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Letter from the publisher

Art is for everyone

We received responses from readers this month commenting about trash and littering around the city. I was pleased to see that so many people support my contention that we need to create urgency about the condition of



our streets. Apparently many of you have clean-up teams going strong in your own neighborhoods and I loved hearing from you about this and hope more of you will contact me with your thoughts.

This May Issue has an annual focus about Arts for Kids and the importance of introducing children early in life to any or all branches of the arts. There is no doubt that exposure and participation in music, theater, dance,

or fine art helps imaginations soar, enhances the child's academic performance and contributes strongly to the future growth of a well rounded person.

Having been myself, both a performer and teacher of performance, married to a musician,

the daughter of a singer and a designer, my personal exposure came from the beginning. Other children may have been sung to sleep with a lullaby but for me it was a Verdi aria.

Music was and is a constant in our home. My daughter has grown up with classical music, jazz, opera, world music, R & B, and classic rock from the beginning. Being exposed to it always, she has come to appre-

ciate all of it and I fully believe that someday as a mature adult, she will choose of her own volition to turn on Bach or Puccini, or listen to Ravi Shankar or Flamenco. We have always gone to museums and the walls of our home are adorned with art and photographs and we regularly go to plays and concerts.

I signed her up for dance when she was little and she went on to do it happily for years. The love of the arts is there, deep and solid and there is great respect for those who make art and are thus enhancing our experience here on our planet earth through their work.

Art is universal and there is no culture that doesn't do art of some kind, although there are cultures where it is so natural a part of everyone's reality that they have no word for it. It is just what everyone does.

When visiting the island of Bali, for example, one finds this surprising but charming truth.

We are brought together through these truths and whether making music together, or creating a mural, or watching a film in a foreign language from a cultural reality far away, we discover the links of a chain that binds our humanity and takes away the strange part of being strangers.

Make sure you and your kids are involved. Dance together and sing and make sure they are given a chance to express their unique inner selves.

Thanks for reading.

Susan Weiss-Voskidis, Publisher
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Miracle moms

How these women survived life-threatening labors

BY SANDRA GORDON

When you're expecting a baby, you do what you can to take control of the experience. You go to your ob-gyn appointments and childbirth classes, take prenatal vitamins, and try to eat a healthy diet. Still, there's always that feeling that Mother Nature's really the one in charge, and you're just along for the wild ride. Ever wonder what you'd do if your pregnancy or labor suddenly took a surprising turn? That's what happened to these three women, who were forced to call upon reservoirs of strength and resourcefulness they never knew they had in order to bring their babies into the world.

Babies in danger

"We nearly lost our twins."

— Jennifer Miller, 35

Two weeks before giving birth, Miller woke up in a puddle.

"I assumed my water had broken, so I called my doctor and went to the hospital," says the web designer.

There, though, Miller was told her water hadn't broken and she returned home, where she continued to leak fluid.

"I also felt like there was blood rushing through me. I could hear it pounding in my ears," she says.

Then, 10 days before her due date, Miller went into labor. At the hospital, she developed a 102-degree fever due to an uterine infection.

As it turned out, "I had been leaking amniotic fluid all along," she says. Consequently, even though the babies were in the right position to be born vaginally, Miller had an emergency C-section.

Baby Josie was born first; she weighed just 2 pounds, 12 ounces, and was followed by Anna,

who weighed 3 pounds, 15 ounces. Because of their size difference, the identical twins were easy to tell apart. Although Anna was the larger baby, "she was basically stillborn; she had an initial APGAR of 0 and she was bright red, but they were able to bring her back," Miller says.

After giving birth, Miller learned that she had an undiagnosed case of twin-to-twin transfusion syndrome, which is a complication specific to identical twins who each have their own amniotic sac but share a single placenta. With this syndrome, blood flow through the vessels in the placenta connecting the twins becomes unbalanced; one twin, the "donor," doesn't get enough blood while the larger twin, the "recipient," becomes overloaded with it.

In turn, the recipient twin increases the urine it makes to reduce its blood volume. That twin eventually has too much amniotic fluid. The donor twin produces too little urine and the amniotic fluid becomes very low or absent.

"They mentioned TTTS at the hospital to me once, but nobody talked to me about it," Miller says. Fortunately, after some initial developmental delays, Josie and Anna are now perfectly healthy 7-year-olds.

Life lesson: "Looking back, I dismissed a lot of things I shouldn't have, chalking them up to just having twins," says Miller. "Like the fact that I began feeling really uncomfortable and felt the constant rush of excess blood, which is a symptom of TTTS."

For more about twin-to-twin transfusion syndrome, visit www.tttsfoundation.org.

A deadly complication

"I survived a rare syndrome."

— Miranda Klassen, 33

When Klassen, a sales representative, was in labor with her first child, she had a seizure and went into cardiac arrest, which caused a temporary lack of blood flow to the baby because of her lack of oxygen. To



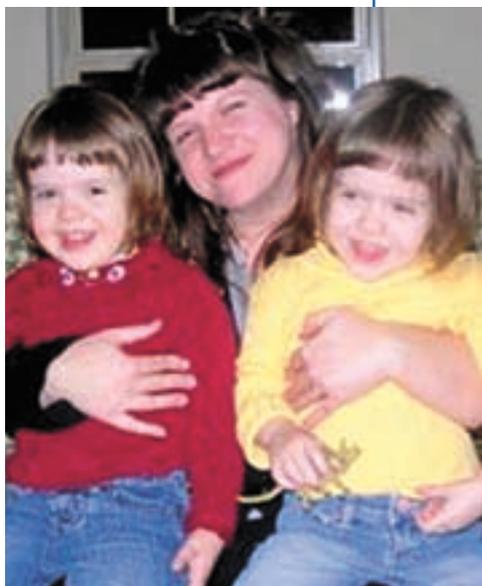
Mikala and Celia Vidal.

restore her heartbeat, her husband, Bryce, later told her that respiratory technicians administered chest compressions while her obstetrician performed an emergency C-section. Her baby, a boy, was delivered in just eight minutes. Yet, it took 10 minutes to resuscitate him. Would he be OK? It was too soon to tell.

While the baby was whisked to the hospital's neonatal intensive care unit, doctors put Klassen into a medically-induced coma to assess the situation. An electrocardiogram showed amniotic fluid in the chambers of her heart, indicating that she had suffered from an amniotic fluid embolism, an extremely rare complication that manifests in response to amniotic fluid entering the bloodstream during delivery, which is not unusual.

"But a very select few women have an anaphylactic-like reaction to the fluid, which causes life-threatening blood clots. I was one of them," Klassen says.

An amniotic fluid embolism can cause heart and lung collapse and excessive bleeding and clotting. Amniotic fluid embolism is an elusive syndrome with no known cause. The condition is estimated to affect one in 80,000 women during labor and when it happens, 80 percent of the women don't survive. Newborn mortality is 30 to 40 percent. Surviving mothers and babies can suffer serious compli-



Jennifer Miller and her girls.



The Klassen family

cations, such as brain and heart damage.

After Klassen's diagnosis, doctors performed intravenous surgery to place a filter just below her heart to catch any potential blood clots that could form and travel to her heart as a result of the embolism.

The filter, in fact, caught a large clot that would have otherwise killed her.

"It was so large that they weren't able to remove it, and it will be in me forever," Klassen says. "Over time, it's very likely that I will lose a lot of circulation in my legs as a result of it."

Nonetheless, she's glad to be

alive and to be there for Bryce and her baby, whom they named Van. He's now a completely healthy 4-year-old, meeting all of his developmental milestones.

Life lesson: After her near-death experience, Klassen started the AFE Foundation (<http://www.afe-support.org>), the first of its kind to educate women about amniotic fluid embolism and support families who have been affected.

"I'm going to take the blessing of having survived AFE and create a voice for people who can't," she says.

"Only five percent of people come out completely intact after AFE like my son and I have."

Wrong diagnosis

"I was a walking fish tank."
— Mikala Vidal, 28

When Vidal, a former public relations representative, was pregnant with her first child, she immediately began retaining so much water that almost every part of her body was bloated.

"At work, I joked that I was a walking fish tank. I had only one pair of shoes I could wear, and I could barely squeeze my arms and legs into my maternity clothes," Vidal says.

Her ob-gyn brushed it off.

"I was told, 'Some women just carry more water,'" recalled Vidal, so she shrugged it off, too. But six

weeks before her due date, Vidal noticed some spotting, so she went to the doctor. From there, she was hospitalized and diagnosed with preeclampsia (pregnancy-induced hypertension). After a few days in the hospital, she was induced, because she had also been leaking amniotic fluid.

"At one point during the labor, I felt a huge pain just under my rib cage. When I told the nurse, she said it was just a contraction, and it was time for my epidural. I didn't think it was a contraction, but then again, I had never had a baby before. So I got the epidural, and it did take away the pain," Vidal says. Ten hours later, she delivered a healthy baby girl, Celia, who weighed 5 pounds, 1 ounce.

"Preeclampsia goes away after the baby is born, so I should have been cured," Vidal says. But after her epidural wore off, she still had that excruciating rib-cage pain. "It turns out that my liver was failing, which was causing the pain, along with a few other organs. I had to be med-flighted to the intensive care unit at another hospital," Vidal says.

There, she was stabilized and diagnosed with a severe case of hemolysis syndrome — a breakdown of red blood cells — elevated liver enzymes, and a low blood platelet count.

"It presents like preeclampsia, but only gets worse after you deliver," Vidal says. Hemolysis syndrome occurs in less than one percent of all pregnancies, and mortality rates

are reported to be as high as 25 percent.

Life lesson: "At the ob-gyn's office, I just trusted the certified nurse midwife and never asked questions, which was a huge mistake. I knew retaining that much water wasn't normal. I realize the importance of being your own advocate and asking as many questions as possible about your health and the health of the baby," Vidal says.

For more information about hemolysis, visit www.aafp.org/afp/990901ap/829.html.

Sandra Gordon is a mom of two who writes about parenting, health, nutrition, and baby products for books, national magazines and websites. Visit her at www.sandrajordan.com.



MOMMY 101

ANGELICA SERADOVA

Patience required for motherhood



On my morning commute, I saw a woman trying to soothe her toddler as he cried and kicked while being strapped to his stroller. The mom kept her cool as her son continued to struggle with her. I should also mention that she had two other children with her, and one was an infant.

Most of the train riders gave her a cold stare, and, up until about eight months ago, I probably would have done the same. How dare she ride the subway during rush hour? Doesn't she know people are trying to get to work? This was my selfish, pre-baby way of thinking. It's funny how, for some people (ahem, me), it takes having a child to realize that the world, in fact, does not revolve around them. But this impatience with children was not limited to mass transit.

Truthfully, I've never really been too tolerant of them. I wasn't the girl who baby sat for the neighborhood kids, and I didn't "ooh and ah" when my friends started to have babies. Even now, a lot of my single friends worry obsessively about finding the right person to settle down with before "it's too late" to have kids. I never felt that way. Having

children, to me, was always something in the very distant future, and, although I was aware of my poor attitude, I vowed (and still do) that my children would always behave, especially in public! To say I had no patience with children is a huge understatement.

Babies teach us a lot of things even before they're born; compassion, joy, unconditional love, but your patience is challenged right around day three as a new parent. It's patience you need when breastfeeding isn't happening as naturally as you thought it would. Patience will get you through a rough patch of colic and sleepless nights, and you will definitely call on your patience when your baby spits up all over you when you're running late for work. Big smile.

Unfortunately, some people's patience runs a little thinner than others, and there will always be people who have a problem with your kid on the train, or at a restaurant, movie theatre, etc. I am patient with impatient people, because I am one. I have to remind myself of my new, calmer identity, at least for my daughter's sake. My mother has been telling me to work on it for years. She even bought me a cute little "Patience" rock, which I keep at my desk as a gentle reminder. And, yes, I rub it in moments of high stress. (Hey, whatever gets you through your day!) Funny, her patience isn't particularly great either...

That day on the train, I was able to do my small part in making a mom's day just a little easier. As she continued to struggle with her whiny kid and prepare the others to leave the train, I held the emergency exit door for her and gave her an empathetic smile. Sure, I was late for work, but it was the right thing to do for a fellow mom. So, as I held the door open and three more moms passed through with their strollers and small parade of kids, I bit my bottom lip, called on my patience, and just kept holding on.



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CHASING

Two determined

BY JENNY GRACE TORGERSON

For two kids with a passion for dance, nothing could stop them from realizing their dreams. Because of their spirit and dedication, these two, now in their early 20s, are dancing with one of the most prestigious — and competitive — dance companies in the city.

Paige Fraser

Many little girls grow up dreaming of becoming dancers. For Paige Fraser, that dream is a reality. Fraser is a member of the Ailey II dance company, affiliated with the prestigious Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre. After beginning her dance training at the age of 4, Fraser spent 12 years in serious study, which led to a spot in the Alvin Ailey high school program.

"It was a great experience and a huge privilege," says Fraser, now 21. That led to a chance for Fraser to study further with the Alvin Ailey company while pursuing her degree at Fordham University, where she is currently a senior. In 2010, Fraser was one of 12 dancers selected out of the Ailey School's 1,500 to join the Ailey II company.

However, Fraser's dream of becoming a professional dancer almost turned into a nightmare. At the age of 12, the Eastchester Bronx native was diagnosed with scoliosis, which severely affects the alignment of her spine and pelvis. After being urged by several doctors to undergo corrective sur-

gery that would effectively end her dream of becoming a professional dancer, Fraser and her parents made the pivotal decision to forgo. Instead, through yoga and gyrotonics (which is a form of pilates-like exercise involving machinery), Fraser built up strength in her core muscles and managed to all but correct her scoliosis.

"People see me today, and they don't believe I have scoliosis," says Fraser. "It's a blessing that I am still pursuing a career in dance."

And today, Fraser is focused on dance and her studies. Although she enjoys modeling and musical theatre, she says "dance is my main passion and has to have all of my attention." That focus has certainly paid off.

In 2010, Fraser had the honor of performing in Alvin Ailey's "Memoria" in celebration of the compa-



THEIR DREAMS

Ailey dancers share their stories

ny's 50th anniversary. Over the past year, Fraser has performed across Europe, in 35 U.S. cities, and on the island of Bermuda. This year, she will be dancing leading roles in Thang Dao's "Echoes," Troy Powell's "Reference Point," and Donald Byrd's "Shards," all with Ailey II. Someday, Fraser would love to be a part of the main Ailey company.

Fraser's advice for others aspiring to follow in her dancing footsteps is to remember to "never settle for someone else's opinion, and to believe in yourself and never give up."

Thomas Varvaro

Growing up in Marine Park, Brooklyn, dance was not on Thomas Varvaro's mind. As an avid sports enthusiast, Varvaro's dreams revolved around baseball and karate. So, when his mother initially suggested he take up dance, Varvaro balked.



"I thought it was too girly," says the now 22-year-old. But his mother saw through his hesitation to his desire to perform and insisted he try. At age 8, Varvaro took his first dance class, and his career as a dancer was born.

After his initial training, Varvaro took a trip with his mother to see the American Ballet Academy perform a production of "A Midsummer Night's Dream," and he knew he was on the right path.

"It really made it obvious to me that this is what I should be doing," remembers Varvaro. After that pivotal moment, Varvaro went on to earn a place at Bay Academy, a former performing arts magnet school, where his teachers realized his exceptional potential. At the faculty's urging, Varvaro auditioned for, and landed, a space in the Ailey Athletic Boys Dance Program, where his technique grew.

Varvaro felt from the beginning that the Ailey school was welcoming to him and his family, and he felt at home there.

"The faculty took the time to get to know me and help me," he says.

With their support, Varvaro went on to study at LaGuardia Performing Arts High School, where he honed his classical ballet technique through a joint program with the School of American Ballet. At the end of his senior year, his hours of training really paid off. He chose to return to Ailey and its Bachelor of Fine Arts program. From there, the prestigious — and immensely competitive — Ailey II company asked Varvaro to become an apprentice.

For Varvaro, it was "a dream come true to join the company." As a young dancer, he had collected Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre posters and fliers and dreamed of someday dancing with them. While apprenticing with Ailey II, Varvaro would sit in on rehearsals, watch the dancers, and happily soak up every moment of the experience.

Now a full-fledged member of Ailey II, dance has taken Varvaro to places he only ever dreamed of visiting. As an apprentice, he spent a summer dancing in Paris, and last season, he toured with the company throughout Europe and across the United States. After this season in New York, Varvaro will be traveling with the company to Germany, Poland, and Luxembourg.

"Dance has taught me that you really can live your dream; with dedication it's possible," says Varvaro. And he hasn't stopped dreaming. After his time in Ailey II is over, Varvaro hopes to join the main Ailey company, or possibly dance with Cirque du Soleil, then get a Master's degree and teach dance to other dreamers.



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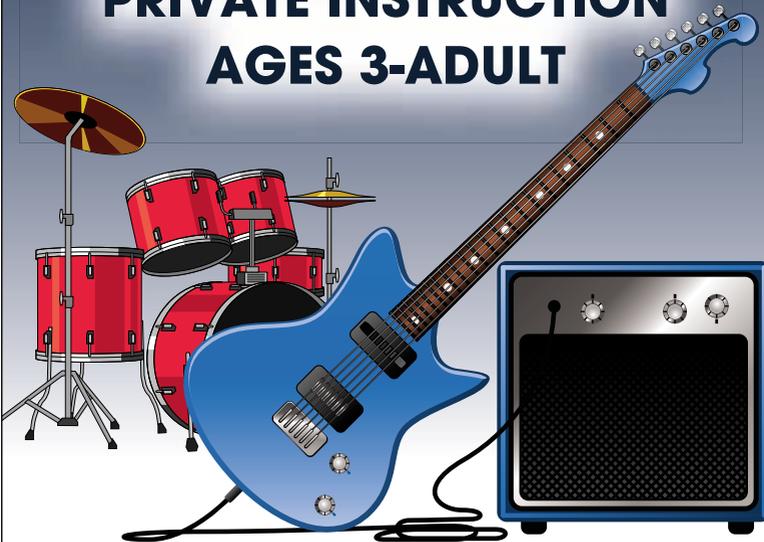
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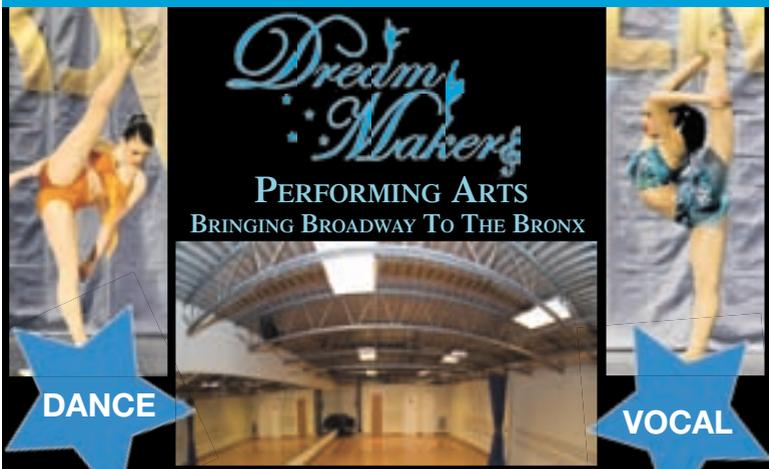
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City kids play together in perfect ‘Harmony’

Under-served elementary students are developing their musical talents

BY LAURA VAROSCAK-DEINNOCENTIIS

An organization is developing the musical talents of young New York City students who would not ordinarily be exposed to music education.

The Harmony Program provides free music education to elementary students in select public schools. Children who are interested in the program apply by submitting an essay on why they want to study a musical instrument. Once accepted, they choose an instrument from the brass, woodwind, string, and percussion families. Participants receive daily music lessons, instruments, books, supplies, and opportunities to attend cultural events.

Anne Fitzgibbon, founder and executive director of the Harmony Program, traveled to Venezuela in 2007 on a Fulbright Fellowship to study the famous National System of Youth and Children’s Orchestras, known as El Sistema. Impressed by its commitment to social change through music, she returned to New York.

Her primary goal was to design a program that uses music as a means to help children grow into healthy, well-rounded, and productive individuals. In addition to fostering social development, the Harmony Program encourages learning through ensemble playing, creates a supportive community for program participants and families, and demands a serious commitment to daily music study.

The Harmony Program prioritizes serving schools in high need areas, as well as those that do not offer formal band or orchestra. Equally



important to the selection process is the partnership of a dynamic and cooperative principal who believes in the value of music education. PS 152’s principal, Dr. Rhonda Farkas, recognizes how the Harmony Program enriches the educational experience of the students in her school in Flatbush, Brooklyn.

“It has benefited them in exponential ways,” said Farkas, “by lifting their confidence levels, boosting self-esteem, enhancing cooperation and collaboration, self-direction, flexibility, adaptability, productivity, and responsibility.”

I recently visited PS 152’s after-

school program, listened to the students play, and heard what they have to say.

The kids — taught by college- and graduate-level music students trained by the Harmony Program — were enthusiastic and ready to learn, even after a long day of school.

Instructor Patrick O’Reilly taught his young drumming students how to identify notes and rests, rhythms and patterns, repeats and loops. There was a strong sense of group learning and peer teaching in the intimate class of four. Sebastian, a fifth grader, took a break from the snare drum to help a classmate identify the



down beat from a series of notes on the board. He was patient and kind, and continued to support her until she played the music correctly.

The kids expressed their gratitude and appreciation for the program.

"When I have a bad day, the music and my friends make me happy," said Mia. "The two go together."

Fifth-grader Theresa added that playing music is not only fun and exciting, but it helps her to focus and concentrate, too.

"I think it's going to help me on the [English Language Arts] exam," she said.

Sebastian agreed and said learning to read music has helped him improve in math.

Cassandra recalled that the Harmony Program brought made it possible for her to perform with one of the most famous musicians in the world. "Playing with Placido Domingo was awesome!" she recalled. In January, Cassandra was one of 35 young musicians chosen from the Harmony Program to perform at the gala celebration honoring the tenor and conductor. The maestro conducted the orchestra of fourth to sixth graders.

"Making music as a part of an orchestra is an important part of the program, because it requires children to respect their places as members of a community and to understand the rules, structure, and organization that govern that community," explained Harmony founder Fitzgibbon.

Lexy, a violinist, joined the Harmony Program in second grade. Now a fifth grader, she also had the opportunity to play with Domingo. Lexy recalled the experience with excitement, but quickly shifted her focus to the Harmony Program itself.

"Music allows me to express my feelings," explained Lexy, whose favorite pieces of music are Pachelbel's "Canon in D" and "The Magic Flute." "I'm so grateful that it is a free program. Otherwise, I would not have the opportunity to play an instrument."

When I entered the woodwind group's practice room, the students were in the middle of learning a new, challenging Bach piece. They struggled persistently until the end, then immediately asked their teacher if they could play "The Magic Flute," which they had been practicing for the past few months. They performed it with joy, confidence, and pride. The young musicians' talent amazed me, but I was even more impressed by their dedication and respect for the music-making process.

The Harmony Program teaches more than music. It develops important skills necessary for children to succeed in many areas of their lives.

Principal Farkas explains, "It offers our children the tools, resources, and experiences that have helped facilitate and drive the knowledge, complex thinking skills, collaboration, and creativity required for the college and career outcomes needed to succeed in the 21st century."

For more, visit harmonyprogram.cuny.edu.

Laura Varoscak-DeInnocentiis is a mom, teacher, and freelance writer. She is a regular contributor to *New York Parenting Media* and has won several editorial awards from *Parenting Media Assoc.* Varoscak holds master's degrees in fiction writing, education, and psychology. Visit her webpage at www.examiner.com/parenting-in-new-york/laura-varoscak for more articles on *Brooklyn parenting*.

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Creative theater games to spark your child's imagination

BY JOCELYN GREENE

Looking for a fun activity to spark your kids' imaginations? Kids love to be entertained, and they especially love to take part in their own amusements. Luckily, there are two great theater games that will entertain them and let their imaginations soar.

One great game that even works for just two people is "story clap." It's inspired by Viola Spolin, an important innovator of the American theater in the 20th century.

Here's how to play:

One person starts with an opener that puts us in the fairy tale or fable mind-set, as in "Once upon a time, there lived a firefly who didn't know she was a firefly..." or, "In a deep forest there was a witch who loved to make soup out of..."

That storyteller then claps, which passes it to the next person. It is that person's job to continue where the first person left off, then pass it on to the next person, and so on. The game continues in this fashion until the story reaches a natural end.

You'll be surprised at how creative the story becomes as the tellers feel inspired by the collective voice of the group.

As you play the game more and more, experiment with the length of the story chunk you tell. Archetypes — such as princesses, witches, animals, dragons — are great to play off of, and you can combine elements of your children's favorite books and characters. This game is also a great way to air an issue that may have come up at home, so kids can give voice to their feelings.

As the adult in the group, it is important that you help direct the story. Set up a conflict and then help it toward resolution. With kids ages 4–6, it's a good idea to designate the adult as the clapper to keep the action going. You'll be amazed by how much they already understand story structure, and how excited they are to create their own tales with you.

In my experience, we end up physically re-telling the story, but it is a great activity all on its own for winding down at bedtime, on car trips, or at a family gathering. On rainy days, you can help the kids write the story on paper and they can illustrate it!

Another great game is "ACTive reading" — a reading aloud game in which kids get to play the parts in the stories.

Let your child create the environment of the book. Let him explore the way the ocean sounds while you read "Mariana and the Merchild: A Folktale from Chile." Playfully whistle and whoosh the sounds of the sea and the wind with him, or create whale calls and dolphin whistles. Then, have your child quietly continue the ocean soundtrack while you read aloud — the effect can be quite hauntingly beautiful.



When reading "Make Way for Ducklings," watch what happens when your child acts out the traffic and noisy streets of Boston, or creates the quacks of the duck family? How about the sounds of the monkeys in "The Hatseller and the Monkeys," or the monsters in "Where the Wild Things Are?" You may come up with sounds that are funny, or some that are eerie. You'll be surprised by the way your child astutely hears his world and gives voice to his imagination.

Most children are eager to play the parts in the stories they read. If they read themselves, they enjoy following along while you read, and getting the chance to say the words of a certain character. Whether you are reading "Horton Hears a Who," or the Harry Potter books, there will likely be a character with whom they identify. Let them cast themselves and say their characters' dialogue while you read the rest. They will be living inside the story in a very exciting way. For a moment in time, the characters' journeys become theirs. If they aren't reading yet, gently prompt them with the character's lines and let them interpret the rest.

In this way, you enter into a kind of dialogue with your child, even while you are reading. He'll feel connected to the world of the book because he is a part of creating it, and he'll feel connected as you both tell the story. He'll also be having a lot of fun, which is always the bottom line!

Jocelyn Greene is the founder and executive director of the theater program Child's Play NY. She also runs the after-school acting programs at Packer Collegiate Institute, the Berkeley Carroll School, and Greene Hill School.



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Celebrate mothers of special-needs children

Remarkable moms need extra thanks on Mother's Day

BY REBECCA MCKEE

May is the month to appreciate our mothers and grandmothers. We make a special effort to show our love and gratitude this time of year through our words and actions (and, for good measure, a beautiful bouquet doesn't hurt!).

But a more and more homes include family members who have autism spectrum disorder. Many of these individuals may rarely convey to their mothers just how much adoration and love exists within their special bond, and those moms can use

some special recognition.

Mothers of children with special needs work tirelessly day in and day out for their children.

Their work includes motherly duties of love, providing food, shelter, clothing, tenderness, and teaching.

But standing atop of that mountain is a pressure-cooker filled with speech and language goals, fine- and gross-motor coordination activities, functional life skills, opportunities for generalization, natural environment teaching moments, sensitivity and awareness for siblings and peers, team meetings, workshops, parent-training

visits, data collection and analysis for behavioral outbursts, and so much more.

It is a world that involves these mothers' front doors opening and closing continuously to allow for professionals to enter and exit. Between those times it is the mothers who hold everything together.

It is a motherhood that requires patience; patience that includes waiting an entire summer while an 8-year-old child learns to imitate waving.

It is a motherhood that requires grace; grace that includes calmly handling a very loud 10-year-old autistic child in the supermarket while every other adult in the surrounding area glares. It is a motherhood that requires fortitude — courage and advocacy mixed together in a cake bowl — that has to be at an all-time high level from the time of diagnosis throughout adulthood.

It is a motherhood that requires connectedness; connectedness means constant networking, attendance at workshops, fund-raisers, classes, and more.

It is a motherhood that requires a realistic view of accomplishment; accomplishment can easily mean her child learning how to tie his shoes at the age of 19 after working on this skill for more than 300 hours. It is a motherhood that requires balance; balance between caring for all members of her family, herself, and a person with special needs who naturally requires just that much more.

We should all remember to honor our mothers each day, and especially on Mother's Day.

This May, if you know a mother or grandmother who has the personal privilege of having a family member with autism spectrum disorder, or individualized personality, acknowledge her. Take the time to wish her a happy Mother's Day.

These are words she may have yet to hear from that special person in her life.





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What we all need to know about **BULLYING**

End abuse
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Everyone should know:

- Bullying is a power issue. It's about preying on the weak and on those who may be "different."

- Bullying has moved out of the schoolyard and onto the Internet and mobile phones. Cyber bullying is the fastest growing method students use to bully others.

- It takes a village. Children who are bullying others need to understand that everyone is watching — parents, teachers, neighbors, church members, coaches, troop leaders, etc. — and will speak up when their behavior is inappropriate.

- Kids fall into three roles: the bully, the victim, and the witness. The witnesses who do not speak up against bullying provide an audience that encourages the bully.

- Speaking up against a specific bullying incident or pattern takes courage and can result in repercussions for the victim or witness. To keep them safe, protect the students' anonymity.

Parents should know:

- Just as you teach a child personal hygiene, ethics, and good behavior, you need to teach him that bullying is wrong and that witnessing a bully calls for action. What action? At a minimum, tell an adult.

- There are warning signs that may indicate your child is being bullied, or may be bullying others. Become familiar with them. You can find warning signs at stopbullying.gov.

- Have regular conversations

about all of those topics that are uncomfortable for both you and your child — such as bullying, drugs, sex. Acknowledge that these are difficult conversations for both of you, but that you are going to have them anyway.

- You are your child's advocate. If you suspect or know your child is being bullied, your job includes engaging school staff and others to help support your child through this bad time. Visit the school frequently. Get to know teachers and other staff before problems occur.

- Monitor and supervise your child's online and cellphone activities, set boundaries, and let him know you are monitoring him. It's the best way to know that he is

neither bullying nor being bullied, sexting, sharing passwords, or compromising his privacy, safety, and security.

Here are some links about how to monitor:

- How much should you monitor? At childhelp.org.

- Spying or monitoring? At about.com.

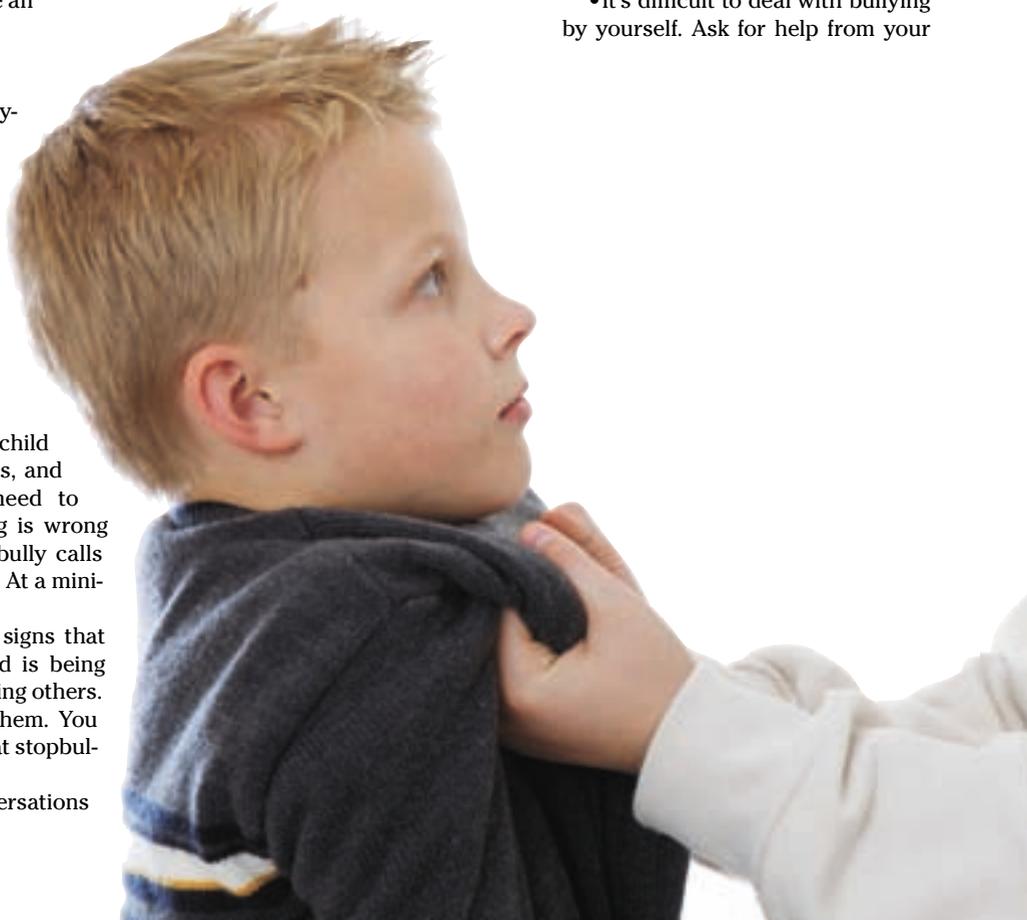
- Four things to help protect kids online at Microsoft Safety and Security Center at microsoft.com.

- Overview of monitoring cellphone use at education.com.

Kids should know:

- No one deserves to be bullied. It is harmful and can have long-lasting repercussions.

- It's difficult to deal with bullying by yourself. Ask for help from your



friends, parent, or an adult you trust or know has been assigned to deal with bullying.

- Doing nothing says you think it's OK to bully another person. Take a stand against bullying.

- If someone gets upset with your behavior toward others, even if you think you're just being funny, you may be bullying. Stop, reflect, and talk about it with someone you trust.

Additional links for kids:

- That'sNotCool.com.
- StopBullying.gov.

Teachers should know:

- Early and immediate intervention to resolve conflicts will mini-

mize bullying and support victims. Find tips at stopbullying.gov.

- Dealing with bullying is a team effort. Learn all you can about bullying through research and recommended interventions.

- There needs to be a designated leader who serves as a resource for staff and students and keeps track of incidents. Kids should know who that person is and that anonymity will be protected.

- Your attention needs to extend beyond the schoolhouse or program doors to include the school neighborhood, Internet, and texting.

For a cyberbullying toolkit for educators, visit commonsensemedia.org.



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Why the world embraces the Montessori method

How this 100-year-old education philosophy continues to benefit students today

BY DANE L. PETERS

Having discovered Dr. Maria Montessori's internationally proven educational philosophy — a theory she began developing at the end of the 19th century in Italy — late in my career, I find that I cannot learn enough, for my sake, for the students in my school, and for my granddaughter. So much of what takes place in a Montessori environment today is predicated on the guiding principles that Montessori developed after many years of observing children.

Montessori is an educational philosophy that supports a student's innate curiosity and freedom to question, encouraging adaptability and independence. The need for our children to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills has become even more important as they face the challenges to come in our rapidly changing world.

Whether you read Dr. Jane Healy's book, "Your Child's Growing Mind"; the New York Times Feb. 17, 2012 article, "Building Self-Control the American Way"; or Daniel Pink's book, "Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us," you will come across present-day principles and phrases that relate directly to Montessori's work and methods. The resurgence of Montessori education here in the U.S. — that began in the early 1960s — has grown to more than 4,000 private and public schools today.

In understanding Montessori education, which is now the most utilized pedagogy on the globe, with more than 22,000 schools in 110 countries, it might be helpful to review a few of the most prominent words that describe the basic tenets of her work and their relevancy to the needs of education today.

• **Teacher as facilitator** – Montessori believed that teachers should be a guide-on-the-side rather than a



sage-on-the-stage. A top-down learning environment is non-productive for the student. Education is most successful when the student is an independent learner. Also, Montessori teachers must complete exten-

sive training to become credentialed Montessori teachers.

"The child is truly a miraculous being, and this should be felt deeply by the educator," said Montessori.

• **Respect for the student** – Along

the same lines as teacher as facilitator, in a Montessori environment, there is a deep respect for the student. Students flourish in a setting that is supportive and respectful of their individuality, abilities, and potential.

• **Intrinsically motivated** – Probably one of Montessori's most meaningful tenets is helping students to work for their own goals, satisfaction, and interest, and not for external rewards. It is widely recognized that individuals are more highly motivated when they have a vested interest in their pursuits and goals.

• **Prepared environment** – A Montessori classroom is designed with thoughtful structure that facilitates students making choices and learning at their own pace. It is an environment that develops independent problem-solving skills by allowing students time to explore, discover, concentrate, research, and learn. The teacher closely monitors the progress of each student, helping her make good choices that support learning and exploration of all subjects within an academic curriculum.

• **Mixed-age classes** – Montessori classrooms have 3-, 4-, and 5-year old students in one classroom, just as first-, second-, and third-grade students or fourth-, fifth-, and sixth-grade students are in one classroom. This promotes peer learning; students learn from and teach each other, developing collaboration and leadership skills, compassion, and mastery of the material.

• **Three-year cycle** – Students remain with the same teacher for three years, allowing teachers to gain an intimate knowledge of each student's individual learning style and potential. And it provides consistency in a student's academic life. A spiraling curriculum throughout the three-year cycle develops a deeper understanding of academic subjects.

• **Method and materials that are timeless** – Many of the materials Montessori developed 100 years ago are used in classrooms today. For example, the sequencing materials students use are highly applicable to the strict syntax necessary for computer programming or building software applications. Also, many of the self-correcting Montessori materials enable students to be successful without adult intervention, encouraging a student's independence and self-

confidence.

• **Practical life skills** – Students engage in tasks that relate directly to everyday practical skills. Caring for yourself and your environment, organizing, and using household materials, are employed in the classroom to help students build critical-thinking, decision-making skills, and fine-motor coordination skills.

• **Grace and courtesy** – Being thoughtful of the needs of others and engaging with others in a respectful manner are important characteristics of a Montessori education. These are the building blocks for the peace curriculum that is ever-present in a Montessori school. Compassion is a characteristic held in high regard within the Montessori curriculum.

• **Life-long learner** – Curiosity and a life-long intellectual pursuit of knowledge is a means for life. Learning is not simply to complete an assignment or achieve a satisfactory test score.

• **Critical thinker** – Always using exploration and experience, students are encouraged to make informed decisions. Students learn to gather information, make comparisons, and apply what works to each problem or situation, with a focus on understanding the process of discovery and developing independent, problem-solving skills.

• **Confident learner with a strong sense of self** – Montessori students learn to take risks in their academic work and think creatively without a fear of failure. When they do fail, they see it as a learning experience and know how to independently recover and get back on track.

...
All of the above Montessori concepts are not only important in the early years, but they also provide the foundation for adolescence and adulthood. During the critical adolescent years, these methods become essential to give students the independence to manage freedom with responsibility. Repeatedly, Montessori education touches the lives of so many people in a way that helps them to be confident, thoughtful citizens, always working to build a better environment for themselves and others.

Dane L. Peters is head of Brooklyn Heights Montessori School in Brooklyn. You can reach him at dpeters@bhmsny.org. Visit his blog at www.daneseblog.blogspot.com.

Montessori

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ABCs, colors, nature and much more!"
Fatima Straughn— Proud Parent

The New York City Montessori Charter School opened in the fall of 2011 as the first Montessori charter school in New York State and the first public Montessori school in New York City. We provide a rigorous academic program, which aligns the Montessori method with Core Curriculum Standards. The school will add a new grade each year, with K-2 in 2012.

The mission of The New York City Montessori Charter School (NYCMCS) is to empower its students to think critically and cultivate their problem solving and social skills so that they can continue to learn in their pursuit of higher education and succeed in the careers needed in the 21st Century.



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'Paradise' found

Artists give a landmarked manor a creative makeover

BY SHAVANA ABRUZZO

The Bronx is celebrating a renaissance as an exciting urban gallery thanks in part to an innovative group that lavishes art on abandoned buildings.

No Longer Empty, comprised of artists and curators, reinvents vacant venues as modern-day museums by filling them with temporary exhibitions that take art to the public arena and address the economic slump that contributed to their demise. It transformed an old bait and tackle store on the ground floor of the Chelsea Hotel for its inaugural exhibition in 2009, and last month it launched "This Side of Paradise" on the Grand Concourse at the landmarked Andrew Freedman Home — a relic from the Roaring '20s. The Italian Renaissance-style palazzo, an ex-retirement home for formerly wealthy seniors, has fallen on hard times due to diminishing funds, and operates these days as an events space and day care center — but that's all about to

change, thanks to smart art.

"Paradise" features dozens of installations by more than 30 local and international artists — among them, Bronx veteran John Ahearn, Sofia Maldonado, and Daze — under whose mastery the dilapidated ballrooms, bedrooms, bathrooms, kitchens, and libraries become vibrant windows into the demographics, history, culture, and even transportation of a borough not typically associated with Shangri-la (although previous generations of immigrants fled Eastern Europe and the Lower East Side's tenements for its comparative clean air).

The results are thought-provoking, heart-warming — even eye-popping! There's a Persian rug made from everyday objects, a room recreated with music, furniture and artifacts, and a collaborative game whose story always has a different ending.

Ahearn's piece is a sweet partnership with children from the Headstart program on the ground floor. Plaster casts of their hands form a garland to represent the home's present

community. Maldonado stirs new life in the decommissioned kitchen with her candy-colored pop-art, showing a gussied-up cook observing from high above, while offering a new perspective of the cookhouse whose white-gloved butlers and maids once tended meticulously to the penniless boarders who dressed in tuxedos and gowns for dinner. The attention to decorum was among the requirements mandated by the eponymous benefactor, a former owner of the New York Giants baseball team and a financier of New York's first subway lines, who left an endowment in his will for the home's creation.

"They were expected to have attained a state of reasonable culture, and not to eat peas with their knives," commented an article at the time in the *New Yorker*.

Bolts of color and animated characters inspired by the cartoon flicks, "The Yellow Submarine" and "Alice in Wonderland" — the handiwork of Daze — jazz up a space that until recently resembled a room in a Vanderbilt mansion that hadn't been occupied in decades.

"Peeling paint, leaking ceilings, old carpeting, and rusted pipes added to an ambience that could best be described as eerie," says the artist.

Expect to be awed and exhilarated, too, by the magnificence and the scale of the exhibition.

"We hope that these artworks, and the mere fact of transforming a space into an artistic expression, inspires people to seek more art or even to do it themselves!" says Naomi Heresson-Ringskog, No Longer Empty's executive director.

"Paradise" also features interactive workshops, school tours, and family events as it ushers in a new era of glory days at the Freedman manor, jump-starts an art revolution in the Bronx, and nudges the viewer to rethink, "Where is paradise?"

"This Side of Paradise" through June 5 at the Andrew Freedman Home [1125 Grand Concourse bet. McClellan and 165th streets in the Bronx], Thursday-Sunday, 1-7 pm, free; www.nolonger-empty.org.

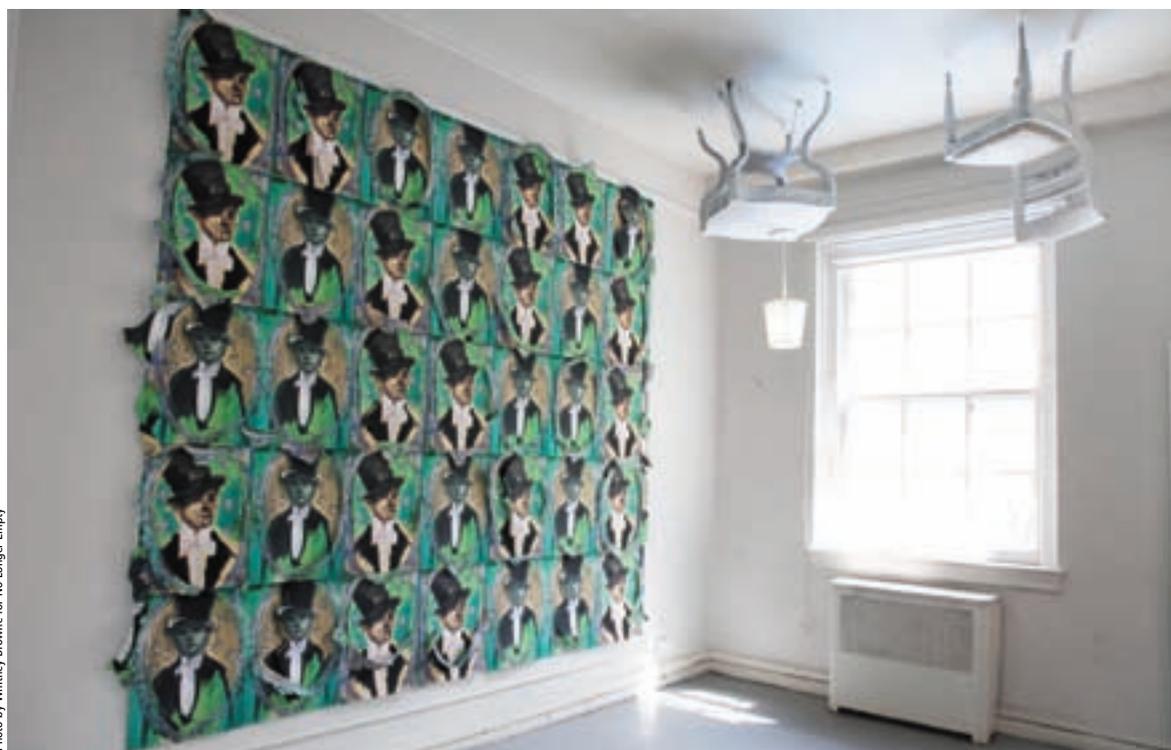


Photo by Whitney Browne for No Longer Empty

FACE-ADE: Scherezade Garcia's eye-popping installation depicts bon vivants from the manor's heyday.

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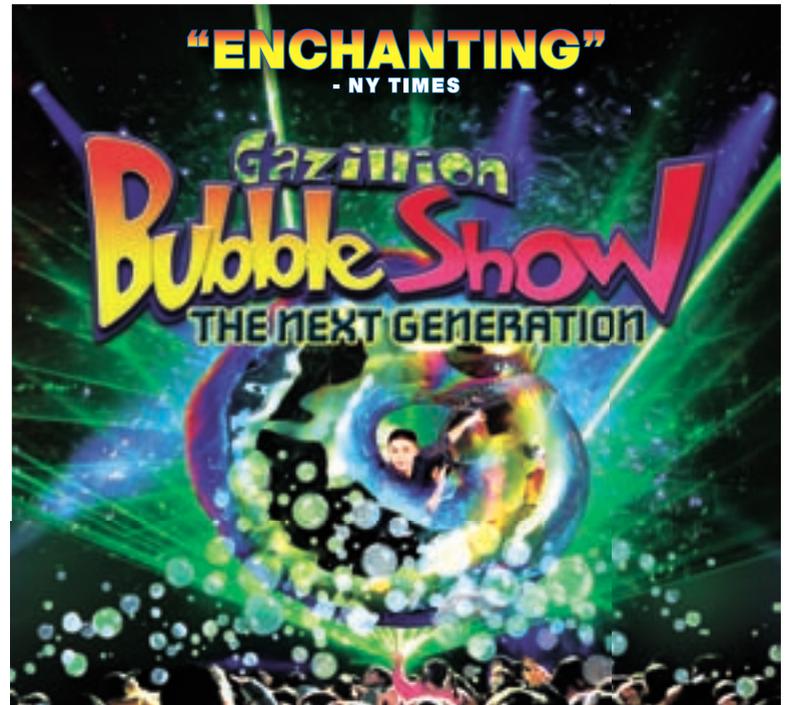
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HEALTHY LIVING

DANIELLE SULLIVAN

Tips for pain-free breastfeeding

It is possible!

Among the endless concerns that come with new parenting and first-time pregnancy is the decision of whether or not to breastfeed. Many new moms want to breastfeed but are honestly afraid to do so after hearing stories about the pain and anguish associated with it.

Susan Bennington of Bay Ridge was one of them. When her son, Jamie, was born two years ago, Bennington admits that she almost didn't even try to breastfeed, because she thought it would hurt too much.

"My sister had given birth to my niece a year before I got pregnant, and she had such a hard time with it, she eventually gave up. Ever since then, she talks about how she should have just bottle-fed from the beginning and saved herself the torment," she says.

Bennington cites sore nipples and difficulty in latching on as the top two causes of why her sister stopped.

"While I was naturally concerned seeing what my sister went through, I still felt in my heart that breastfeeding was best, and wanted to give my child every chance at the best health possible," says Bennington. "So, I started reading up on it in my sixth month almost daily. When my son was born, amazingly enough, he latched on right away. It gave me the confidence to continue, and I'm so glad I did."

Sara Chana, a breast-feeding expert and certified lactation consultant, says that when breastfeeding is working properly, it shouldn't hurt.

Here are her best tips for pain-free breastfeeding:

- Don't believe that breastfeeding is supposed to hurt and that sore nipples are to be expected. If the baby is latched on to the breast properly, breastfeeding should not hurt!

- Do teach your baby to latch onto the breast, not the nipple! Most



women that come into my office are letting the baby latch onto the nipple and not the breast itself. (Remember, it is called "breastfeeding," not "nipple feeding.")

- Don't worry about getting your whole areola into the baby's mouth. Most women are taught to get the whole areola into the baby's mouth, but all women have different size areolas, so this is really not the judge of a good latch. With a good latch, there usually is some areola showing, and often times, lots of areola is showing.

- Do hold your breast steady and compress it into a pointy shape with your hand, because a pointy breast can fit deeper into a baby's mouth. Be sure to bring the baby to you deeply (not trying to stuff your nipple into the baby's mouth). Your goal is to get your breast deeply into the baby's mouth with the nipple touching the S spot (between the baby's hard and soft palate). Your nipple

actually needs to point back into the baby's throat.

- Don't get discouraged. If your latch hurts, try again. If you allow the baby to nurse in a way that hurts you, your baby will not get the message that he needs to nurse deeper. When a mom and her baby share the experience of being on the breast deeply, with practice, mom will be able to nurse pain free.

- Do get help from a professional lactation consultant if you are in pain, not getting enough soiled diapers, or feel unsure or discouraged. Birth hurts — breastfeeding is not supposed to!

Danielle Sullivan, a Brooklyn-born mom of three, has worked as a writer and editor in the parenting world for more than 10 years. Sullivan also writes about pets and parenting for Disney's Babble.com. Find her on Facebook and Twitter @DanniSullWriter, or on her blog, Just Write Mom.

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THE BOOK WORM

TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

A rootin' tootin' read

It's the rare for kids to want to grow up to be a cowboys in this age of video games and sports heroes, but a new book about a former slave-turned-cowpoke might change all that.

"Best Shot in the West, the Adventures of Nat Love" by Patricia C. McKissack and Fredrick L. McKissack, Jr., (Chronicle Books) tells the story of Nat Love, the youngest child of slaves who was born in a log cabin on a plantation in Tennessee and when on to become a free cowboy known by his peers as one of the best shooters, ropers, and wranglers in the West.

Nat was 7 when the Civil War broke out and his owner, Robert Love, took Nat's father away to help build forts. When they returned, Love didn't tell his slaves that they were free and it was quite awhile before they found out the truth.

But the joy of being free didn't last long. Soon after, times got tough when Nat's father and sister died. In

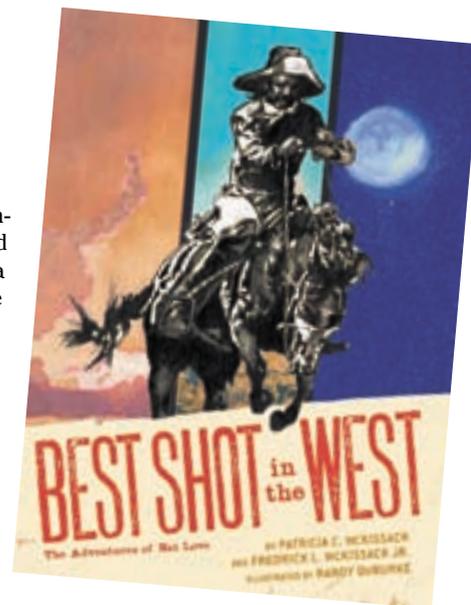
order to help care for the family, Nat found jobs here and there, mostly working as a cowboy. He learned that he was really good at breaking colts, and was paid 10 cents for each dangerous ride.

When he was 14, Nat gave his mother half his savings and left home. He walked some and rode some until he found work as a cow-puncher.

The other cowboys soon came to respect Nat, who became a trailboss known as "Deadeye Dick" because he was one of the best shooters, ropers, and wranglers in the West.

But then cowboying changed, and so did Nat, who had lived a charmed life for 20 years. But he was getting older, and it was time for different dusty trail.

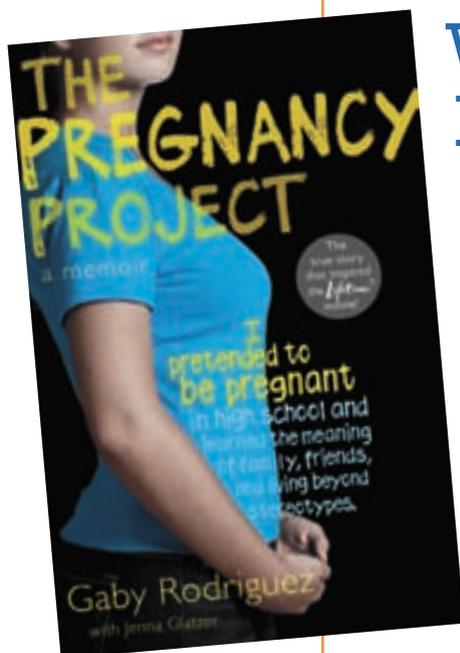
Based on a the autobiography of Nat Love, the McKissacks bring to kids the kind of story that will ignite



their imaginations with tales of the Wild West. Written in comic-book form, it is kid-friendly, and the artwork by Randy DuBurke ropes in even the most reluctant reader.

"Best Shot in the West" is one rootin' tootin' read for kids ages 8 to 13.

"Best Shot in the West: The Adventures of Nat Love," by Patricia C. McKissack and Fredrick L. McKissack, Jr. [133 pages, 2012, \$19.99].



What's it's really like being a teen mom

You said you had a headache, your stomach hurts, or your foot was so swollen you couldn't walk. But really you were unprepared for a physics test, didn't want to deal with dramatic friends, or were recovering from the prior day's embarrassment.

Now your daughter does the same thing. But how far would she go? Author Gaby Rodriguez lies in order to make a difference and explains it all in a book she co-wrote with Jenna Glatzer called "The Pregnancy Project" (Simon and Schuster).

While most kids have some idea of what they want to be someday, Rodriguez knew what she didn't want to be -- a teen mom.

It was a family legacy she wanted to avoid. Her mother was pregnant at 15,

all of her older sisters were pregnant in high school, and some of her brothers were fathers before they were out of their teens. Everybody in her Oregon community figured that Rodriguez would embrace the family tradition.

She knew from experience that when a girl becomes a mother too young her education suffers and that was not an option for budding, young author. She had her sights set on college. Yet she was curious. What would people say if she did get pregnant? Would their attitudes toward her change? What would it be like to live the stereotype?

Since her senior project was looming and mandatory for graduation, Rodriguez decided to try a bold experiment. With the help of her mother, boyfriend, best friend, and a few trusted teachers, she pretended to be pregnant. All of her classmates and her siblings believed she was expecting a baby that April.

The situation wasn't easy and after enduring stares, whispers, and nasty

comments Rodriguez thought about quitting a few times. Yet she persevered, even creating a fake bump out of clay and padding.

The reader accompanies Rodriguez on an emotional journey of discovery during and after her senior project. "The Pregnancy Project," is a brave story with a dash of brilliance and a twist of wide-eyed amazement.

Yet, what Rodriguez learns during her experience isn't nearly as important as the guidance Glatzer offers to girls in this book. The co-authors are blunt about the pain of smug, unwarranted comments by friends and candid about the surprising anger Rodriguez felt in response. They offer firm and practical advice for sexually active teens. So if you're a girl who is contemplating pregnancy, do yourself a favor, and read "The Pregnancy Project." It just might change your mind.

"The Pregnancy Project," by Gaby Rodriguez with Jenna Glatzer [218 pages, Simon and Schuster, 2012, \$17.99] is recommended for teenaged girls.

Terri Schlichenmeyer has been reading since she was 3 years old, and she never goes anywhere without a book. She lives on a hill with two dogs and 12,000 books.

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Going Places

LONG-RUNNING

Cartoon exhibit: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St., at Avenue of Science; (718) 699-0005 X353; www.nyscience.org; Weekdays, 9:30 am–5 pm, Saturdays and Sundays, 10 am–6 pm, \$11 (\$8 children 2-17, college students and seniors).

Animation. A 6,000 square exhibit features characters from the Cartoon Network, including larger than life graphics, animation from concept to finished product, storyboarding, character design and drawing.

“Little Miss Muffet’s Monster Sitting Service”: The Swedish Cottage Marionette Theatre, West Dr. at 79th Street Transverse; (212) 988-9093; cityparksfoundation.org/swedishcottage.html; Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, 10:30 am and noon, Wednesdays, 10:30 am and 2:30 pm, \$8 (\$5 children under 12).

Based on the nursery rhyme, “Little Miss Muffet”, this version tells the story of Molly Muffet, the descendent of the original Miss Muffet. Run time is approximately 50 minutes and is suitable for children 3-9.

Teen advisory group: Kingsbridge Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd. at Briggs Ave. (718) 579-4244; www.nypl.org; Friday, April 27, 4 pm; Friday, May 4, 4 pm; Friday, May 11, 4 pm; Friday, May 18, 4 pm; Free.

Children 13 to 18 lend their voices to library topics.

House tour: Edgar Allen Poe cottage, 2640 Grand Concourse at E. Kingsbridge Rd. (718) 881-8900; <http://www.bronxhistoricalsociety.org>; Saturdays, 10 am–4 pm, Sundays, 1–5 pm, Now–Sun, May 27; \$5 (\$3 students/children and seniors).

Visit the home of Edgar Allen Poe; the restoration of his cottage is complete and open for a guided tour.

Garden tool exhibit: Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum, 895 Shore Rd. (718) 885-1461; www.bartowpellmansionmuseum.org; Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays, Noon–4 pm, Now–Sun, July 1; Free with admission.

Selections are from the extensive collection of landscape architect Mark K. Morrison.

“The Amazing Max and the Box of Interesting Things”: The MMAC Theater, 248 W. 60th St. between Am-



It’s Toy Story time!

Woody, Buzz and the whole gang are back for a screening of “Toy Story” at Pelham Bay Library on May 31 at 3:30 pm.

Children 5–12 will enjoy this classic (yes, it is a classic already!) computer-animated tale, featuring the voices of Tom Hanks, Tim Allen, and Don Rick-

sterdam and West End avenues; (212) 239-6200; www.telecharge.com; Saturdays, 4:30 pm, Now–Sat, June 30; \$29.50 (\$49.50 VIP seating).

The magic show with a mind of its own. Magician Max Darwin makes objects appear out of thin air.

Game Day: Pelham Bay Library, 3060 Middletown Rd. at Crosby Avenue; (718) 792-6744; <https://www.nypl.org>; Monday, April 30, 4:30 pm; Monday, May 7, 4:30 pm; Monday, May 14, 4:30 pm; Monday, May 21, 4:30 pm; Monday, June 4, 4:30 pm; Free with museum admission (\$6 Free for members).

Children in Sixth Grade and older participate in board games and electronic games.

Movie time: Kingsbridge Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd. at Briggs Ave. (718) 579-4244; www.nypl.org; Wednesday, April 25, 4 pm; Wednesday, May 2, 4 pm; Wednesday, May 9, 4

les as their favorite toys — new and from yesteryear. Join Woody (Hanks) as he learns the meaning of friendship from spaceman, Buzz Lightyear (Allen).

“Toy Story” at the Pelham Bay Library [3060 Middletown Rd. at Crosby Avenue, (718) 792-6744]. Rated PG, 77 minutes. May 31 from 3:30–5 pm. Free. www.nypl.org.

pm; Wednesday, May 16, 4 pm; Free.

Children 5-12 enjoy an age appropriate film.

SAT, APRIL 28

Run for the Wild: Bronx Zoo, 2300 Southern Blvd. at Boston Road; (718) 220-5103; www.wcs.runforthewild.org; 8 am; \$35 (\$25 children and seniors - registration fee).

The annual 5K and Family Fun Run calls for all runners and walkers. Lace up your sneakers and enter the wildest race around and help save the lions. After the run stay for the post-run activities including refreshments, music, and more.

Nature workshop: Central Park Zoo, 830 Fifth Ave at E. 65th Street; (212) 439-6583; www.centralparkzoo.com/programs; 10–11:30 am; \$35 (\$40 non-members).

Children 9-12 years old learn about frogs toads and everything amphibian.

Submit a listing

Going Places is dedicated to bringing our readers the most comprehensive events calendar in your area. But to do so, we need your help!

All you have to do is send your listing request to calendar@cnglocal.com — and we’ll take care of the rest. Please e-mail requests more than three weeks prior to the event to ensure we have enough time to get it in. And best of all, it’s FREE!

Family Art project: Wave Hill, West 249th St. and Independence Ave. (718) 549-3200; www.wavehill.org; 10 am–1 pm; Free with museum admission.

View the beautiful wildflowers that are beginning to bloom then use tempera paint and learn the printmaking method.

Toddler Time: Central Park Zoo, 830 Fifth Ave at E. 65th Street; (212) 439-6583; www.centralparkzoo.com/programs; 10:30–11:30 am; \$25 (\$30 non-members).

Animal Sing-A-Long - for 2 and 3 year old children. Live animals, movement and musical activities plus a craft.

Josh Selig: Barnes & Noble, 97 Warren St. at Murray Street; (212) 587-5389; www.barnesandnoble.com; 11 am; Free.

Author of “Olive Branch: Red & Yellow’s Noisy Night” and creator of the Wonder Pets will be on hand to read a story and sign copies of his books.

Golf fest: Chelsea Piers, 23rd St. and the Hudson River; (212) 336-6800; www.chelseapiers.com; Noon–6 pm; \$15 (\$10 children).

Stop by and demo out the latest golf equipment and enjoy complimentary hitting and swing tips from pros, a kids corner and hot dogs and beverages.

Ballet Hispanico: The Joyce Theater, 175 Eighth Ave. at 19th Street; (212) 242-0800; www.joyce.org; 2 pm; \$10-\$59.

The world premier of Espiritu Vivo.

SUN, APRIL 29

Family Art project: 10 am–1 pm. Wave Hill. See Saturday, April 28.

Recess Monkey: 92Y Tribeca, 200

Going Places

Continued from page 30

Hudson St. at Vestry Street; (212) 601-1000; www.92ytribeca.org/byok; 11 am; \$15 (Free for children under 2).

The acclaimed Seattle children's band performs selections from the latest album.

Golf academy: Chelsea Piers, 23rd St. and the Hudson River; (212) 336-6800; www.chelseapiers.com; Noon–5 pm; Free.

Enjoy a 15 minute lesson with a golf pro, demos and more.

Ballet Hispanico: 2 pm. The Joyce Theater. See Saturday, April 28.

MON, APRIL 30

PJ Night with Literacy Inc: Kingsbridge Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd. at Briggs Ave. (718) 579-4244; www.nypl.org; 5–6 pm; Free.

Stories, crafts and refreshments for children 5-12.

TUES, MAY 1

Tech time: Pelham Bay Library, 3060 Middletown Rd. at Crosby Avenue; (718) 792-6744; <https://www.nypl.org>; 4–5:30 pm; Free with museum admission (\$6 Free for members).

Need extra computer time? Teens 13-18 years old get the opportunity.

WED, MAY 2

Story time: Pelham Bay Library, 3060 Middletown Rd. at Crosby Avenue; (718) 792-6744; <https://www.nypl.org>; 11–11:30 am; Free with museum admission (\$6 Free for members).

Toddlers 18 months to 3 years old and parent/caregiver enjoy stories, action songs, and finger play.

Advisory group: Pelham Bay Library, 3060 Middletown Rd. at Crosby Avenue; (718) 792-6744; <https://www.nypl.org>; 4:30–5:30 pm; Free with museum admission (\$6 Free for members).

Teens 13 to 18 years old share their opinions and get service credit for school.

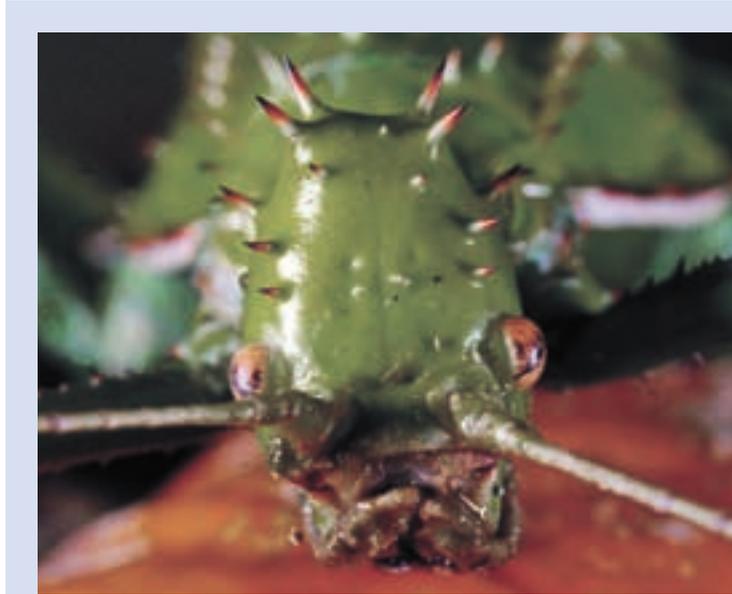
THURS, MAY 3

Gilbert and Sullivan: Dicapo Opera Theatre, 184 E. 76th St. <https://www.dancespatrelle.org>; 7:30 pm; \$35.

The ballet is presented by Dances Patrelle featuring favorite Gilbert and Sullivan selections, from the Pirates of the Penzance to the Mikado. Appropriate for all ages.

FRI, MAY 4

Mary Courtney: Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum, 895 Shore Rd. (718) 885-1461; www.bartowpellmansionmuseum.org; \$8 (\$5 for students and



Bugging out at zoo

Kids will be smarter about arthropods after visiting the Central Park Zoo on May 19.

Seven- to 10-year-olds, who enjoy creepy, crawly insects, will love this class at the zoo, where they'll learn all about the bugs who make their homes there.

Taught by an urban ecologist, children will collect insects from various habitats around the zoo

and sort the collections to try to identify the species.

Each participant will take home his or her own insect trap to collect and observe the ones they find in their own neighborhoods.

"Bugs, Bugs, Bugs" at the Central Park Zoo [830 Fifth Ave. at East 65th Street in Manhattan, (212) 439-6583] May 19, 10-11:30 am. \$35 members, \$40 non-members. For more, visit www.centralparkzoo.com.

seniors).

The folk singer will play guitar and the bodhrán, a traditional Irish hand-held drum. Registration is required.

Arts and crafts: Pelham Bay Library, 3060 Middletown Rd. at Crosby Avenue; (718) 792-6744; <https://www.nypl.org>; 11–11:30 am; Free with museum admission (\$6 Free for members).

Children 2 to 5 years old create projects and have fun.

Museum open house: Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum, 895 Shore Rd. (718) 885-1461; www.bartowpellmansionmuseum.org; 12–4 pm; Free.

Free guided tours of the mansion and garden.

"Jaws, Paws and Claws": Pelham Bay Library, 3060 Middletown Rd. at Crosby Avenue; (718) 792-6744; <https://www.nypl.org>; 3:30 pm; Free with museum admission (\$6 Free for members).

Stories about animals told by LuAnn Adams. For children 4 years and older.

Gilbert and Sullivan: 7:30 pm.

Dicapo Opera Theatre. See Thursday, May 3.

SAT, MAY 5

Zoo help: Central Park Zoo, 830 Fifth Ave at E. 65th Street; (212) 439-6583; www.centralparkzoo.com/programs; 9–10:30 am; \$50 (\$60 non-members) each session \$170 (\$215 non-members) four sessions.

Children 8-10 years old help the animal keepers and study the behaviors of animals.

Learn to ride: Pelham Bay Ranger Station (PBRS), Pelham Bay Park, Bruckner Boulevard and Wilkinson Avenue; (718) 885-3467; www.nyc.gov/parks/rangers; 10 am–1 pm; Free.

For adults and children.

Family Art project: Wave Hill, West 249th St. and Independence Ave. (718) 549-3200; www.wavehill.org; 10 am–1 pm; Free with museum admission.

Sachets and florals are on tap.

Animal Tales Extravaganza: Bronx

Zoo, 2300 Southern Blvd. at Boston Road; (718) 220-5103; www.bronxzoo.com; 11 am–4 pm; \$29.95 (\$19.95 children 3-12 \$24.96 seniors).

Celebrate Cinco De Mayo with Dora and Diego, arts and crafts, listen to a story, march in the Rainforest Creature Parade or experience Avenue Zoo - it's all family fun all weekend long.

Toys and games: Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum, 895 Shore Rd. (718) 885-1461; www.bartowpellmansionmuseum.org; 11 am–1 m; Free.

Children play with old-fashioned games like hoops, graces and pass the slipper. Registration requested.

Pooch picnic: Pellham Bay Ranger Station (PBRS), Pelham Bay Park, Bruckner Boulevard and Wilkinson Avenue; (718) 885-3467; www.nyc.gov/parks/rangers; Noon–2 pm; Free.

Celebrate your pet, with the annual picnic; fun games include face painting, arts and crafts and more.

Museum open house: 12–4 pm. Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum. See Friday, May 4.

Story night: Kingsbridge Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd. at Briggs Ave. (718) 579-4244; www.nypl.org; 1 pm; Free.

Members of the Rotary Club of Riverdale read to children 5-12.

Rescued wildlife show and tell: Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum, 895 Shore Rd. (718) 885-1461; www.bartowpellmansionmuseum.org; 1–3 pm; Free.

A showcase of owls, birds of prey, and other animals for visitors to see in person.

Gilbert and Sullivan: 2 and 7:30 pm. Dicapo Opera Theatre. See Thursday, May 3.

SUN, MAY 6

Family Art project: 10 am–1 pm. Wave Hill. See Saturday, May 5.

Astrograss for Kids: 92Y Tribeca, 200 Hudson St. at Vestry Street; (212) 601-1000; www.92ytribeca.org/byok; 11 am; \$15 (Free for children under 2).

A unique blend of bluegrass and down home humor. The concert features sing-a-longs, dance contests, hoedowns and songs about Brooklyn neighborhoods.

Guided hike: Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum, 895 Shore Rd. (718) 885-1461; www.bartowpellmansionmuseum.org; Noon–2 pm; Free.

Explore nature and learn history with an urban park ranger.

Toys and games: Noon–2 pm. Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum. See Saturday

Continued on page 32

Going Places

Continued from page 31

Museum open house: 12–4 pm. Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum. See Friday, May 4.

Spring fair: The Morgan Museum, 225 Madison Ave. (212) 590-0393; <https://www.themorgan.org/public>; 2–5 pm; \$8 (\$6 members; \$2 children).

Children 6-12 along with parents enjoy a day filled with music, dance, art and animals. To kick off the event, in the company of animals, conductor and composer Adam Glaser presents *The Composer's Paintbrush: Painting the Animal Kingdom* following the performance strolling actors in animal costume encourage children how to explore music, a photo shoot, dancing, singing and mask making workshops.

Cracked Walnuts: Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum, 895 Shore Rd. (718) 885-1461; www.bartowpellmansionmuseum.org; 2–4 pm; Free.

Jeff and Jan Ausfahl perform traditional jigs and Civil War-era folk songs with washboard and banjo.

Gilbert and Sullivan: 2 pm. Dicapo Opera Theatre. See Thursday, May 3.

TUES, MAY 8

Baby time: Pelham Bay Library, 3060 Middletown Rd. at Crosby Avenue; (718) 792-6744; <https://www.nysl.org>; 11–11:30 am; Free with museum admission (\$6 Free for members).

Little ones from birth to 18 months and their parent/caregiver listen to songs, and hear stories.

Game Day: Kingsbridge Library Center, 310 E. Kingsbridge Rd. at Briggs Ave. (718) 579-4244; www.nysl.org; 4 pm; Free.

For children 5-12.

Tech time: 4–5:30 pm. Pelham Bay Library. See Tuesday, May 1.

WED, MAY 9

Read-aloud: Pelham Bay Library, 3060 Middletown Rd. at Crosby Avenue; (718) 792-6744; <https://www.nysl.org>; 4–4:30 pm; Free with museum admission (\$6 Free for members).

Children hear a story from the librarian.

Advisory group: 4:30–5:30 pm. Pelham Bay Library. See Wednesday, May 2.

Flemenco in the Boros: Pregones Theater, 575 Walton Ave. and E. 150th Street; (718) 585-1202; 8 pm; \$10-\$12.

Flamenco performed by Vivo Carlota Santana. RSVP required.

THURS, MAY 10

Mother's day craft: Kingsbridge Li-



Fun at the mansion

Open house weekend at the Bartow Pell Mansion Museum kicks off Friday night, May 4, when folk singer Mary Courtney performs a selection of Irish and American folk songs on the guitar and *bodhran* (a hand-held Irish drum) from 5:30-8:30 pm. Tickets, which include a trolley ride from Pelham Bay Park station or City Island, are \$8 for adults and \$5 for students and seniors.

Festivities continue through Mother's Day weekend with an open house on Saturday and Sun-

day from noon-4 pm; guided hikes through the grounds; a wildlife showcase focusing on birds of prey; playtime with 19th-century toys and games; traditional jigs performed by Jeff and Jan Ausfahl; and a garden tool exhibit. Check our listings for exact times of each event.

Open house weekend at Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum [895 Shore Rd. in Pelham Bay (718) 885-1461]. General admission to the grounds is \$5 for adults, and \$3 for seniors and students. Children under 6 are free; www.bartowpellmansionmuseum.org

day from noon-4 pm; guided hikes through the grounds; a wildlife showcase focusing on birds of prey; playtime with 19th-century toys and games; traditional jigs performed by Jeff and Jan Ausfahl; and a garden tool exhibit. Check our listings for exact times of each event.

For children 5-12.

FRI, MAY 11

National Public Gardens Day event: Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum, 895 Shore Rd. (718) 885-1461; www.bartowpellmansionmuseum.org; Noon–4 pm; Free.

Enjoy a garden tool exhibition and tours.

Krafty Kids: Pelham Bay Library, 3060 Middletown Rd. at Crosby Avenue; (718) 792-6744; <https://www.nysl.org>; 3:30–4 pm; Free with museum admission (\$6 Free for members).

Children 5-12 learn hands-on skills using a variety of materials.

Skate night: St. James Recreation Center, 2530 Jerome Ave. at E. 193rd St. (718) 367-3657; www.nycgovparks.org; 6:30–8:30 pm; Free.

Roller skating and board games.

"Hansel & Gretel": Lehman Center for the Performing Arts, 250 Bedford

Park Boulevard West; (718) 960-8833; www.LehmanCenter.org; 7:30 pm; \$15-\$30.

Presented by the The Bronx Opera Company. Suitable for children 5 years and older.

SAT, MAY 12

Kinder Kritters: Central Park Zoo, 830 Fifth Ave at E. 65th Street; (212) 439-6583; www.centralparkzoo.com/ programs; 10–11 am; \$25 (\$30 non-members).

Springtime on the Farm - for 4 and 5 year old children. Instructors lead the children through songs, dances and games, as well as creative animal themed crafts.

Family Art project: Wave Hill, West 249th St. and Independence Ave. (718) 549-3200; www.wavehill.org; 10 am–1 pm; Free with museum admission.

Visit the trees on the grounds.

Toddler Time: Central Park Zoo, 830 Fifth Ave at E. 65th Street; (212) 439-6583; www.centralparkzoo.com/ programs; 10:30–11:30 am; \$25 (\$30

non-members).

Hop Skip and Jump - for 2 and 3 year old children. Live animals, movement and musical activities plus a craft.

Animal Tales Extravaganza: Bronx Zoo, 2300 Southern Blvd. at Boston Road; (718) 220-5103; www.bronxzoo.com; 11 am–4 pm; \$29.95 (\$19.95 children 3-12 \$24.96 seniors).

Arts and crafts presented by Bright Horizons, Animal tales by Plum Organics, Sportacus and Stephanie from Lazy Town on Sprout, Avenue Zoo and Kate Monster from the Animal Zoo. it's all family fun all weekend long.

Mother's Day: New York Botanical Garden, 200th St. and Kazimiroff Blvd. (718) 817-8700; www.nybg.org; 11 am–4 pm; \$20 (\$18 seniors and students; \$8 for children 2-12).

Treat mom to a garden party and tea for her special day.

"Hansel & Gretel": 7:30 pm. Lehman Center for the Performing Arts. See Friday, May 11.

SUN, MAY 13

Family Art project: 10 am–1 pm. Wave Hill. See Saturday, May 12.

Mother's day: Central Park Zoo, 830 Fifth Ave at E. 65th Street; (212) 439-6583; www.centralparkzoo.com/ programs; 11 am–12:30 pm; \$45 (\$50 non-members).

Children 3 to 10 years old with an adult meet a variety of animals, make a tasty treat for one of the zoo animals and embark on an animal moms scavenger hunt, followed by a craft and cake.

Mil's Trills: 92Y Tribeca, 200 Hudson St. at Vestry Street; (212) 601-1000; <http://>; 11 am – 2 pm; \$15 (Children under 2 free).

Leaping Lizards it's a concert just for kids and moms just in time for Mother's day. Amelia Robinson plays her original songs on her ukulele. Suitable for babies/toddlers ages birth to 4.

Mother's Day: 11 am–4 pm. New York Botanical Garden. See Saturday, May 12.

TUES, MAY 15

Tech time: 4–5:30 pm. Pelham Bay Library. See Tuesday, May 1.

WED, MAY 16

Read-aloud: 4–4:30 pm. Pelham Bay Library. See Wednesday, May 9.

Advisory group: 4:30–5:30 pm. Pelham Bay Library. See Wednesday, May 2.

Story time: 11–11:30 pm. Pelham Bay Library. See Wednesday, May 2.

Going Places

FRI, MAY 18

Arts and crafts: 11–11:30 am. Pelham Bay Library. See Friday, May 4.

Art Slam: Children's Museum of the Arts, 103 Charlton St. at Hudson Street; (212) 274-0986; rachel@rrapoport@cmayn.org; www.cmany.org; 6:30–9 pm; Free.

Children in seventh to ninth grade party with pizza, music and art. RSVP required.

SAT, MAY 19

Insect workshop: Central Park Zoo, 830 Fifth Ave at E. 65th Street; (212) 439-6583; www.centralparkzoo.com/programs; 10–11:30 am; \$35 (\$40 non-members).

Children 7-10 years old learn about bugs and how to identify the different species at the zoo.

It's my Park Day: St. James Recreation Center, 2530 Jerome Ave. at E. 193rd St. (718) 367-3657; www.nycgovparks.org; 10 am–2:30–pm; Free.

Celebrate with a walk around the park, help clean up, arts and crafts and face painting.

Family Art project: Wave Hill, West 249th St. and Independence Ave. (718) 549-3200; www.wavehill.org; 10 am–1 pm; Free with museum admission.

Gardens and flowers and more.

Animal Tales Extravaganza: Bronx Zoo, 2300 Southern Blvd. at Boston Road; (718) 220-5103; www.bronxzoo.com; 11 am–4 pm; \$29.95 (\$19.95 children 3-12 \$24.96 seniors).

Arts and crafts presented by Bright Horizons, Animal tales by Plum Organics, Disney's Choo-Choo Soul, Mo Willems' Elephant and Piggie and the Rainforest Parade. it's all family fun all weekend long.

Digital Scavenger Hunt: St. Mary's Recreation Center, St. Ann's Ave. at 145th Street; (718) 402-5155; www.nycgovparks.org; 11 am–4 pm; Free.

Teams come out and compete to find as many items as possible.

SUN, MAY 20

Family Art project: 10 am–1 pm. Wave Hill. See Saturday, May 19.

The Deedle Deedle Dees: 92Y Tribeca, 200 Hudson St. at Vestry Street; (212) 601-1000; www.92ytribeca.org/byok; 11 am; \$15 (Free for children un-

der 2).

Brooklyn based educational band performs favorite children's numbers.

Insect hunt: Pelham Bay Ranger Station (PBRS), Pelham Bay Park, Bruckner Boulevard and Wilkinson Avenue; (718) 885-3467; www.nyc.gov/parks/rangers; 1 pm; Free.

Explore the natural world with rangers and learn all about bugs.

Bike tour: Bartow-Pell Mansion Museum, 895 Shore Rd. (718) 885-1461; www.bartowpellmansionmuseum.org; 2–4 pm; Free.

An annual spring bike tour heads north to Pelham to visit two historic Pell houses. Registration is requested.

TUES, MAY 22

Baby time: 11–11:30 am. Pelham Bay Library. See Tuesday, May 8.

Tech time: 4–5:30 pm. Pelham Bay Library. See Tuesday, May 1.

WED, MAY 23

Advisory group: 4:30–5:30 pm. Pelham Bay Library. See Wednesday, May 2.

SAT, MAY 26

Garden Domino Tournament: El Flamboyant Community Garden, 592 Tinton Ave. and E. 150th St. (212) 788-8065; www.nycgovparks.org; 2–7 pm; Free.

Open to all ages and skill levels.

TUES, MAY 29

Tech time: 4–5:30 pm. Pelham Bay Library. See Tuesday, May 1.

WED, MAY 30

Advisory group: 4:30–5:30 pm. Pelham Bay Library. See Wednesday, May 2.

THURS, MAY 31

"Toy Story": Pelham Bay Library, 3060 Middletown Rd. at Crosby Avenue; (718) 792-6744; https://www.nypl.org; 3:30–5 pm; Free with museum admission (\$6 Free for members).

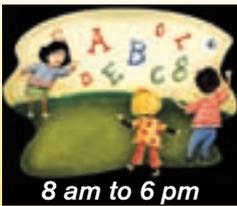
Children 5-12 enjoy a screening of the Tom Hanks, Tim Allen and Don Rickles animated story of a boy and his toys. Rated PG, 77 minutes.

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New & Noteworthy

BY LISA J. CURTIS



A neat seat

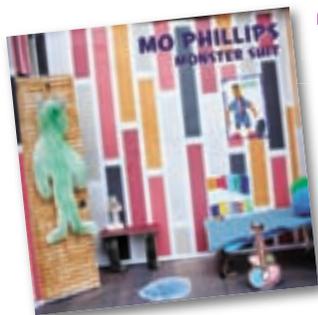
We all know at least one girl that would swoon for the “Princess” Fainting Couch by Levels of Discovery. She’s the daughter, granddaughter, or niece that loves to host a tea party, prefers tutus to pants, and clamors for Fancy Nancy books at bedtime. And such a girl would feel glamorous indeed as she lounged on these purple cushions, perched above hardwood that is embellished with the words “Her

Royal Highness.”

HRH’s parents will adore the practical function of this lounge: the seat — equipped with a slow-closing metal safety hinge — lifts to reveal storage for your little princess’s tiaras, bejeweled shoes and feather boas.

The couch, which features removable back, arm, and seat cushions, measures 31-inches wide, by 13.5 inches-deep, and 27-inches high. Perfect for all ages, up to 100 pounds.

Levels of Discovery “Princess” Fainting Couch with Storage, \$151.96–209.95. Visit barnesandnoble.com.



‘Monster’ talent

Warning: Listening to Mo Phillips’ latest CD, “Monster Suit,” will make your head bob uncontrollably and add a cheesy grin to your face. That’s because this Portland, Oregon-based singer-songwriter’s collection of 14 rockin’ songs are both silly and smart. Phillips entertains parents and children alike with lyrics that demonstrate sympathy to both camps, whether this dad of two boys

is exhorting listeners to not “fall off the couch ‘cause the carpet is lava” in the country-influenced “Hot Lava;” or commiserating over an unruly ‘do in “Bed Head;” or he’s encouraging his young listeners to be true to themselves in “The Princess and The Cowboy.” Now, giddyup to the record store.

“Monster Suit” CD by Mo Phillips (Hey! Bacon!! Records), \$12.99. Visit mophillips.com.

The best babysitter ever

A wonderful Mother’s Day gift for a special grandmother, “Silly Frilly Grandma Tillie” is a beautifully illustrated tribute to those special women that can’t help but delight their grandkids.

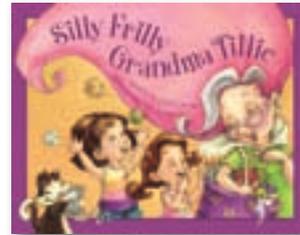
In Laurie Jacobs’ humorous hardcover, Grandma Tillie is babysitting Chloe and So-

phie. Rather than parking the girls in front of the TV, Grandma Tillie becomes the entertainment, transforming herself into a series of fun-loving characters.

The sweet, comic tale is recommended for children ages 4–8.

“Silly Frilly Grandma Tillie” by Laurie Jacobs (Flashlight Press),

\$16.95. Visit ipgbook.com.



Picnic fit for Yogi

GoPicnic has developed an allergen-free mealtime solution to enjoy on your child’s time-crunched days. Its SunButter + Crackers ready-to-eat, meal-in-a-box is a balanced, light lunch with creamy sunflower seed spread that is easily squirted onto the crunchy, multi-grain crackers. The box also contains seed and fruit trail mix, tropical fruit “bites,” and a

chocolate cookie.

The components are delicious and don’t need to be refrigerated. Bring a napkin and a drink and you’re on your way!

GoPicnic SunButter + Crackers ready-to-eat meal, \$4.99. Available at Target stores and at GoPicnic.com.



For her little twinkle toes

Whether your daughter is 3 or 23, a mommy-and-me pedicure date can be a fun, bonding experience for both. Just in time for toe-baring sandal weather, Piggy Paint has released four new shades: Glitter Bug, translucent with multi-color sparkles; Glamour Girl,

fuschia with silver glitter; Pocketful of Posies, a matte, dark pink; and Hypnotize, a deep, shimmery teal in Piggy Paint’s “Refined” line of chic colors that is geared toward moms.

What makes these polishes so special? Piggy Paints are water-based, non-toxic, and devoid of the dizzying odor of standard polishes. The chip-resistant paints — made in the U.S. — are a great favor idea for your little princess’s spa-themed birthday party. Now you can both put your best feet forward — safely.

Piggy Paint nail polish, \$3.98–\$8.99. Visit walmart.com.



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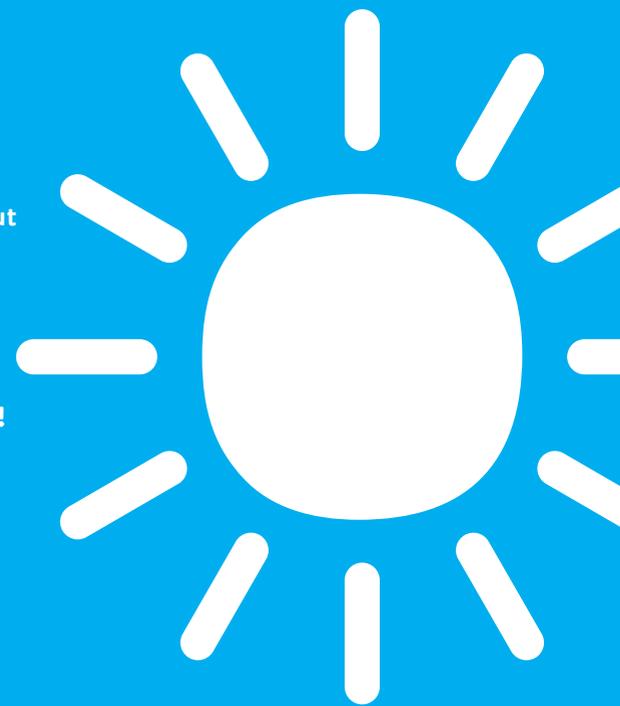
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