go outside the house because they feel that a party at home won't provide enough entertainment for the kids. However, in my experience it's a lot easier to show them a good time than we might think. Nina and her friends enjoy playing simple games like spoon race or a blindfold game. During unstructured time they have a blast making up their own games.

I realize that parents can feel pressured about keeping up with the Joneses. That's unnecessary. Nina gets involved in the planning of her parties. She has learned to be confident about not conforming to what everyone else is doing.

I understand that in our busy world, parents want to save time and have as many no-fuss activities as possible. Preparing a party does not have to take much time. Games like musical chairs take virtually no time to set up. Buy a cake, put on some music and there's your party.



You don't even have to worry about goody bags. Nina's guests always love our goody bags that consist of small prizes that the kids won during the games.

If you do have some time, baking a cake and decorating the house can be part of spending quality time with your child. Setting aside time to prepare for her special day shows Nina that her birthday is not just another appointment on the calendar.

I know that space is another issue for many parents, especially since it's often customary to invite the whole class so nobody's feelings get hurt. I have taught Nina that it's more important to invite friends she truly cares about. The intimacy of a small party allows her to have plenty of time to interact with each of her friends. That rarely happens at structured out-of-the-house-parties, during which the kids play next to, but not with, each other.



And, kids don't need a lot of space to have a good time. No apartment could be smaller than the one I grew up in as a child. At my birthday parties, we still had fun playing games at the table or in a circle on the floor.

The focus of a birthday party is about celebrating your child, not about impressive entertainment. It's about welcoming friends, receiving their gifts and taking the time to unwrap and acknowledge them. It's about spending time with friends that mean something to you.

Try these websites for birthday party ideas: www.familyfun.org or www.indianchild.com/party_games.htm.

Bettina has one daughter and is a freelance writer living in East Arlington. Please send any feedback you have to jebena69@aol.com.

Starting a lifetime of healthy snacking

By Melissa Lucius

“Nack! ‘Nack!” shouted Veronica from her crib. At 18 months, she was ready for a “snack” first thing in the morning. To her, “snack” just meant eating.

Now 2, she’s pretty clear about which meals take place at which times of the day. But one thing remains: snacks are still a big part of her life. Since she snacks so frequently, those snacks better be healthy ones.

Veronica, like most toddlers, eats erratically: she goes for days just picking at her food, and then one day, she seems to eat us out of house and home. Or she will just eat one thing for a week, and then switch to something else.

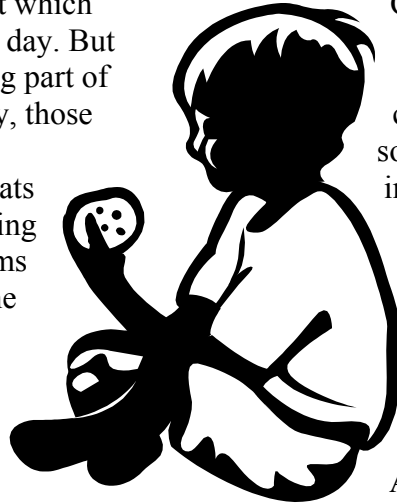
How great that we can trust her appetite: she’s eating according to what her body needs at that moment. If her bones are having a growth spurt and she needs calcium, she will eat yogurt and cheese non-stop. Until she’s three or so, we will let her eat what she wants, when she wants, as long as it’s healthy. Once she turns three, it’s a different ballgame. Older kids (and adults) eat for so many psychological reasons: frustration, boredom, social occasions, and so on.

Since she snacks so often, and sometimes those snacks are bigger than the meals, we treat the snacks as mini-meals. Our kids never got used to “snack” foods, and we don’t keep them around the house. When it’s snack time, they have any kind of fruit or the rest of their sandwich from lunch, or a pumpkin muffin, raisins, yogurt. They’re thrilled if I offer them half a slice of bread as a snack.

The chips and cookies manufacturers want us to think that for lunch, you have a turkey sandwich and an apple, and for a snack, you have chips or a cookie. But this doesn’t really work for toddlers, because their snacks are like meals, and need to be nutritious. If Veronica were to have a big bag of Cheez-its and some sugary fruit punch at 10:30, she may not be hungry for

her healthy 12:00 lunch. However, if she has tofu cubes or apple slices or string cheese for her snack, and isn’t hungry for lunch, it’s fine, because she filled up on the good stuff.

Most “snacks” from the snack aisle have little or no redeeming nutritional value. The



Cheez-its look healthy because they have cheese, but it’s really just a trace. They also are full of artery-clogging trans-fats. The only somewhat nutritionally redeeming ingredient is a little white flour, which doesn’t do any harm, but it really doesn’t do any good either. There’s no place in the toddler’s diet for this kind of stuff.

They say the epidemic of American obesity can partly be attributed to our snacking habits. Americans snack constantly, and mostly on low-nutrition foods. One solution is to make those snacks nutritious.

We have to create these habits in our children now. What adult hasn’t tried to change his or her eating habits at some point and found it difficult? What a gift we can give our children by helping them develop healthy snacking habits.

Melissa has two daughters and facilitates workshops in Effective Parenting. Please send any feedback or questions to parenting@rcn.com.

The best way to make children good is to make them happy.

--Oscar Wilde

Calendar

Special Events for Families

Lexington Lions Club Carnival

June 30 – July 4. Center Playground, Worthen Rd., Lexington. Thurs.-Fri. 6-11pm; Sat. 12-11pm; Sun. 1-11pm; Mon. 12-7pm. **Sat. July 2 fireworks at 9:30pm.** \$1 admission, children under 6 free; additional cost for rides, fun house and games. Info:

<http://www.lexingtonlions.org>

July 4th at Robbins Farm Park

Mon. July 4, 7pm. Robbins Farm Park, Eastern Ave., across from Brackett School. Enjoy a live performance by the John Penny Band, followed by a large screen simulcast of the Boston Pops Concert and Fireworks display. Collaborative effort by the Town of Arl. and the Friends of Robbins Farm Park.

Info: <http://www.robbinsfarmpark.org>

Drop-in Outdoor Tot Doodle

Tuesdays 10-10:45am, thru July 26 (weather permitting). Boys & Girls Club, 60 Pond Lane, Arl. Parent/child outdoor activity for children 15-36 months, including art, science, games and more. \$3/child (requires membership which is \$20/year). Info: 781-648-1617,

<http://www.abgclub.org>

Family Day at Reservoir Beach

Wed. July 6 (rain date July 7). Join the Arl. Rec. Dept's 1st Family Day! Activities will include a sand castle contest, scavenger hunt, refreshments and give-aways. Sand castle contest construction begins at 9am, judging is at 10am. Contact the Rec. Dept. for contest rules. Ages 5 & up. \$4/gen. admission. Info: 781-316-3880.

Arlington at Night Summer Concert Series

6:30-8:30pm. Jefferson Cutter House Lawn, intersection of Mass. Ave. and Rt. 60., Arl. Free. Rain dates Thursdays.

July 6 – Jump City

July 13 – Vadim Kilpakov & Via Romen, Russian Gypsy Music

July 20 – Sarah Borges Band

July 27 – The Passing

Summer Family Performances

Medford Library, 111 High St., Medford. Select Thursdays at 7pm. Free.

July 14 – Children's Latin Dance

Aug. 4 – Pumpernickel Puppets, *The Story of Peter Rabbit*

Aug. 11 – Jay Mankita musician & storyteller

Aug. 25 – The Activated Storytellers, *Daring to Dream*

Info: 781-395-7950,

<http://www.medfordlibrary.org>

Jaguar Cubs' First Birthday Party

Sun. July 17, 11am-3pm. Stone Zoo, 149 Pond St., Stoneham. Tukari and Tai, the zoo's jaguar cubs, celebrate their first birthday. Kids can make cards for the birthday boy and girl, craft their own party hat and watch as the cubs receive a special birthday treat.

Free with admission. \$7.50/adult, \$4.50 ages 2-15. Info: 781-438-5100,

<http://www.zoonewengland.com>



Kidstock Theater Performances

Medford Library, 111 High St., Medford. Kidstock of Winchester will be giving 3 original performances. Kidstock creative theater features middle school actors in musical productions written for young audiences to enjoy. The performances are interactive and run for 30-40 minutes.

Free. Ages 4 & up. Reservations required. Info: 781-395-7950.

July 18, 10:30am – The Rusty Duckling

Aug. 1, 10:30am – The Frying King

Aug. 15, 10:30am – Blackboard the Terrible

Ben Rudnick and Friends Concert

Tues. July 19, 6pm. Wright's Pond, Elm St., Medford. Info:

<http://www.benrudnickandfriends.com>

Family Picnic Concert Series

Select Thursdays at 6pm. Robbins Library Lawn, Arl. Bring a blanket and a picnic and enjoy outdoor music. Free. A Russell Fund Program. July 21 – Sulinha and Friends



July 28 – Margot Fox

Aug. 4 – Ben Rudnick & Friends

In the event of rain, July concerts will move to the Community Rm, and the Aug. 4 concert will be postponed until Aug. 18. Info: 781-316-3234,

<http://www.robbinslibrary.org>

Payson Park Kiddie Concerts

Payson Park, Payson Rd. at Elm St., Belmont (rain location, Chenery Middle School, 95 Washington St.). Free. Co-sponsored by the Belmont Rec. Dept. Bring a blanket/lawn chair and a picnic. Fri. July 22, 12pm, Teddy Bear Picnic
Fri. July 29, 12pm, Wayne Potash & the Music Fun Band

Info/rain: <http://www.ppmf.org>

Craft Fair

Wed. July 27, 10-11:30am. Robbins Library Lawn, Arl. (rain location Community Rm.). Youngsters will have an opportunity to display and sell homemade items. Registration at Robbins Library. Co-sponsored by Robbins Library and the Arl. Rec. Dept. Free. Info: 781-316-3234,

<http://www.robbinslibrary.org>

Sing-alongs & Music

Mondays

5pm. Finagle a Bagel, 91 Middlesex Tpke., Burlington. Ed Morgan performs a selection of fun original and classic children's songs. Free. Info: 781-273-6500, <http://www.finagleabagel.com>

Tuesday, July 5, 12, 19

10am. Robbins Library, Arl. Babies to 36 mos. Songs and singing games. Space is limited; tickets available at 9am. Free. A Russell Fund Program. Info: 781-316-3198.

Second & fourth Friday of the month

10am. Calvary United Methodist Church, 300 Mass Ave, Arl. Sing-along with Diane Taraz. \$1. Info: 781-648-3719, <http://www.dianetaraz.com>

Saturdays and Sundays

5-8pm on WERS 88.9FM radio. Every weekend The Playground program from the Emerson College radio station plays the best local, national and international kids artists as well as classic hits, Broadway show tunes and more. Info: 617-824-8891, <http://www.wers.org>

Saturdays

11am. Stellabella Toys, 1360 Cambridge St., Inman Sq., Cambridge. Join local musicians to sing songs and play games. All ages. Free. Info: 617-491-6290.

Library Storytimes

Mondays, July 11, 18, 25

10:30am OR 11am. Robbins Library, Arl. *Each session limited to 12 children. Tickets available day of the program.* Drop-in for ages 18mo.-3yrs. with an adult. Stories, rhymes and fingerplays, followed by play and a simple craft. Info: 781-316-3234.

Wednesdays, July 6, 13, 20

10:30am. Robbins Library, Arl. Drop-in for ages 3-5 with an adult or alone, but adult must remain close by in library. Longer stories, rhymes, games and fingerplays followed by a simple craft. Info: 781-316-3234.

Tuesdays, July 12, 19, 26

10am. Fox Library, Arl. Stories and simple craft. Ages 3-5. Info: 781-316-3198.

Thursdays, July 7, 14, 21

10am. Fox Library, Arl. Stories and simple craft. Ages 18 mos. – 2 yrs. Info: 781-316-3198.

Storytimes

NEW! Waldorf School Storytimes

Mondays thru Aug. 8 (except July 4), 10am. Waldorf School, 739 Mass. Ave., Lexington. Ages 4 & under, accompanied by an adult. Each storytime will be led by a member of the school's Early Childhood faculty and will feature live storytelling/puppetry, singing, and snacks. An adjacent garden will be open for play afterwards. Free. Info: 781-863-1062,

<http://www.thewaldorfschool.org>

UPDATE! National Heritage Museum

Thurs. July 21, 10:30am. 33 Marrett Rd., Rt. 2A, Lexington. In *Play Checkers with Me*, a small boy teaches his baby brother a new game. We'll decorate boards and pieces for our own games and get ideas from the classic games in "Made in Massachusetts." Ages 4 & under. \$3/child. Info: 781-861-6559, <http://www.monh.org>

Barnes & Noble Storytimes

98 Middlesex Tpke., Burlington. Pre-schoolers – Tues. at 10:30am Pajamarama – Fri. at 7pm. Free. Info: 781-273-3871.

Barefoot Books

Fri. & Sat. 10:30am, ages 2 & up. Sun. 2pm, ages 5 & up. (Offered once per month – call for date). 1771 Mass. Ave., Camb. A fun hour of age-appropriate stories. Coloring and refreshments too! Free. Info: 617-349-1610.



Harvard Coop

11am every Tues. & Sat. 1400 Mass. Ave., Camb. Join us for our preschool story hour with snack and craft on the Lower Level. Free. Info: 617-499-2000.

Henry Bear's Park

Thurs. 11am at Arl. & Camb. locations. Ages 3-6. Free. 685 Mass. Ave., Arl. Info: 781-646-9400. 361 Huron Ave., Camb. Info: 617-547-8424.

Pottery Barn Kids

11:30am daily. Check store for details. Free. Pottery Barn Kids, Burlington Mall, Burlington. Info: 781-221-5833.

Other Arlington Fun Stuff

UPDATE! Arlington Boys & Girls Club

60 Pond Ln., Arl. *Summer family swims thru August 25 for members and immediate family: Thursdays from 7-7:45pm. \$6/family.* The Boys & Girls Club offers a variety of programs for children ages 6 mo. & up from swimming to tumbling and more. \$20/annual child membership, plus fee for ea. program. Info: 781-648-1617, <http://www.abgclub.org>

NEW! Arlington Center for the Arts Summer Programs

41 Foster St., E. Arl. One-week summer sessions. 8:30am- 3:30pm daily, with optional extended day until 6pm. Each week, kids will paint, sculpt, sing, and more, focusing on fun themes, including: The Ocean Blue; Dragons and Such; Anamalia; Where in the World; Kid Lit; Sun, Moon and Stars; Mexico; The Circus; and African Rainforest. Ages 5-11. \$245/week for ACA members, \$265/week for non-members. Info: 781-648-6220, <http://www.acarts.org>

NEW! Henry Bears Park Kidtivity Events

Every Tues. 11am-1pm and Thurs. 3-5pm in July. Henry Bears Park, 685 Mass. Ave., Arl. Classes give kids something crafty and fun to do all summer long. Ages 4 & up. \$5-\$8. Registration required. Info: 781-646-9400, <http://www.henrybear.com>

UPDATE! Puddlestompers Playgroup

Monday and Friday drop-in toddler and pre-school playgroups and outings. Mondays Playgroup 10:30am-12:30pm. Meets at various local playgrounds and takes occasional fieldtrips. To join the group's email list, contact 781-641-0944, JulieLucey@comcast.net Fridays Outings, 10am-2pm. Weekly outings will be planned throughout the summer. Trips will generally be limited to within a ½ hour from Arl. (e.g. Walden Pond, Decordova Sculpture Garden, etc.). To join the group's email list, contact Nina at nina@matchups.com

UPDATE! Reservoir Beach,

Lowell St., Arl. Open until Aug. 28. Hours: July – 10am-8pm daily; Aug. – 10am-7pm daily. The beach provides: lifeguards on duty, a clean sandy beach area, filtered, chlorinated, and aerated water, daily water quality testing, bathrooms, changing area, and outdoor

showers. Also vending machines and picnic tables. Enjoy a stroll along the walking trails, bird watching, or fishing. Free parking. Season Passes for Arl. residents: \$35/adult, \$20/child (ages 1-17). Family season passes for Arl. residents: \$100 for 2 adults, 2 children + \$10 for each additional child. (Season passes available to non-residents for a higher fee.) Daily passes: \$4/day (Mon-Fri), \$6/day (weekends & holidays). Purchase season passes at Arlington Rec. Office, 422 Summer St., 781-316-3880.

Arlington Rec. Dept.

Each season, the Arl. Rec. Dept. offers a number of programs for small children, including indoor gym playtime, arts & crafts, gymnastics, sports, and yoga. 422 Summer St., Arl. Info: 781-316-3880, http://www.town.Arlington.ma.us/Public/Documents/ArlingtonMA_Recreation/index

Art Beat Weekend Workshops

Weekday drop-in program until Sept. 2. Different themed craft each week, focusing on world cultures. \$10-20/project. Sat. drop-in from 3-6pm continues throughout the summer. Ages 4 & up. 212-A Mass Ave., Arl. Info: 781-646-2200, <http://www.artbeatonline.com>



Capitol Theater Movies for caregivers with babies.

Mon., new movie chosen weekly starting between 1-2pm, \$4.50/adult. Nursing, bottle feeding, fussing, and

changing diapers is strongly encouraged and never frowned upon! 204 Mass Ave., Arl. Info: 781-648-6022. To join the email list send an email to

BabyFriendlyMovies-subscribe@yahoogroups.com; or visit <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/BabyFriendlyMovies>; for this week's movie visit <http://www.somervilletheatreonline.com>

Fidelity House

25 Medford St., Arl. Offers one-week summer camp programs for preschool, kindergarten and older kids. Info: 781-648-2005, <http://www.fidelityhouse.org>

Puddlestompers Nature Classes

Outdoor nature program for ages 2 to 5. Check the Web site for a summer schedule of 2, 4-week sessions. A portion of tuition is donated to Arl. conservation and open space organizations. Info: 781-449-0776, <http://www.puddlestompers.com>

Thompson Spray Pool

Thompson School, N. Union St., E. Arl. Open until Aug. 28, 9am-7pm daily. Weather permitting. Free. Adjacent to

fun playground. *Note: NO bathroom facilities.* Info: 781-316-3880.

Beyond Arlington

Open for Season! Beaver Brook Spray Park

Trapelo Rd., Belmont. Daily 10am-5:30pm. Ideal for toddlers through age 5 years. There are swings, slides and climbing structures. The primary attraction on hot summer days, however, is the 'Spray Pool' - a nifty area with water spraying out of ground vents with boulders for kids to climb over. There is a lifeguard on duty and restrooms on site. Info: 617-626-1250.

George's Island Family Activities George's Island, Boston.

Family Fun Days every weekend thru Labor Day, 10am-4pm. Educational and outdoor programs may include naturalist walks, live music, craft activities, and more. Refer to their Web site for program descriptions. Ages 2 & up. Free.
Boston Children's Theater Performances every Fri. until Labor Day, 12pm & 1:30pm shows. Free. Ages 4 & up. Refer to Web site for show schedule.

Ferry service to the island is available from Long Wharf from 10am-5pm, \$8/adult, \$6/child 4-12, free/under 4. Family and group discounts available. Info: 617-727-7676,
http://www.bostonislands.com/isle_georges.html

Babes in the Woods

Tues. 10am. Middlesex Fells. Strolls and hikes through the park. Free. Info: 781-396-8994,
<http://www.fells.org/babes.html>

Kids Playground

15 Normac Rd, Woburn. Indoor playground with play space, tubes & tunnels, mini golf, interactive village and more. Info: 781-935-2300,
<http://www.kidsplayground.com>

Memorial Drive Sundays

Every Sun. through Nov. 13, Memorial Dr. in Cambridge is closed to traffic 11am-7pm. Bring your bike (tricycle, trail-a-bike...), stroller, rollerskates, scooter, running shoes or walking feet to take advantage of this magnificent parkway along the Charles River.

Michaels Imagination Saturdays

Sat. 10am-12pm. Michaels Arts & Crafts, 34 Cambridge St., Burlington. Different craft each week. Ages 5-10. \$2/child. Info: 781-229-7592,
<http://www.michaels.com>

Puppet Showplace Theatre

32 Station St., Brookline. Wed. & Thurs. 10:30am & 1pm shows. Recommended for age 3 & up. Age appropriateness varies per show. \$7/members, \$8.50/non-members. Info: 617-731-6400,
<http://www.puppetshowplace.org>

Rattle at the Brattle, baby-friendly film series. Wed. afternoons 1-3pm, 40 Brattle St., Harvard Sq., Cambridge. Free. Film schedule only available at box office or by joining the email list. 617-876-6837. For more info or to join the list:
parents@brattlefilm.org

Local Attractions

NEW! Davis' Farmland

9:30am-4pm, 7 days a week thru Sept. 5 (closes for inclement weather). 145 Redstone Hill, Sterling. Feed farm animals, cool off in the play & spray, also hayrides and pony rides. Info: 978-422-6666, <http://www.davisfarmland.com>

The Butterfly Place

120 Tyngsboro Rd., Westford. A large, warm atrium containing up to 500 butterflies (representing up to 50 species from around the world) and filled with colorful plants and shrubs on which the butterflies feed and reproduce. Come walk amongst the butterflies and see them up close! Info: 978-392-0955,
<http://www.butterflyplace-ma.com>

Children's Discovery Museum

177 Main St., Acton. A Victorian house with rooms, corridors, and closets creatively transformed into ten hands-on exhibit areas. Ages 6 & under. Check their calendar for many special programs. \$8/Person; Free/under 1. Info: 978-264-4200,
<http://www.discoverymuseums.org>

Drumlin Farm Wildlife Sanctuary

208 S. Great Rd, Lincoln. Explore the fields and forest and visit the farmyard. Weekly programs for kids. Closed non-holiday Mondays. Members free, \$6/Non-member adult, \$4/Non-member ages 3-12. Info: 781-259-2200,
http://www.massaudubon.org/Nature_Connection/Sanctuaries/Drumlin_Farm

Ecotarium

222 Harrington Way, Worcester. Nurture young children's curiosity and wonder with hands-on exploration of real things. Monthly family preschool programs. Members free, \$8/Non-member adult, \$6/Non-member ages 3-18. Explorer Express Train ride, \$2.50/person. Info: 508-929-2700, <http://www.ecotarium.org>

Habitat Wildlife Sanctuary

10 Juniper Rd, Belmont. Monthly Sat. nature walks with stories and crafts for ages 3-4 w/adult. Trails wind through forests, across meadows, around 2 ponds, and wetlands. Fun programs for kids including storyhours. Members free, \$4/Non-member adult, \$3/Non-member child. Info: 617-489-5050,
http://www.massaudubon.org/Nature_Connection/Sanctuaries/Habitat

Harvard Museum of Natural History

26 Oxford St, Cambridge. Summer science camps for kids ages preschool-5th grade. Discover dinosaurs, wildlife and insects; explore oceans; investigate artifacts and more! 1 week programs run in July and Aug. \$120/non-members, \$108/members. Registration and info: 617-495-3045,
<http://www.hmn.harvard.edu>

National Heritage Museum

33 Marrett Rd., Rt. 2A, Lexington. Great monthly programs for kids and families including storytimes with crafts and family programs. Info: 781-861-6559,
<http://www.monh.org>

Southwick's Zoo

10am-5pm, 7 days a week. 2 Southwick St., Mendon. About an hour from Arlington but worth the trip! Info: 800-258-9182, <http://www.southwickzoo.com>

The Stone Zoo

149 Pond St., Stoneham. Small local zoo, with a petting barnyard, playground, and lots of animal exhibits. Great for young children! \$7/Adult, \$4.50/Ages 2-15. Info: 617-541-5466,
<http://www.zoonewengland.com>

Swan Boats, Boston Public Garden

Open until Labor Day, 10am-5pm daily (weather permitting). \$2.50/adult, \$1/child (2-15). Info: 617-522-1966,
<http://www.swanboats.com>

Seminars

Effective Parenting

Ongoing. Groups forming continually for 4 weekly, 2 hour evening or weekend sessions in Arl. A parenting workshop designed for parents of children birth to 3 yrs. Led by a seasoned mom and skilled facilitator, this small and highly interactive group will explore different parenting topics each week. \$120/person, \$160/couple. Info: Melissa Lucius, 781-641-4284, email parenting@rcn.com or <http://www.effective-parenting.org>

Benefits

Kans for Kids

Sat. Aug. 6, 10am–1pm. Gibbs School on Tufts St., Arl. Donate clean returnable bottles and cans to benefit Arl. Rec. Youth Activities. Info: 781-316-3880.

UPDATE! PTO Thrift Shop for the Arl. Public Schools *Note: the shop will be closed July 6 & 7.* Wed. 4-8pm, Thurs. 9:30am-1pm, 2nd Sat. of the month 12:30-5pm. Basement of the Fox Library at 175 Mass. Ave., E. Arl. Gently-used clothing for all ages, toys, books, housewares and more. Volunteers needed during store hours and for donation processing. Info: 781-483-3433, <http://www.ptothriftshop.com>

Groups

Arlington Fathers' Group

Tues. 7:30-9pm. Sponsored by Parents Helping Parents. Free support group for fathers who are feeling isolated, overwhelmed, or concerned about their anger toward their children. For location & information, call 800-882-1250.

Belmont Food Allergy & Asthma Support Group

A group of parents who meet monthly to discuss and advocate for the issues that arise when you have children living

with food allergies and asthma. Info: Theresa Normile, Tnormile@foodallergyfacts.com or 617-489-6668.

Grandparents' Support Group

Second Tues. of the month, 12-1:30pm. For grandparents who are primary caretakers of their grandchildren. Free, sponsored by the Town of Arl. Info: 781-316-3410.

La Leche League

An int'l, nonprofit, organization dedicated to providing education, information, support, and encouragement to breastfeeding women. Arl. meetings at Fox Library, 175 Mass. Ave. at 7:30pm on the 1st Tues. of ea. month (pregnant women & nursing moms) and the 1st Thurs. of ea. month (moms of nursing toddlers). One morning meeting is held in Camb. on 2nd Thurs. of the month at 10am, call for location. Free. Info: Heather 781-648-2988, <http://home.comcast.net/~jrsladkey/ll/in dex.html> Neighboring towns also have leagues with monthly meetings. Refer to <http://www.llusa.org/MARIVT/Massachusetts.html> for a listing of Mass. Leagues.

New Mothers' Drop-in Group

Fri. 10-11:30am, Calvary United Methodist Church, 300 Mass Ave., Arl. Free, nonsectarian, facilitated group. All

new parents are welcome with their babies. Sponsored by Jewish Family & Children's Svcs. Info: 617-558-1278.

New Mothers' Drop-in Group

Every other Tues. (7/5, 7/19), 9:30-11am, Henry Bear's Park, 685 Mass Ave., Arl. Free, informal drop-in group for new mothers with infants. Info: 781-646-9400.

New Mothers' Group

Tues. 10-11:30am, Beth Israel Deaconess & Children's Hospital Medical Care Ctr., 482 Bedford St., Lexington. Free, group meets for 8 weeks. To register or for more info, call Kristin Hicks at 617-667-2229.

Nursing Mothers' Group

Wed. at 1:30pm. Baldwin Park I, 12 Alfred St., Woburn. Drop-in. All breastfeeding mothers & babies welcome. Meet other moms and have your breastfeeding questions answered by a certified lactation consultant. \$2 donation suggested. Info: 781-756-4788, <http://www.winchesterhospital.org/>

Older First-time Moms' Group

Third Wed. of every month, 7-8:30pm. Fox Library, 175 Mass. Ave. Arl. Social and support discussion group for first-time moms in their late 30's & 40's in the Boston area. Free. \$1 donation suggested. Info: 781-674-2029.



AFC families enjoyed outings to Chip-In Farm, above, and Parallel Park, right.



AFC Membership/Renewal Form



New Member **Renewal** **Date:**

School District (circle for geographic location):

Name(s):

Bishop Brackett Dallin Hardy
Peirce Stratton Thompson Out of town

Address:

Zip:

Areas of Interest:

E-mails:

Events/Parties New Parent Outreach Seminars
Newsletter Outings with kids Web site
Playgroups Outings without kids Other

Phone:

Please list your children:

Membership Dues *All memberships renew in September*

Name **Gender** **Date of Birth**

One-year membership \$20 (joining July-January)
 Mid-year discounted membership \$10 (joining Feb-June)
 Send a gift membership (\$10 or \$20) to the following:

Please circle all that apply:

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

Please make check payable to **Arlington Family Connection** and mail with this form to:

I am: Employed full time Stay at home parent
Employed part time Other

Arlington Family Connection
P O Box 150
Arlington MA 02476

Newsletter delivery preferences:

US Mail Email Both

For information contact Ruth Schmidt at (781)643-2362 or membership@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org

Make some Kindergarten Connections

If you have a child starting kindergarten in the fall and you are interested in meeting the families of other children entering kindergarten in your school district (or at your chosen private school), contact the following people who have volunteered to coordinate get-togethers for your school. Get-togethers will be starting soon.

- Bishop:** Karen Donovan, 781-777-1011 or dorankaren@comcast.net
- Brackett:** Amy Bledsoe, 617-852-3293 or amybledsoe@rcn.com
- Dallin:** Lizzie Casanave, 781-643-8614 or ecasanave@hotmail.com
- Hardy:** Katherine Shao, 510-301-7915 (c) or kshao@earthlink.net
- Peirce:** Lisa Carlson Hill lcarlsonhill@hotmail.com and Jessica Callaghan, 781-648-1798 or ojcallaghan@comcast.net
- Stratton:** Marian Tomusiak 781-646-0845 or mtomusiak@verizon.net
- Thompson:** Sarah Huber, 781-643-7804 or parkesarah@verizon.net

A Kindergarten Connections volunteer is still needed for **St. Agnes** School, as well as any other private schools. If you have a child entering any of these schools in the fall and would like to help other families meet one another, please consider being the contact person for your school. The job has traditionally involved organizing "meet at the playground" events for families, but it is not limited to that; do whatever you are interested in!

For questions or to volunteer, please contact Karen Donovan at webmaster@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org or (781)-777-1011.

Arlington Family Connection
PO Box 150
Arlington, MA 02476

July, 2005

Save the Dates!

Thursday, July 7

AFC Book Club

Meets first Thurs. of every month. For more info contact Trish Richardson at richardson_728@hotmail.com. This month's book is *Little Children* by Tom Perrotta. *Note: There will be no August meeting.*



Tuesday, July 12

AFC Steering Committee Meeting

7:30pm. Open to all members. For the meeting's location, contact Ruth Schmidt at 781-643-2362 or info@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org

Sunday, July 17

Circus Smirkus 2005 'Pinocchio'

11am, Middlesex School, Concord. Join other AFC families for the only touring Youth circus in the country (<http://www.circussmirkus.org>). Tickets are \$16/person for all ages.

AFC's tickets for this show are sold out, but you can purchase tickets on your own at Catch a Falling Star toy stores in Lexington and Winchester. Refer to <http://www.circussmirkus.org/> or call 800-532-7443 for additional regional show dates and times.

Wednesday, July 20

AFC Playground Fun!

10-11:30am (rain date Fri. July 22). Skyline Park, Eastern Ave., Arl. Join other AFC families in a series of monthly playground fun with special surprises for the little ones! Info: contact Jeanne at 781-643-6212 or outings@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org

Working Moms Group

Note: The Working Moms Group will not have its usual Saturday meeting in July or in August. We are planning a cookout / pot luck get together later in July. More details will be sent out through the AFC e-Bulletin Board.

For questions or to join the mailing list, please contact Wendy at workingmoms@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org or call 781-648-2341.

Friday, August 5

AFC'S 4th Annual

"Pizza at the Playground"

5:30-7:30 pm, bring your family and friends to Parallel Playground (Medford St. at the Mystic Valley Pkwy. Rotary) for free pizza, playground fun, and to meet other AFC members. This is also a good opportunity to renew your AFC membership. RSVP with # kids and adults attending, and dietary restrictions (i.e. no dairy, etc.) to Amy at outings@arlingtonfamilyconnection.org or 781-646-5417. (Rain date: Fri., Aug. 12)