

# DCEC BUZZ

## Summer Comes to an End

With the start of a new school year, another fun-filled and exciting summer comes to a close at Day Care. Many exciting things happened this summer and many field trips were taken, so lets take the time to look back on some of the highlights for the summer.

### Field Trip Process

Each room is allotted two field trips per month of their choice. The lead teacher or group leader of the room is in charge of both deciding on the field trip and making all of the arrangements. After a field trip is chosen, a form goes through the front office through either Brian or James. They examine the form and decide if the trip is well planned and if there is adequate funding for the trip. Once the trip is ap-

proved, the organizer then arranges transportation and makes any necessary admission or ticket purchases.

### Beaver Field Trips

The newsletter staff has taken the liberty of talking to each of the lead teachers and group leaders about their most enjoyable summer trip. After talking with them and some other Beaver staff, it was pretty much unanimous. The field trip to the Birdland Pool was voted the trip of choice by a majority of staff. Tina, the Lead Teacher of the Go-Getters stated, "The kids had the most fun at the pool." Jennifer of the Wee-Ones also added, "I thought



Some Go-Getters enjoy a carousel ride on a recent outing.

it was best for the babies because of all of the one-on-one contact."

Another note-worthy aspect of this trip is that it is all available on DVD. With the help of a multi-media assistant, the whole outing was captured on video and on photographs. The video clips and photos were then edited into DVD format,  
*(Cont. p4)*

### Editors:

Copy Editor: Craig Kaufman  
Pub. Editor: Julie Coltrain

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### Current Board Issues

- ☺ County rate increases.
- ☺ Capital Expenditures/ Day Care improvement projects.
- ☺ Fundraising/ Fund Development.

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## Staff Member Receives Award

On July 15th, 2003 the Central Iowa Child Care Council announced its winner for the Child Care Provider of the Year for 2002. This years winner is Day Care's own Jennifer Stark. Stark is

the Lead Teacher of the Wee-Ones and she received the award a few days prior to the 15th. A luncheon was held, and Stark was officially presented with the award.

Nominations for the award came from Day Care's around the  
*(cont. p2)*



Stark with Kristy Vilsack

## Fundraising Continues for Day Care

Last issue, a story ran about the newly designed playground for the Beaver Center. On top of that, there are several other projects that have been completed or are currently in the works.

Recently, the roof at the Beaver Center was replaced. The cost of this, combined with the playground expense, a new furnace that is required at Woodland and other miscellaneous upgrades that need to be made at both centers, add up very fast. According to James Cahill, the projected combined cost of these repairs and upgrades comes to around \$133,000.

What exactly is being done about this large sum? A few months ago letters were sent to a number of

businesses and organizations in the area in an attempt to find grant money that is available to help for projects of this nature. More than ten letters were sent out so far by Day Care explaining our situation and asking for whatever help we could receive. Recently, we have received commitment from some organizations and are growing closer to reaching our goal. Here is a breakdown of some of our recent donations:

Variety Children's Charity	\$40,000
Mid Iowa Health Foundation	\$ 7,500
Parrothead Club	\$ 1,700
American Legion Foundation	\$ 500
<hr/>	
Total	\$49,700

This is a significant amount of money and Day Care is very thankful for all donations received so far. However, we are still working on more ways to meet our goal. Other fundraising ideas are currently in the works along with more letters being sent out every day.

If you would like to make a contribution of any sort, private donations are always appreciated. If you would like to make a tax deductible donation please contact James Cahill at the Woodland center at 280-5332.

## Stark Wins Award (Cont.)

Central Iowa Region. Providers were nominated by their administrators and Stark was nominated by Day Care for Exceptional Children's administrators. "She is a hard working, dedicated individual who doesn't go out of her way to seek

recognition, rather she goes out of her way to look out for the best interest of her clients," stated James Cahill, the Director for both centers.

When interviewing Stark she answered that she was, "Surprised and excited to be receiving the award. I

was also humbled and given another reason to continue doing my best."

Stark can be seen in action everyday at the Beaver Center. When observing her work it is obvious why she was the top choice for this award.

## Staff Focus-Julie Coltrain

My name is Julie Coltrain and I'm the Lead Teacher of the Rainbow Room. I have worked at Daycare for almost 7 years now and have enjoyed every day.

I was born in Honolulu, Hawaii then moved to Lafayette, Louisiana. I spent 7 years there and then moved to Iowa when I was 11. I met my husband Mike shortly after that. We got to know each other over the years and now we have now been married almost a year. We have a beautiful 5 month old daughter named Josie, who is the light of my

life.

I graduated from Urbandale High School in 1997 and attended

both DMACC and Upper Iowa. My hobbies include: reading to Josie, fishing, camping, and shopping. Other places where I have been employed are Maid



Rite, Des Moines Desserts, and Drake Head Start. The thing I enjoy most about this job is seeing children that I knew in the Wee Ones when I first started now come to the Rainbow Room. I love watching them grow. It is also such a great feeling to know you make a difference in someone else's life. This job is such a big part of my life and I can't imagine being this content and happy anywhere else.

# New Dress Code Makes Changes at DCEC

On July 9th of 2003 Board Members of Day Care For Exceptional Children implemented a new dress code policy for all staff members. All staff members are now required to wear a shirt with a Day Care logo and appropriate pants or shorts.

## Reason For Change

In a conversation with James Cahill, director and head of the administration at Day Care, he stated that there were many reasons for the change. One of the biggest reasons was, "The new dress code will allow parents to identify staff better and give the organization a more professional look." Another reason for the change is that it allows staff to have a set wardrobe for work so there is less question and less worry

about staff wearing their own clothes. Brian Fett, assistant administrator at the Beaver Center feels that one of the advantages to it is that it, "Puts our shirts in the public eye, hopefully making our logo more identifiable to the general public."

Staff reactions to the change have been mixed. Most of the staff feel that it is a good change, while others understand the change but miss having the freedom of wearing their own clothes. Fett feels that, "The dress code is meeting its intended purpose, but we will continue to find new ways to make staff members look more professional and to make a larger variety of options available to staff." However you look at it, the look of the Day Care

is forever changed.

## Outing Shirts

A new component to this years field trip dress code is the addition of outing t-shirts. The shirts were purchased with dollars that were budgeted before the end of the last fiscal year. The shirts feature the Day Care logo on the front and are brightly colored to allow clients to stand out in crowded areas. All staff and clients are now required to wear outing shirts on all field trips.

## News Briefs

### DCEC Staff Attends Retreat

Day Care Staff Members Attended a Retreat on September 16th at the Botanical Center. Motivational speaker Steve Siemens led the workshop that focused on many relevant topics.

### Woodland Center Gets A Facelift

Be on the lookout for some newly painted rooms at the Woodland Center! Painting began in September and will continue throughout the school year.

### Daycare Has a New Secretary

Congratulations to Julie Rouse on being named the new Day Care secretary.

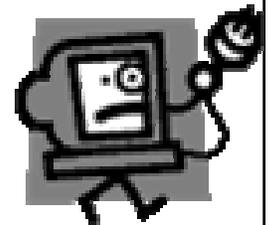
### Governor Names October Iowa Learning Disabilities Month

October has now been declared Iowa Learning Disabilities Awareness Month. Several staff and clients attended the signing ceremony on Sept. 23 at the Capital.

**Special thanks...** to all of you who have returned your September forms.

### Daycare Receives Computer Donation

Day Care for Exceptional received a computer donation from the Iowa Clinic. Six full computers were received at the beginning of the summer months and are currently up an running in the classrooms. A special thanks to the Day Care staff, Board Members and Iowa Clinic Employees who made the donation possible.



## What to Watch For...

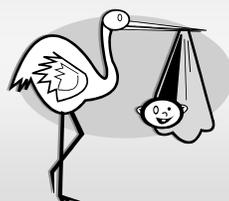
**October 15** 90 min early dismissal

**October 16** No school

**October 17** No school

**October 31** Day Care Halloween party

**Congratulations to Jenny and Mitch Brown on the birth of a new baby girl on June 30, 2003**



### Special Thanks...

To all Parents, clients and staff who participated in the Beavertdale Fall Festival and parade.





Woodland Center  
641 24th Street  
Des Moines, IA 50312  
Ph: 280-5332  
Fax: 280-5446

Beaver Center  
2217 Beaver  
Des Moines, IA 50310  
Ph: 274-2831  
Fax: 274-3178

**T**O PROVIDE DAY CARE SERVICES TO PHYSICALLY AND MENTALLY CHALLENGED CHILDREN IN ORDER FOR THEM TO REMAIN IN THE FAMILY/HOME SETTING.



## Summer Comes to an End (Cont.)

and are available to any parent who is interested.

### Woodland Field Trips

Woodland has also had some exciting experiences this summer, but due to the number of clients at Woodland it is nearly impossible to take the entire center on one trip, so we talked to each group individually. Nasha of the Rainbow Rooms said that her favorite field trip was Chuckie Cheese because, "The kids were all really good and they had fun. On top of that the staff to kid ratio made it easier to keep track of everyone."

This year the Super Stars group was divided up into three rooms instead of two. When asked, Shanna, Group Leader of the Jungle Room stated that she enjoyed their trip to the Clive Aquatic Center because, "The kids had fun, and it was something new that everyone

worked hard for." Kristin of the Desert Room enjoyed the roller skating trip because, "The kids had a good time, plus it was fun to watch." Stephanie of the Ocean Room chose the Science Center of Iowa stating, "The kids liked it because of all the hands on activities and exhibits."

As for the Social Living Group their favorite trip was Adventureland because it allowed both clients and staff a little time to act like kids again. The group was also well behaved and knew that it was a privilege to be there.

### Advice from the Staff

After talking with all the groups, the newsletter staff has come up with this list of advice to future field trip planners:

1. Make sure to have lots of staff.
2. WEAR SUNBLOCK!!!

3. Have hands on stuff for the kids to do.
4. Ask the kids what they want to do.
5. Bring extra clothes.
6. Have lots of everything!
7. Take the time to plan.
8. Allow plenty of time (it takes at least 15 minutes to load a bus on a good day).

### Wrap up

All in all, it has been a very successful summer that included many new and exciting experiences both for the kids, and the staff. There were many stressful times, but the rewards were obvious in the smiles of the children.