

QUEENS

Family

www.webfamilyny.com

December 2010
FREE

**Education
Section**

Holidays *with heart*

Spend less & savor more

Childcare to fit your budget



Where to go in December? Check out our **Going Places**



She promises to work hard. **Promise to do your part.**

Through all the homework, projects, and hours of practice, your child gives you her best. All this hard work will pay off when it's time for college. Do your part to help pay for her education by opening a New York 529 College Savings Program *Direct Plan*. With as little as \$25, you, family and friends can open and contribute to an account for your child. Contributions can qualify for a generous deduction from New York State taxable income.* Earnings grow tax deferred, and you pay no state or federal taxes on qualified withdrawals, making a 529 plan one of the most tax-efficient ways to save.** Plus, a free rewards service from Upromise® can add to your account. It's so easy—just visit ny529directplan.com, and in about ten minutes, you've kept your promise.

Visit ny529directplan.com
or call 1-800-608-8617



*Up to \$10,000 is deductible from New York State taxable income for married couples filing jointly; single residents can deduct up to \$5,000 annually. *May be subject to recapture in certain circumstances—rollovers to another state's plan or non-qualified withdrawals.*

**Earnings on non-qualified withdrawals may be subject to federal income tax and a 10% federal penalty tax, as well as state and local income taxes. Tax and other benefits are contingent on meeting other requirements and certain withdrawals are subject to federal, state and local taxes.

Before you invest, consider whether your or the designated beneficiary's home state offers any state tax or other benefits that are only available for investments in such state's qualified tuition program.

The Comptroller of the State of New York and the New York State Higher Education Services Corporation are the Program Administrators and are responsible for implementing and administering the *Direct Plan*. Upromise Investments, Inc. and Upromise Investment Advisors, LLC serve as Program Manager and Recordkeeping and Servicing Agent, respectively, and are responsible for day-to-day operations, including effecting transactions. The Vanguard Group, Inc. serves as the Investment Manager. Vanguard Marketing Corporation markets, distributes and underwrites the *Direct Plan*.

No guarantee: None of the State of New York, its agencies, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), The Vanguard Group, Inc., Upromise Investments, Inc., nor any of their applicable affiliates insures accounts or guarantees the principal deposited therein or any investment returns on any account or investment portfolio.

New York's 529 College Savings Program currently includes two separate 529 plans. The *Direct Plan* is sold directly by the Program. You may also participate in the Advisor Plan, which is sold exclusively through financial advisors and has different investment options and higher fees and expenses as well as financial advisor compensation.

Upromise is a registered service mark of Upromise, Inc.

For more information about New York's 529 College Savings Program *Direct Plan*, obtain a Program Brochure and Tuition Savings Agreement at ny529directplan.com or by calling 1-800-608-8617. This includes investment objectives, risks, charges, expenses, and other information. You should read and consider them carefully before investing.

© 2010 State of New York

Family December 2010

Letter from the publisher

This year has been an enormous transition year for much of our city. High levels of unemployment, loss of property, property values and investments have all contributed to a state of unease and uncertainty, and people have been revamping their budgets and trying to figure out how to make their dollars stretch further.



Continuing to provide for our children and their welfare is every parent's primary goal, and we sacrifice elsewhere in our lives to make sure our children are given all they need to grow and prosper.

It's been a rough year for the many schools and businesses that provide education, care and services for our children. Budgets have been slashed and everyone is trying hard to hold on.

Looking ahead to 2011 we cross our fingers and hope we will return to prosperity and a better economic climate for everyone.

Personally, I have much to be grateful for. I have a super teenage daughter who is a dedicated student and a thoughtful human being. I have a terrific staff with which to collaborate on work I thoroughly enjoy. I have good health, loving friends and relations, and an appreciation of a lot that life has to offer. All this I was taught by my parents and I am trying to pass on this same love of living to my next in line. That's what we, as parents, must do.

And now, I must thank the wonderful people I work with who make these magazines happen. I want to thank our writers — both staff and freelance — our design people and our distributors. I especially want to thank Tina, Cliff, Linda, On Man, Arthur, Irene, Yvonne, Leah, Vinnie, Nikki, Courtney, Joanna, Earl, Patti, Pat and Paul.

The biggest thank you of all goes to my partner in effort and intellect and my fondest collaborator, Sharon Noble. Without her, it wouldn't be fun and it wouldn't be possible.

Happy holidays to all of you. Happy New Year and thanks for reading!

Susan Weiss

Susan Weiss-Voskidis, Publisher

FEATURES

- 4 Gifts for less**
Personalized presents will win children's hearts
BY BELINDA MOONEY
- 8 Holidays with heart**
Spend less and savor more this holiday season
BY KATHY SENA
- 14 Learn the lingo**
For parents hoping to communicate with teens
BY JOANNA DELBUONO
- 18 Hollywood Rx for the holidays**
Classic movies to revive weary parents
BY CHRISTINA KATZ
- 22 Seasonal minefield**
Tips for special needs families navigating the holidays
BY REBECCA MCKEE, MSED, BCBA
- 26 Affordable child care is possible**
The best care for your child when you're on a budget
BY CANDI SPARKS
- 28 Autism support**
Queens group helps families cope with the disorder
BY MARY CARROLL WININGER
- 32 Bugging out again**
Greenpoint cartoonist dishes on his new kids book
BY CHUCK O'DONNELL
- 35 Pee-wee in the 'house'**
Paul Reubens's TV show hits Broadway
BY LISA J. CURTIS
- 40 To Facebook or not to Facebook?**
Is it ethical for a teacher to 'friend' students?
BY VERA BORUKHOV

SPECIAL SECTION

- 12 Education Directory**

STAFF

- PUBLISHER:** Clifford Luster
- PUBLISHER/MANAGING EDITOR:** Susan Weiss
- EDITOR:** Vince DiMiceli
- CREATIVE DIRECTOR:** Leah Mitch
- ART DIRECTOR:** On Man Tse
- ADVERTISING SALES:** Sharon Noble, Linda Smith
- SPECIAL ASSISTANT:** Tina Felicetti

CONTACT INFORMATION

- ADVERTISING SALES**
718 260-2587
Family@cnglocal.com or
SWeiss@cnglocal.com
- CIRCULATION**
718 260-8336
TFelicetti@cnglocal.com
- EDITORIAL**
718 260-4551
Editorial@cnglocal.com

- ADDRESS**
Family Publications New York/CNG
1 MetroTech Center North
10th Floor
Brooklyn, NY 11201
www.webfamilyny.com



Brooklyn Family, Queens Family, Bronx/Riverdale Family and Staten Island Family are published monthly. Copyright©2010. No part of our contents may be reproduced without permission from the publisher.



COLUMNS

- 2 Newbie Dad**
BY BRIAN KANTZ
- 6 Good Sense Eating**
BY CHRISTINE M. PALUMBO, RD
- 10 Cinematters**
BY LAURA GRAY
- 16 Lions and Tigers and Teens**
BY MYRNA BETH HASKELL
- 20 Parents Helping Parents**
BY SHARON C. PETERS
- 24 Growing Up Online**
BY CAROLYN JABS
- 34 Our Relationships**
BY JOAN EMERSON, PhD
- 42 It Figures**
BY CYNTHIA WASHAM
- 44 New & Noteworthy**
The hottest new products

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- 36 Going Places**
Find out what's going on in your town



NEWBIE DAD

BRIAN KANTZ

Sensing the holidays

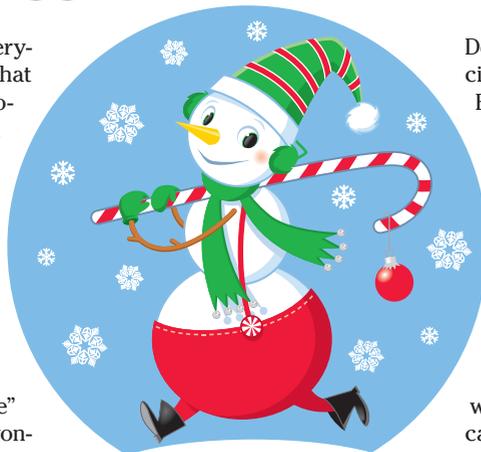
Traditions trigger memories for this father

As a parent, I want to do everything I can to make sure that my two boys have a memorable childhood. Memorable in a good way, of course. Not in a my-dad-made-me-star-in-“Home Alone”-then-squandered-all-of-my-earnings way. So, my wife and I take them to interesting places, encourage them to try different foods, and snap about a bazillion photos to document our experiences together.

Still, for all of the “memorable” stuff that we do, I can’t help but wonder how much my kids will actually remember. After all, they are only 6 and 3, and unless you’re Junie B. Jones, it’s kind of tough to write first-grade memoirs with any great detail. I’m 37 and those closets in my brain that hold 30-year-old memories are filled with a lot of, ahek-ahek, dust.

There is hope, however. In my humble, non-scientific — but always correct — opinion, the brain best remembers those things that, at a moment in time, inundated one of your five senses: taste, sight, hearing, smell, or touch. And, it seems to me, that kind of attack on the senses is bound to happen each year when the holidays roll around. That’s the time when colors are a tad sparklier (yes, I said sparklier), songs are a bit zazzier (yes, zazzier), and cakes taste more rum-my (no, not yummy, rum-my).

That’s why, for me, a good percent-



age of the early childhood memories that do still exist revolve around the holidays and the senses. And I’m making a concerted effort to pass those memories on to my two sons. Here’s a sample:

Taste

I know you’ll be right with me on this one: candy canes. One lick of a candy cane and you’re immediately transported to the holidays of your childhood. My favorite version of candy canes is the seasonal special, peppermint stick ice cream. It’s mint ice cream with crushed candy canes. My boys prefer mini-candy canes, which turn their fingers red.

Sight

Watching holiday specials on TV is a great memory. Seeing the

Dolly Madison ice cream commercial that accompanied “A Charlie Brown Christmas” was a sure sign that the holidays were here. “How the Grinch Stole Christmas,” “Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer,” and “Frosty the Snowman” endure to this day.

Hearing

Two words: Bing Crosby. No album will ever top Bing’s “White Christmas” for direct association with the holidays. In my mind, I can hear Bing singing, “I’m dreaming...” and my dad singing, “... of a ...” and my grandfather singing, “... white Christmas ...” Who doesn’t love to impersonate the bub-a-dub-bub sound of der Bingle?

Smell

The smell of the holidays is pine. I’m told my father once tried to put up an artificial tree in our house, but one look at my mother’s face told him that he better throw it in the trash and drive, as fast as he could, to the lot down the street to pick up a real tree. Once inside a house, a pine tree’s scent dominates everything.

Touch

The holidays always recall the feeling of squishing cookie dough in my hands. One of my family’s great traditions was the annual baking of a cookie called, “Winter Rainbows.” The recipe calls for the dough to be colored red, yellow and green. My mom would squeeze a few drops of food coloring on the dough and then let my brothers and I have at it. I remember going to school with green fingers. Now, it’s my sons’ turn to squish dough.

And since it is the season of giving, I’d like to offer the gift of the “Winter Rainbows” recipe. Spend some time with your kids making memories and making some really great cookies. Enjoy — and happy holidays!

Brian Kantz really wants you to make these cookies. They’re good. Seriously. Visit Brian online at www.briankantz.com or drop him a note at thenewbie-dad@yahoo.com.

Winter Rainbows

Makes six dozen cookies. (Yes, you’ll want at least that many.)

INGREDIENTS

2 cups all-purpose flour
 ½ tsp. baking powder
 ½ tsp. salt
 1/8 tsp. baking soda
 10 tbsp. (1-¼ sticks) butter, softened
 ½ cup firmly packed brown sugar
 ¼ cup granulated sugar
 1 egg
 1 tsp. vanilla
 Yellow, green and red food coloring
 Milk

INSTRUCTIONS

In a large bowl, mix or sift together flour, baking powder, salt, baking soda. In another bowl, beat butter with sugars until fluffy. Beat in egg and vanilla. Stir in flour mixture, a third at a time, blending well to make a soft dough. Divide dough into three equal portions, tinting one green, one red and one yellow.

Roll each portion of dough into a nine-by-five rectangle between sheets of wax paper. Chill in freezer 10 minutes. Cut each piece of dough in half lengthwise, cutting through wax paper. Peel off top sheets.

Brush top of one strip lightly with milk; place another strip, paper side up, on top. Peel off paper. Repeat procedure with remaining dough strips, alternating colors, to make six layers. Press lightly together. Cut finished stack lengthwise to make two narrow stacks. Wrap in plastic wrap, foil, or wax paper; chill in refrigerator three hours or overnight. Unwrap dough. Cut into 1/8-inch slices with a sharp knife. Place on greased cookie sheets. (They won’t spread much, so you can put them pretty close together on the cookie sheet.) Bake in moderate oven (350 degrees) for eight minutes, or until edges are golden.

“An enchanting ride.”

— The New York Times



A family favorite!
The Met's spectacular production by **JULIE TAYMOR**, the director of *The Lion King*, returns in its abridged, English-language version for the holidays.

Mozart

THE MAGIC FLUTE

DEC 21 mat, 24, 28 mat, 29 mat, 30 mat JAN 1, 3 mat, 6

Visit metopera.org, the box office, or call 212-362-6000.

Tickets from \$22. Premium orchestra seats are \$109.

The Met
ropolitan
Opera

Gifts for less

Personalized presents will win children's hearts

BY BELINDA MOONEY

Holiday time is also gift-giving time, especially for children. Buying presents for everyone in the family can stretch your budget to the limit, if you're not careful. Deciding what to buy for all of those kids — your own, nieces and nephews, grandchildren — is a challenge when you're not only trying to get the most from every dollar, but also trying to give a gift that has the individual in mind. But it can be done! Here are some thoughtful and fun ideas that will make every child — from toddlers to teens — feel special and save you some money as well.

Gift baskets

While we often think of gift baskets as for adults, they are enjoyed by kids, too. And if you put them together yourself, you can save money while creating a customized present that says, "You're important to me." A gift basket is as fun to make as it is to give. Start with a container to hold your gifts in. This can — but doesn't have to — be a basket. You can use wicker baskets; storage containers; a large, colorful bowl; a plastic bucket; or even an upside-down cowboy hat. They can be filled inexpensively with items from the local dollar store, with homemade treats or even thrift store finds. Most retail stores sell the cellophane wrappers you see around gift baskets. Just slip yours in, tie it off with a colorful ribbon and — voila! — a beautiful gift.

Here are some fun themes for kids' gift baskets:

- **Artsy gift basket** — This theme is just right for the child who likes crafts or creating in any form. For those who like to draw, include colored and drawing pencils, a pad of paper, erasers and an instruction book. For younger kids, anything that lets them be creative works — paint sets, coloring books, crayons, safety scissors and glue sticks. Add whimsical items like glitter glue, stickers, construction paper and foam cut-outs.

- **For the sporty type** — A gift basket for the sports enthusiast is easy

to make and can be created for any type of athletic activity. It might be a soccer, swimming, football or golf theme. You can also create a gift basket around her favorite sports team, if she enjoys that, but doesn't actually play sports. Products that work well in this type of basket are mugs, sports bottles, hats, pencils, a rolled up sweatshirt or gym shorts with a team logo.

- **Just for girls** — These gift baskets are perfect for when your child needs a present for someone you may not know very well. Kids especially enjoy shopping for their friends or cousins and the dollar stores are perfect for this. You can use a pretty wire basket or even a small plastic bin that you can personalize with permanent markers. Fill with toiletries such as shampoo, bubble bath and body wash, or whimsies such as barrettes, inexpensive jewelry, a small stuffed animal or lip gloss.

- **For the guys** — Just like a basket for the girls, this is a quick-and-easy gift idea for friends. A mini crate works great as a "basket." Toss in some toy cars, squirt guns, army men, small model kits or an inexpensive, hand-held electronic game, and you are ready to go.

Personalize it!

Kids love anything that has their name on it or tells the world who they are, such as shorts that say "Big Sister" or "Favorite Niece." You can purchase items like this easily through many local stores or over the Internet, or you can consider making them yourself. Beach towels, mugs, dinnerware, name plaques, shirts and wall hangings can all be personalized with a child's name. Teens especially enjoy shirts, purses, jewelry and other items that have their names or initials on them. Local embroidery and T-shirt shops are affordable, and china markers and fabric paint make decorating on your own easy.

The teenage crowd

Teens can be tough customers to buy for without breaking the bank,

but it is possible. Gift cards for this age are a fool-proof idea.

Get one to his favorite book or music store, sporting goods emporium or game shop. Put the gift card in a cute mug with a candy bar, and you have a simple-but-sweet surprise. Gift certificates to fast food restaurants are always a perfect idea for any teen; after all, eating is what they do best! Or fill a gift bag with a DVD, microwave popcorn and a two-liter of pop. Teens are often easier to please than we think they are.

Get creative

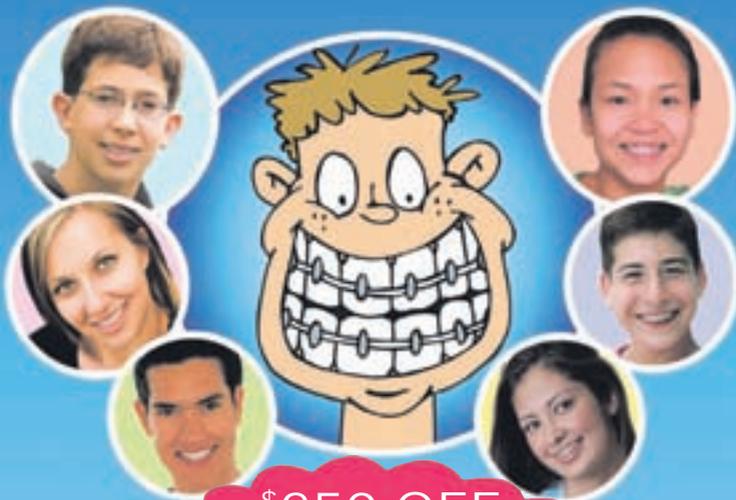
With a little ingenuity and planning, you can shop for kids without going broke. Just like older folks, kids enjoy gifts that say you thought about them and let them know they are special.



Orthodontist AARON MILCHMAN D.M.D., P.C.

STATE OF THE ART ORTHODONTICS

Beautiful Smiles Created In A Caring & Comfortable Setting



**\$250 OFF
FULL
TREATMENT**

Braces for Children & Adults

Labial (outside)

Lingual (inside)

Aesthetic (ceramic-tooth color)

Invisalign™ (Invisible)

Most Insurance Plans Accepted Towards Payment

Whitestone

172-20 26th Avenue
Flushing, NY 11358

718.747.0393

Kew Gardens Hills

70-18 Main Street
Kew Gardens Hills, NY 11367

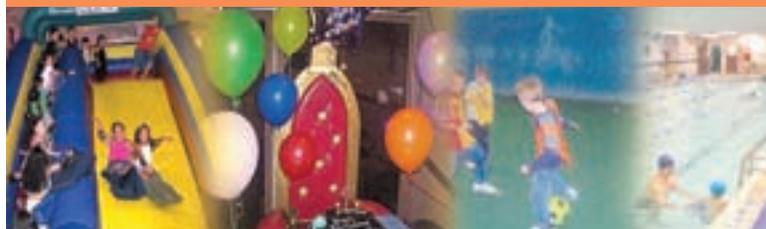
718.575.9300

www.straightenwithbraces.com

ASTORIA SPORTS COMPLEX

PRESENTS

PARTY! PARTY! PARTY!



Have Your Next Fabulous Party With Us

- ★ Swimming
- ★ Basketball
- ★ Soccer
- ★ Baseball
- ★ In-Line Skating
- ★ Moon Walk
- ★ Super Slide
- ★ Healthy & Fun

Visit our web site for a virtual tour & prices

Includes:

- Hostesses ★ Two Sports
- ★ Pizza & Soda ★ Gift for Every Guest
- ★ Special Gift for Birthday Child
- Table for Adults ★ Party Area For 2 1/2 Hours

FREE Indoor parking for birthday child's parents

We give all our parties our "personal touch" as we are committed to customer satisfaction!

34-38 38th Street • Astoria, NY 11101 (Bet. 34th & 35th Aves.)
718-729-7163 www.ascsports1.com

Conveniently located in the heart of Queens -
One block from public transportation (V,R,G)



"THE PLACE THAT EVERYONE RAVES ABOUT"



GOOD SENSE EATING

CHRISTINE M. PALUMBO, RD

Latest guidelines for your child's diet

Have you ever wished for a dietary roadmap to assist you in your family's meal planning? How about one using a science-based approach by our nation's top nutrition experts and updated to align with the latest research? The recently released Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee's report is just that.

First developed in 1980, the Dietary Guidelines are updated every five years. In addition to helping Americans navigate the nutrition world, they're used for federal nutrition programs and building consumer messages. For example, the National School Lunch Program utilizes the recommendations in order to feed over 30 million children every day.

Report highlights

Its new focus is on children's health. Preventing childhood obesity is the most powerful public health initiative to combat our country's obesity epidemic in the long term.

It says:

- Children and teens should accumulate at least one hour of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity every day.

Q: What are "SoFAS?"

A: SoFAS refer to the solid fats and added sugars that contribute too many calories — about 35 percent — to the American diet for kids, teens and adults. You, likely, understand the meaning of added sugars. Solid fats are the fats in butter, cheese, stick margarine, vegetable shortening and the fats in meat.

- Kids should be discouraged from drinking sugar-sweetened beverages.

- We should eat a more plant-centered diet that emphasizes vegetables, cooked dry beans, fruits, whole grains, nuts and seeds.

- The benefits of cooked seafood outweigh the risks from mercury and other possible contaminants. Aim for two 4-ounce servings per week.

- Healthy patterns of eating include the Mediterranean diet and the Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) diet.

- Daily vitamins don't benefit healthy people. An exception is peo-

ple who have a calcium or iron deficiency who may wish to supplement their diet.

Environment change

The report acknowledges the difficulty in changing your diet unless changes are made to the overall food environment. How do you eat a nutrient-dense diet at the same time supermarkets, schools, restaurants and other food venues offer myriad food and beverage choices high in fat, sugar and sodium?

The report recommends that we:

- Improve people's nutrition literacy and cooking skills.

- Motivate families with children to prepare and enjoy more home-cooked meals.

- Encourage the food industry to offer smaller portions of foods that promote health. These include foods low in sodium, added sugars, refined flours and solid fats.

A bit of controversy

The committee suggests people reduce sodium to just 1,500 milligrams each day, and cut out foods with added sodium. Some nutrition experts dismiss this as being unrealistic in today's society. The report also recommends upping potassium in the diet — plentiful in produce — which helps cut sodium's effect on blood pressure.

According to Toby Smithson, RD, LDN, CDE, a spokesperson for the American Dietetic Association, some groups feel there should be more definitive guidelines for the amount of fat in the diet and more emphasis on vitamin D. She adds that some critics want, "more focus on choosing whole grains instead of making half your grains whole."

The committee's recommendations will be considered when the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Department of Health and Human Services develop the final Dietary Guidelines early next year.

To read the full report, go to www.dietaryguidelines.gov.



Grape Tomato Bruschetta

Makes eight bruschetta

INGREDIENTS

4 Arnold® Honey Wheat Sandwich Thins® rolls, separated
2 pints grape tomatoes, sliced in half lengthwise

1 tablespoon aged balsamic vinegar
2 tablespoons garlic-infused extra-virgin olive oil
12 fresh basil leaves
Kosher salt, to taste
Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

INSTRUCTIONS: Toast Sandwich Thins® halves to a light golden brown. In a bowl, mix tomatoes with balsamic vinegar, olive oil, salt and pepper, to taste. Stack basil leaves and roll them in the shape of a log. Slice the rolled basil, making ribbons. Toss most of the cut basil with the tomatoes, reserving a bit of fresh basil to garnish. Spoon dressed tomatoes on top of each toasted Sandwich Thins® half and garnish with a few fresh basil ribbons.

NUTRITION FACTS: 100 calories, 14 grams carbohydrate, 3 grams protein, 4 grams fat, 0.5 grams saturated fat, 0 trans fat and cholesterol, 3 grams dietary fiber, 3 grams sugar, 115 milligrams sodium, 15 percent DV vitamins A and C, 2 percent DV calcium, 4 percent DV iron.

Recipe courtesy of Claire Robinson of "Five Ingredient Fix."



Wishing You a
Happy & Healthy
New Year

The most affordable braces in town!

free initial
consultation

most
insurances
accepted

low
down
payment

\$500 off
with this
coupon

HOUSE OF
ORTHODONTIA

122 Atlantic Avenue • Brooklyn • NY • 11201 • Tel 718 852 4414

Our winter class schedule is now available for all ages at greatneckarts.org or call 516.829.2570.

What new talents are budding in you?

- Actor's Workshop
- Art
- Ballet
- Cake Decorating
- Cartooning
- Chess
- Clay
- Drama
- Drawing
- Fashion Design
- Fencing
- Glee Club
- Hip Hop
- Jazz
- Music Classes
- Musical Theatre
- Painting
- Photography
- Pottery
- Print Making
- Suzuki Violin
- Tap

113 MIDDLE NECK ROAD GREAT NECK NY 11021 516.829.2570
GREATNECKARTS.ORG PROUDLY SERVING QUEENS AND LONG ISLAND

Great Neck Arts Center **GNAC**
growing artists since 1993

©FW2011

George Balanchine's **The Nutcracker**

NEWYORKCITYBALLET

NOW through JANUARY 2

Tickets Start at Just \$20.
Ask about our VIP Sweet Seats.

nycballet.com
CenterCharge 212-721-6500
David H. Koch Theater at Lincoln Center 63rd Street & Columbus Ave.

American Express® is a proud supporter of New York City Ballet

AMERICAN EXPRESS
PREFERRED SEATING
NYCBALLET.COM/AXPNUT
TERMS, CONDITIONS AND RESTRICTIONS APPLY

Holidays with heart

Spend less
and savor
more this
holiday
season

BY KATHY SENA

With the holidays approaching, I've found myself chatting with friends about how we often regret spending too much money, running around like lunatics with our to-do lists, and stressing out during a season that should be spent enjoying family and friends. So this year, I'm planning to make my family's holidays more meaningful — and less crazed and costly. Want to join me? Here's how:

Plan ahead

First and foremost, make a list of every person you plan to buy a gift for, then create a budget. Don't wait until the 11th hour to shop — when you're more likely to feel desperate and spend too much on that fancy doodad the kids saw on TV on Dec. 23. You know the one. It's just like that thingamajig they got tired of by Dec. 27 last year.

Give gifts that help others

The possibilities here are endless, but here's one fun example: My family and I started giving gifts from Heifer International (www.heifer.org) a few years ago, and that has been a great experience. In your loved one's honor, you can give the gift of a share of a sheep, a flock of baby chicks, or a goat that will provide income and food for a needy family. Kids love to help pick out the gift. You buy as many shares of an animal or a flock as you like, so this gift idea works even for young kids who want to contribute some of their own money. The organization provides beautiful gift cards to give to your recipients.



Give experiences, not things

Does your sister really need another scarf? Instead, buy movie tickets for a fun girls' night out and spring for the popcorn. Want to include the nieces and nephews and not break the bank? Make a gift of a movie night at your house and go all out with movie-style candy, popcorn, soda — maybe even hot dogs. When you buy the goodies yourself and serve them at home, you can treat everyone for dimes on the dollar compared with those insane

movie theater prices (Plus, you can plan this event for January, after the craziness of the holidays is over). Even more fun — make everyone a star and show old family movies as the “previews” before the show.

Say no to new decorations

You already have boxes full of decorations — and if you're like me, you whine about a lack of storage space — right? Is it all that important to buy the new “must-have” decorations this year? Another option: Make decorations with the kids. I still

You'll support your community and you'll often find one-of-a kind gifts at craft fairs and school auctions. (And there's usually a bake sale nearby!)



remember the fun I had sitting with my mom and making elves out of pipe cleaners, styrofoam balls, and red felt when I was a kid.

Create photo gifts

They're something only you can give. Grandparents love calendars and photo books featuring the grandkids. My brother and I exchange CDs featuring high-res photos of our families from the past year. We e-mail photos to each other during the year, of course, but we usually send low-res versions. To have all the best photos on a CD is a wonderful (and inexpensive) gift. Another winner: we visited my parents for spring break one year and for Christmas that year, we gave them a photo book that included the photos from our visit.

Be a savvy online shopper

Check out PriceGrabber and other price-comparison sites to find the lowest price. And search Google for online coupons. If you want to buy something at a particular store, just Google the store name and "coupon." I've found coupons for everything from free shipping to 20 percent off my entire order.

Consolidate your online purchases

You'll save time, minimize shipping costs and help the environment. When shipping gifts yourself, re-use boxes and packing peanuts. Also, watch those shipping deadlines and order early to avoid higher costs for faster shipping as the holidays approach.

Buy local

You'll support your community and you'll often find one-of-a kind gifts — at great prices — at craft fairs and school auctions. Plus, this kind of shopping can be relax-

ing and fun! (And there's usually a bake sale nearby!)

Choose useful gifts

They don't have to be expensive. A car-care kit for a new driver. A gardening-magazine subscription for a new homeowner. A selection of spices or a fun cookbook for a budding young chef.

Get creative with gift wrap

Try to re-use materials rather than buy new wrap. Use gift bags and fabric ribbons and bows that can be reused year after year. For gifts wrapped in paper, have fun with Sunday comics or brown paper bags colored or stamped by the kids. My favorite: have little ones make hand prints with non-toxic paint on inexpensive butcher paper or brown paper bags and use as wrap. The grandparents may love the wrap more than the gift! Leftover scrapbooking paper and stickers are great for wrapping small gifts, too. Use extra scraps of wrapping paper as gift tags.

Focus on what counts

Whether it's attending a religious service, enjoying the school holiday play, making thumb-print cookies with your preschooler or playing Monopoly with the whole family, be sure to stop and really focus on the true blessings of the season. This year, my son is going to be playing piano in church, along with other young musicians, on Christmas Eve. For me, there's no present that could appear under the tree that will be more wonderful than that.

Kathy Sena is a freelance journalist and essayist. The best gift she ever received was Matthew Benjamin Sena, who was born Dec. 22, 1995, and came home from the hospital on Christmas Day.

Pediatric and Adolescent Clinic

Board Certified



Clinical Expertise

- Pediatric Primary Care Medicine
- Pediatric Emergency Medicine
- Adolescent Medicine

Now
Accepting
New
Patients

Well child examinations • Immunizations • Blood work
• Patient education and Awareness

- Multi-lingual (English, Spanish, Bulgarian, Russian, French)
- Admitting privileges at Elmhurst Hospital, Mount Sinai, LIJ and Schneider Hospital

We accept walk-ins / and by appointment

- Mon and Wed 4-8pm • Fri 1-6pm • Sat 9-2pm

Daniela Atanassova M.D., F.A.A.P., F.S.A.M

Address: 63-95 Austin Street, Rego Park NY 11374

Contact : (718)268-9100 • www.mdped.com

Find **Family** online at
www.webfamilyny.com

QUEENS theatre

Ballet for Young Audiences

THE NUTCRACKER

TUE DEC 28 - 1PM & 4PM
WED DEC 29 - 1PM & 4PM
THU DEC 30 - 1PM & 4PM
TICKETS \$12

BOX OFFICE: 718.760.0064 ONLINE: www.queenstheatre.org

Coming...
January 29th at 11am & 1pm
A hilarious bilingual production of
GOLDBLOCKS AND THE THREE BEARS



cinematters



LAURA GRAY

'Ramona' & family

Ramona and Beezus

Rated G

After months of begging and pleading, your daughter is now the proud owner of a brand new puppy. She's madly in love with the little fur ball — until he shreds her new sweater. And gobbles up her pancakes. And has an accident on her bedroom rug. She quickly realizes that being a pet owner isn't as easy as she thought.

Once her puppy is in obedience school, his rambunctiousness is curtailed. Your daughter learns how to train him to behave. Before long, he's back to being the darling little pup she always wanted — at least most of the time.

With some hard work, she learns that loving someone (or something) means accepting his annoying traits along with the endearing ones. That's the conclusion that the Quimby family comes to, as well, in "Ramona and Beezus," now available on DVD. Enjoy this entertaining film with your family and then discuss it with our Talk Together points. Later, you can get "Stuck On You" in our Play Together activity.

"Ramona and Beezus," based on the best-selling children's book series by Beverly Cleary, focuses on two sisters and their close-knit family. The Quimbys find their household turned upside-down when Dad loses his job. Mom must return to the workplace, leaving Dad in charge of 15-year-old Beezus (Ramona's nickname for Beatrice), 8-year-old Ramona and baby Roberta. Ramona



Ramona and her family enjoy some backyard waterworks.

overhears her parents discussing their money woes and decides to help out.

Ramona asks Beezus to help her enter a competition for a national advertising campaign. The winner becomes the high-paid poster child for a peanut butter ad. But tomboy Ramona has trouble pulling off the "princess" style the company is seeking. She loses the competition, but is consoled by Beezus. Ramona's other money-making schemes also fail.

Finally, the Quimbys are forced to sell their home. No one is happy

about it, but Ramona is the most upset. When the real estate agent shows the house to some prospective buyers, Ramona bursts in the door, runs upstairs — and falls through the ceiling. Distraught, she helps convince her parents to find a way to stay in the family home. Beezus and the rest of the family reaffirm their love for Ramona, despite her irritating antics. After all, that's what you do when you love someone.

Talk together

Ramona's imagination is sometimes out of control. Which was your favorite of her wild daydreams? Why does her dad encourage her to dream?

Ramona's wacky ideas often cause trouble for other people. Why does this happen? How do her family and friends respond? How would you react?

Schedule a family movie night during the holidays! Check out our archives at www.Cinematters.com and get some great ideas for fun with your favorite films.

© 2010, Cinematters

Play together: Stuck on you

You will need:

- Masking tape or duct tape
- Slips of paper
- Pens or pencils

Distribute 10 slips of paper to each player. Have each person write five positive traits (such as funny, creative or athletic) and five negative traits (such as messy, picky eater or always late) that de-

scribe the person on his or her left. Mix up the slips and spread them facedown on the floor. (Make sure it's a clear, open space.) To play, one person is "It." Wrap several strips of masking tape, sticky side out, around "Its" chest. "It" then has five seconds to roll across the floor, collecting as many slips of paper as will stick to the tape. No

hands allowed! At the end of five seconds, another player removes each slip one by one. If the group agrees that the trait describes "It" accurately, "It" gets five points. If a trait does not apply, deduct two points from "Its" score. Reuse the slips and let each player take a turn as "It." The player with the most points wins. And everyone learns the importance of loving each other, no matter what!

ORTHODONTICS



Brace Yourself For A Beautiful Smile In Our Fun Loving Adventure Under The Sea

Em"brace"fully

Dr. Karen H. Lewkowitz
Dr. Robert L. Shpuntoff

Over
20 Years
Experience!

Come & Visit Our Office!

Located One Block from Great Neck

FREE Consultation & A Gift

-  Affordable Payment Plans
-  Colorful & Clear Braces
-  Braceless Orthodontics
-  We Treat Latex Allergic & Nickel Sensitive Patients
-  Incredible Hi-Tech Office
-  Friendly & Caring Staff
-  Sunday Appointments Available
-  Digital X-Rays

(516) 504-GRIN

(718) 229-5924

www.lewkowitzandshpuntoff.com

55-15 Little Neck Pkwy. Little Neck

One Block North Of Long Island Expressway Exit 32

(Free & Easy Parking)

Members Of The American Association Of Orthodontists



You can make this Holiday Season a happy one for families in Queens.

Join the metrochildren family



Founded and run by early intervention clinicians and now in its 11th year of operation, metrochildren has established itself as a premiere, respected, and leading provider of early intervention services in the New York City area.

Full time, part time, or independent contract employment opportunities are available for Occupational Therapists, Speech Language Pathologists, Physical Therapists, and Special Instructors (ABA). Bi-lingual abilities are a plus. Compensation rates are competitive.

Together with metrochildren you can give a child the gift of a new beginning.

To submit a resume online visit metrochildren.com

For more information call 718-264-7250

The Early Intervention Program is funded and regulated by the New York State Department of Health and the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

THREE LOCATIONS FOR ALL YOUR PARTY NEEDS!



EVERY PARTY IS TOTALLY PRIVATE

- 4,000 Sq/ft
- Bounce House/ Giant Slide
- Jungle Gym
- Arcades
- Toddler Area
- Crafts
- Theme Parties



ASTORIA ONLY
\$199
FOR 15 KIDS
PACKAGE A

ASTORIA BLVD. & COLLEGE POINT
\$40 OFF
PACKAGE PLUS 3 KIDS FREE!



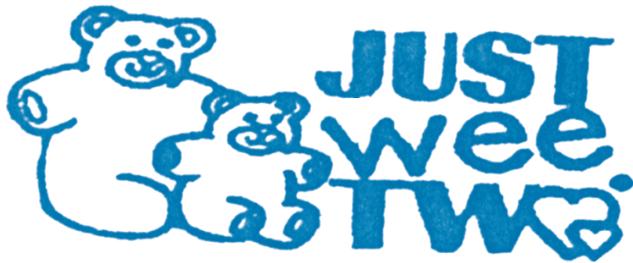
29-21 21 St. Ave., Astoria
718.726.9026
www.thebirthdayzone.com



120-07 20th Ave.,
College Pt. NY
(10 blocks from Target)
718.461.8292
www.partyzoneny.com



89-01 Astoria Blvd.
Jackson Heights
718.478.2120
www.nypartyplace.com
Also caters to Baby/
Bridal Showers, Weddings,
Anniversaries & more.



**where children and grown-ups learn
and play together**

For 8 months - 3 1/2 years

NOW REGISTERING

**For Winter Programs
At our Bayside Location**

Join Us For Fun

- Arts & Crafts
- Music • Stories
- Creative Movement
- Playtime
- Narrow Age Spans
- Maximum 10 Children Per Class
- 1 1/2 Hour Classes
- Professional Staff

"Just For Me"

**2 1/2 - 3 1/2
Separation Program**

**Partial Separation Classes
Also Available**

Infant Classes (Mommy & Me) and ABC Enrichment Classes Also Available

**For Information Call 1-800-404-2204 or 516-433-0003
Or Log Onto Our Website: www.justweettwo.com**

Other Locations: Park Slope & Brooklyn Heights, Plainview & Manhasset, Greenwich & North Stamford, CT

Education

DIRECTORY

ABC Fantasy Land

**66-20 Laurel Hill Blvd, Woodside
718-672-2424**

ABC not only signifies the start of the alphabet, but also the start of your child's educational experience. Their newly renovated facility with 10 large rooms, indoor gym, spacious outdoor fenced in playground is the basis for a happy, friendly preschool which accommodates children ages 2 to 6. Their school prides itself on an enriched dynamic program. The curriculum provides a solid foundation in the areas of beginning literacy, reading and arithmetic readiness, computer, science and social studies skills as well as gymnastics classes. ABC student/teacher ratio allows our fully qualified staff to focus on the needs of each child.

They provide hot meal daily: breakfast, lunch and snack and transportation.

They participate in various childcare assistance programs such as ACS and HRA.

(ages 2 to 6) children are introduced to beginning reading and writing, math and science, arts and crafts, music, dance (ballet), and sports (Taekwondo). The goal is to find each child's talents and abilities and help them discover the individuality.

The ample playground of 4000 square feet and easy access to Kissena Park directly across the street is the place for the children to observe and explore many different elements of nature.

Teachers communicate with the parents on a daily basis through the student's home-school journal.

They also have free UPK Program for all 4 year olds.

Just Wee Two

**with locations in Bayside,
Plainview and Manhasset
800-404-2204 or 516-433-0003 or
www.justweettwo.com**

Just Wee Two offers a very special time for children to enjoy pre-nursery school activities with the security of knowing Mommy (or another caregiver) is there.

A great preparation for pre-school, the Mother & Child program is available for children as young as 14 months. Partial separation and separation classes are also available. The school has a pre-nursery program, arts & crafts, music, play, stories, snack and creative movement.

The Kew Forest School

**119-17 Union Turnpike in Forest Hills
718-268-4667 extension 125 or
www.kewforest.org**

The Kew Forest School is one of Queen's oldest and finest independent day schools. Since 1918, this co-ed, college preparatory institution has provided students from Kindergarten through grade 12 with an academically challenging curriculum in a small, caring environment. Among its hallmarks are a diverse student body, small classes, a low student/teacher ratio and an outstanding record with college placements.

There is a Lower (K-4), Middle (5-8) and Upper School (9-12). Kew Forest also offers a breakfast program beginning at 7:30 a.m., and an After-School program.

Central Queens Y

**67-09 108th St
718-268-5011or www.cqjcc.org**

Families can begin their lifelong CQY journey with Early Childhood Programs. Parents of newborns through five year olds have a myriad of enriching, educational and just plain fun classes from which to choose.

We design programming around the ways children learn and succeed. Our teaching staff brings years of experience with children to the development of innovative new programming. Active, hands-on projects give children a sense of accomplishment and the joy of learning. Music, gardening, arts and crafts are integrated into a learning environment that engages all children.

Please come and join the welcoming CQY family where your child can blossom.

Immanuel Genius

**163-15 Oak Ave. Flushing
213-01 Northern Blvd. 3Fl. Bayside
718-460-9991 or www.immanuelgenius.com**

We offer full day and after school program year round, including exciting Summer Programs. Preschool

**THE
KEW-FOREST SCHOOL**

The future is growing here.

Our Doctors

Our Lawyers

Our Architects

The Kew-Forest School, established in 1918, is the oldest independent, coed, Pre-K through 12, college preparatory school in Queens. We have been nurturing future leaders with a challenging core academic experience for over 90 years.

Contact Director of Admission, Mr. René Bolanos, for information on our weekly Prospective Parent Orientations or to schedule a private tour.

119-17 Union Tpk., Forest Hills, NY 11375-6143 Phone: (718) 268-4667 ext. 125
Website: www.kewforest.org

FREE
UNIVERSAL PRE-K
For 4 Year Olds

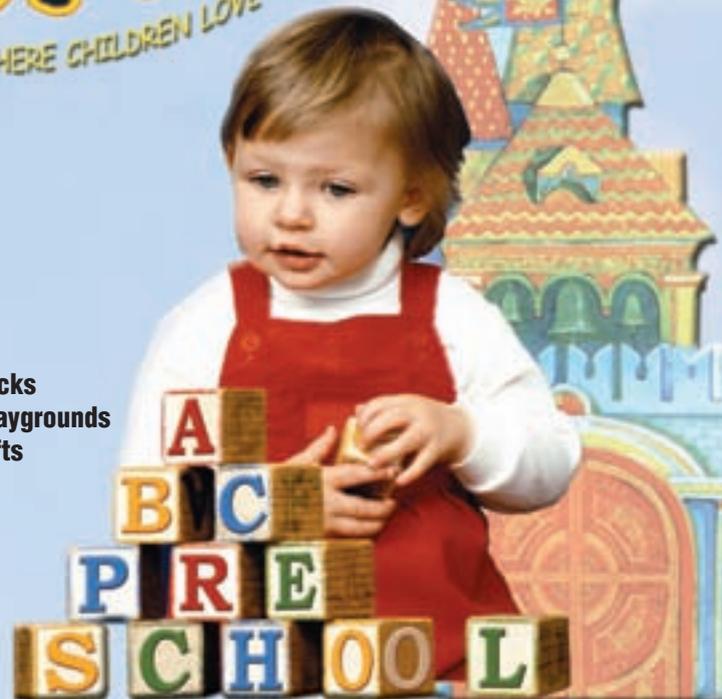
ABC FANTASY LAND

A WORLD OF FUN AND CARING WHERE CHILDREN LOVE TO LEARN

- Nursery, Preschool and Kindergarten (ages 2 to 5)
- European style Daycare Center in Queens
- Recreation with quality education
- Open all year
- Reasonable rates



- Extended hours available from 7:30 am to 6:00 pm
- Transportation provided
- Homemade meals and snacks
- Large Outdoor & Indoor playgrounds
- Sports, Music, Arts & Crafts and much, much more
- Special summer program (ages 2 to 10)
- Accepting all government programs



Immanuel Genius
EDUCATIONAL CENTER

GRAND OPENING
Additional site in BAYSIDE, Northern Blvd. & Bell Blvd.,
213-01 Northern Blvd., 3 Fl., Bayside, NY
718-819-0190 - UPK AVAILABLE



PRESCHOOL **2-5 YEARS**

FREE SCHOOL BUS
IN FLUSHING AREA ONLY
FOR
FREE UPK CLASS
FOR CHILDREN BORN IN 2006



Enrich Your Child's Life

Let Your Child Feel The Power of Learning

AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM **5-12 YEARS**

- Best Enrichment Program English/Math/ Test Prep/ Homework Help
- Personal Attention In Small Group Setting
- Experienced Public Or Private School Teacher
- Individualized Instruction Based On Our Diagnostic Testing
- Detailed Assessment Weekly Report To The Parents
- Fun Filled Programs During Holidays and No School Days
- Variety of Activities Customized For Each Student - Ballet, Tae Kwon Do, Art & Music Instrument Lessons
- Safe & Quiet Natural Environment
- Convenient Transportation- Door-to-Door Service

OPEN
7:30 AM - 7:00 PM

We Accept ACD & HRA Vouchers

163-15 Oak Ave., Flushing, NY 11358 | 718.460.9991 Ask for Ms. Rachel
Visit our website: www.ImmanuelGenius.com
Bus Service To Flushing, Fresh Meadows, Bay Side, Whitestone and Douglaston

Learn the lingo

New book offers tips for parents hoping to communicate with baffling teens

BY JOANNA DELBUONO

Whatever. Fine. Not. Don't despair parents! Your children haven't been taken over by an alien race; it's just teen speak that you are left to decipher. And just like any foreign language, you only need patience and a good dictionary to get you through the rough times. Enter Barbara Greenberg, PhD and Jennifer Powell-Lunder, PsyD, authors of "Teenage as a Second Language, A Parent's Guide to Becoming Bilingual," a must-have for any parent that has suffered through hours of one-word responses and frustrating attempts at conversation.

Their sensitive approach to navi-

gating the turbulent waters of "teen-dom" gives parents hope that all is not lost, just a little misplaced.

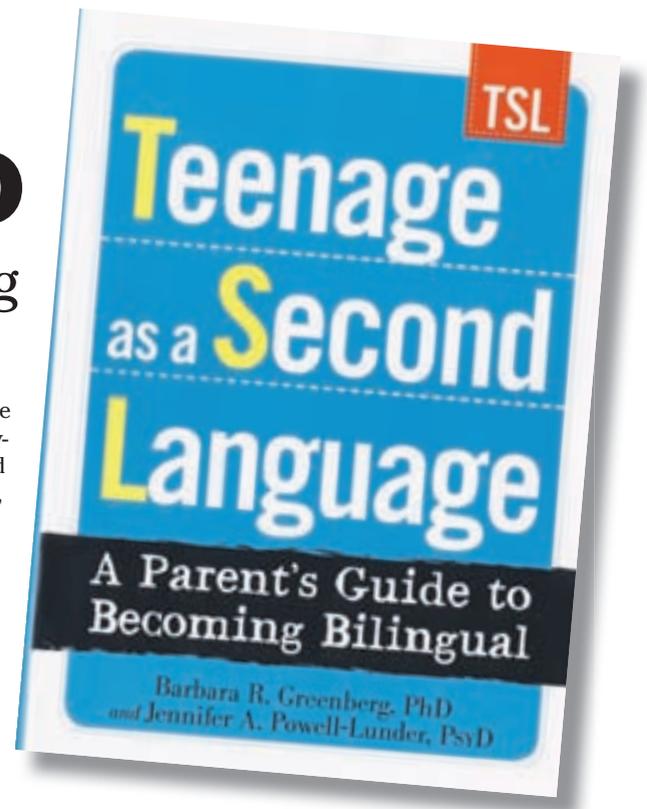
The guide addresses every situation from how to successfully approach conversations regarding sensitive topics to avoid falling into the trap of "Because I said so."

You will also find segments which serve as quick conversation starters and easy ways to understand the most commonly misunderstood words, phrases and nonverbal language that your teen can throw at you.

Remember that as with learning any new language, practice is key and the more teenage you speak, the more comfortable you will become on the road to fluency.

So the next time the frustration levels make your head want to explode, chillax and reach for your copy of the guide. The insightful strategies you learn will keep the lines of communication open and your home from becoming a battleground.

"Teenage as a Second Language, A Parent's Guide to Becoming Bilingual," by Barbara Greenberg, PhD and Jennifer Powell-Lunder, PsyD (243 pgs. \$14.95. Adamsmedia).





Central Queens YM & YWHA
Another Quality Community Center of the Samuel Field Y!
67-09 108th Street, Forest Hills, NY 11375 718-268-5011
Visit us on the web! www.centralqueensy.org

- NEARLY CAMP**
Ages 2 to 3 years old
Call Robin Kaufman at 718-268-5011, ext. 482
or email rkaufman@centralqueensy.org.


- NURSERY CAMP**
Ages 3 to 5 years old
Call Anna Solomonina at 718-268-5011, ext. 402
or email asolomonina@centralqueensy.org.
- OUTDOOR & TEEN TRAVEL CAMP**
Ages 5 to 14 years old
Call Day Camp Office at 718-268-5011, ext. 202
or email daycamp@centralqueensy.org.


- EXPLORER DAY CAMP**
Ages 4 to 9 years old
Call Melissa at 718-268-5011, ext. 205
or email malgranati@centralqueensy.org.
- SUMMER OF ARTS & SPORTS**
Ages 5 to 11 years old
Call Health & Fitness at 718-268-5011, ext. 500
or email dstark@centralqueensy.org.



BRING IN THIS AD FOR \$50.00 OFF DAY CAMP REGISTRATION!

UJA Federation of Queens

NYC GIFTED & TALENTED TEST
10-day CRASH COURSE



Kent Prep is offering G&T crash course for parents who are interested in applying for NYC G & T program. **The 2011 admission test begins on January 10th.**

- Date: **Dec. 4, 2010 (Sat) ~ Jan. 15, 2011 (Sat)**
- Candidates: **Pre-K ~ 2G's** (qualified students only)

*Evaluation and consultation is available to assess your child's readiness.

Also available at KENT:

- Ongoing G & T afterschool classes for qualified students

718.423.5757

KENT *Prep* PREP

194-11A Northern Blvd. www.kentprep.com

Find Family online at

www.webfamilyny.com

*The Publishers & Staff
Wish To Thank You For Helping
To Make 2010 A Successful Year
For Our Family Publications!*

*Wishing You,
Our Readers & Advertisers,
A Happy & Healthy Holiday Season.*



John Tartaglia's

IMAGIN OCEAN™

The LIVE glow-in-the-dark family musical!

"Absolutely Magical!"
- Time Out New York Kids

A magical, musical, one-of-a-kind, undersea adventure for kids of all ages! It's jam-packed with original music ranging from swing to R&B to Big Band and now it has an interactive finale especially for the holiday season! A blast from the first big splash to the last wave goodbye.

Photo: Karen Lynch

NW NEW WORLD STAGES

TELECHARGE.COM OR 212.239.6200
340 West 50th Street, NYC ImaginOceanTheMusical.com



LIONS AND TIGERS AND TEENS

MYRNA BETH HASKELL

Teens & gift giving

I had just turned 13 when I came home with this beautiful bracelet from a boy who admired me. When my mother saw it, she freaked out and told me that I had to give it back immediately. She said that she doubted he bought the bracelet and that it was an inappropriate gift for him to be giving me anyway. So much for that little bauble!

As it turned out, he had taken the bracelet from his older sister's jewelry box because he overheard that she would "never wear it again." Supposedly, she was fighting with

her boyfriend.

There are simpler ways for teens, even for those who don't have jobs yet, to show their appreciation for peers, coaches, or family members — and these ideas won't break the bank!

The act of giving

Your teen will likely get more out of the act of "giving" than the person receiving the gift. But not if a parent does the purchasing. Teens need to do the buying themselves, even if funds are running low. After all, it's the thought that counts; and for many, this adage is oh so true. Some of the most modest gifts I've received are those which I cherish the most.

The holidays are a great time for teens to think about giving to their favorite charity as well.

"Small acts of purposeful kindness and giving to charity (not necessarily money, but time) should be part of every teen's life," explains Dr. Jodi Stoner, a psychotherapist and co-author of "Good Manners are Contagious" (Spinner Press, 2009). She stresses that giving to others "develops integrity, boosts self-esteem, and adds meaning to children's lives no matter what age."

Make it Personal

My daughter took a photograph of an art piece she created for a contest in which she had to express the theme, "Beauty is ..." She put the photograph in an inexpensive, magnetic photo frame and printed out the words, "Beauty is ... a teacher who cares."

For that special someone

If your teen is giving something to a "significant other," be sure that it is appropriate in nature and that her feelings are reciprocated. Explain to your teen that gift giving is over the top for a new crush, but is a nice way to express feelings if a relationship has formed.

Overdoing it with expensive jewelry or electronics is not the answer. Making things by hand or personalizing the gift are great ways to express your affection for someone. Is

your teen creative? She might draw a portrait of her boyfriend from a photograph of him participating in his favorite sport or pastime. If your son likes to cook, suggest that he invite his girlfriend to dinner and make the meal himself.

"Sit down with your teens and help them come up with a budget," suggests Stoner. "This is a great time to talk about what the gift means. Big ticket items are not appropriate — small, meaningful gifts are."

Stoner also points out that teens should be responsible for the cost. If teens are not working, Stoner believes that gifts should come from their allowance.

"Otherwise, teens tend to lose perspective on the monetary commitment," she says.

Tips and tales

"Collage is a great gift. All you need are magazines, photos, glue sticks, and a surface to glue everything to. Teens love collage because they are using pop culture images mixed with their likes or a friend's likes. It's a great gift for their friend's bedroom wall."

Jessica Galkin, Woodstock, NY

"My 15-year-old daughter and her friends bake cookies and give them out at school to their closest friends for their birthdays."

Deb Ciccone-Yaeger, Saugerties, NY

"Every year, my daughter makes her own Christmas present for her grandmother and aunts. We have a file folder for crafts that catch our attention throughout the year. She chooses one of those crafts to make as gifts."

Gretchen Burnett, Salt Point, NY

Share your ideas

Upcoming topic:

Your teens are old enough, but can you trust them to stay home alone?

Please send your full name, address, and brief comments to: myrnahaskell@gmail.com, or visit home.roadrunner.com/~haskellfamily/myrna/

Myrna Beth Haskell is a feature writer and columnist specializing in parenting issues and children's development. She is the mother of two teenagers.



CHRISTY'S

GYMNASTIC CENTER

ACADEMY FOR CHILDHOOD FITNESS & DEVELOPMENT

FUN - FRIENDS - FITNESS

Our Program is Safety Certified & Kinder Accredited By USA Gymnastics

From Tots - Teens

- Wee Tumble... 1 1/2 - 3 Yrs.
- Junior Gym..... 3 - 5 Yrs.
- Gym Time..... 5 1/2 - Teens
- High School Gymnastics
- Tumble Only
- Advanced Gymnastics
- Rising Stars

Arts & Crafts

Birthday Parties

School Trips!

Register Now For Fall Programs

Highly Qualified Staff - Viewing Area
State-Of-The-Art Facilities

WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Competitive USAG Teams
Christine Philips/Owner, Director FREE PARKING

150-50 14th Road, Whitestone
718-767-0123 • www.christysgymnastics.com

ENERGY WORLD

For Kids to Jump, Climb and Have a Good Time IN ASTORIA! Best Birthday Bash for Ages 1+

TODDLER AREA
THEME PARTIES

- You and Me
- After School Drop Off
- Clubs: Craft, Pottery, Jewelry, Painting & Everything Club

BIRTHDAY PARTIES starting at \$199⁰⁰

- Now offering Italian classes
- After school programs
- Open play for members

2 LEVEL MAZE
ROCK CLIMBING

718-777-1220 • EnergyWorldPlay.com

Call To Be Added To Our Email List!

18-27 42nd St. • Astoria, NY 11105

Kids Music Together



Jackson Heights / Woodside / Sunnyside
NEWBORN - 5 YEARS OF AGE

Fall Semester Starts Sept. 14TH

Call/Email To Inquire About Free Demo Classes

Call 646-250-1177 • Email: music2jh@yahoo.com
www.KidsMusicTogether.com

It's Our Mission.

Quality Health Coverage

Child Health Plus with Fidelis Care

- Free or low-cost health insurance coverage for children up to age 19 in New York State. Almost every child is eligible!
- Checkups with your child's doctor
- Immunizations (shots)
- Hospital and emergency care
- Prescription drug coverage
- Dental and vision care
- Speech and hearing services
- More than 42,000 quality providers

Proof of age, income, and address necessary to enroll.

Some children who had employer-based health insurance coverage within the past six months may be subject to a waiting period before they can enroll in Child Health Plus. This will depend on your household income and the reason your children lost employer-based coverage.



FIDELIS CARE®

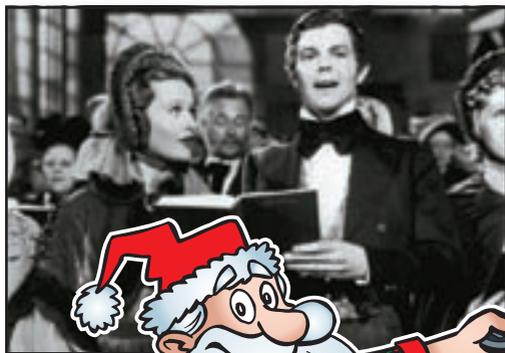
Child Health Plus is a New York State-sponsored health insurance program offered by Fidelis Care.



To find out if you are eligible for one of our government-sponsored health insurance programs, call Fidelis Care at:

1-888-FIDELIS (1-888-343-3547)

(TTY: 1-800-421-1220) • fideliscare.org To renew your coverage each year, call 1-866-435-9521



REEL HOLIDAY FUN: (Clockwise from top left) "A Christmas Carol;" "How the Grinch Stole Christmas;" "A Christmas Story;" "Home Alone;" and "Home for the Holidays."

Hollywood Rx for the holidays

Classic movies to revive weary parents

BY CHRISTINA KATZ

Feeling humbug this holiday season? Here's a sure-fire prescription for kick-starting your holiday spirit. Tuck the wee ones into bed, grab a cup of seasonal cheer, and settle down for a festive movie marathon that will put the "hush" back into your holiday rush.

Detach from family drama

In Jodie Foster's 1995 film, "Home for the Holidays," Claudia Larson (Holly Hunter) flies home to spend Thanksgiving with her wildly dysfunctional family. How many of us

empathized with the family reunion drama that prompts Claudia to explain, "Nobody means what they say on Thanksgiving, Mom. You know that. That's what the day's supposed to be all about, right? Torture."

Whether this year's drama is your aging grandmother deciding she can't tolerate your spouse, your drunken uncle knocking over the heirloom china or your youngest child coming down with the worst kind of flu, you can remain unruffled regardless of what happens. Family drama is not usually the problem — it's our response that determines how much we will or won't enjoy the holidays. A brisk walk or a quick

call to a supportive friend can make the difference between a happy or a hopeless holiday season.

Opt for more fun and less stuff

"And he puzzled three hours, till his puzzler was sore. Then the Grinch thought of something he hadn't before! Maybe Christmas, he thought, doesn't come from a store. Maybe Christmas, he thought, means a little bit more." If an over-emphasis on the material aspects of the holidays has you feeling as crabby as "The Grinch Who Stole Christmas," then maybe you need a refresher on the 1966 Dr. Seuss TV film. Or, if you're a Jim

Carrey fan, try Ron Howard's 2000 feature film version.

Before frustration drives you over the grinchy edge, seek relief at the Center for a New American Dream. It's a national non-profit foundation helping people challenge the "more is better" definition of the American Dream. "More Fun, Less Stuff" is its motto. The brochure about simplifying the holidays contains frugally creative and eco-friendly gift ideas, perfect for downsizing your holiday celebrations without skimping on the fun.

Check out the brochure at www.newdream.org/holiday/brochure.php.

Do a good deed

In "It's a Wonderful Life," perennial do-gooder George Bailey (Jimmy Stewart) is devastated when the financial security of his family's Building and Loan business is threatened by a missing \$8,000 deposit. But all is not lost because George can't resist helping others in greater distress than himself. Instead of plunging to his own death, he rescues angel-in-training, Clarence, who beat him to the jump. Clarence illuminates that without George's good deeds, Bedford Falls would be a much bleaker place indeed.

Making a charitable gesture towards someone less fortunate than yourself will add satisfaction to your holiday season. Is there a soup kitchen where you and your family can volunteer for an afternoon? How about asking your children to donate some of their old toys to a worthy cause before asking Santa for new ones? Could you spearhead an impromptu fund-raiser at your office or social group? You may decide to donate locally or abroad.

For some ideas, visit www.altgifts.org or www.heifer.org/.

Cultivate an attitude of gratitude

In the 1938 big-budget version of Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol," we witness a ghastly, ghostly tour of Ebenezer Scrooge's (Reginald Owen) stingy past, present and future. Subsequently, you may be inspired to cultivate a more loving and generous attitude of your own. Think back to every kindness offered to you in times of struggle or despair. I distinctly remember a college friend listening to my broken-hearted sob story and telling me afterward that I was beautiful. I remember a former

boss offering a kind word instead of criticism, although I'd royally messed up some important documents. Next thing you know, you may look more kindly on the person who jostles you on the street, the car that rudely cuts you off, or the telemarketer who dares to invade your hallowed holiday home. An attitude of gratitude reminds us that we have been wretched and have still been worthy of love.

Spend time 'Alone'

In the comedic family classic, "Home Alone," 8-year-old Kevin McCallister (Macaulay Culkin) declares, "This house is so full of people, it makes me sick. When I grow up and get married, I'm living alone." When his extended family leaves for Paris without him, he discovers that his wish has come true. Does he crumble with fear? Does he run for the nearest sensible adult? No, in fact, he relishes his new-found freedom, at least for a little while.

This holiday season, there will be plenty of well-meaning messages touting the benefits of "spending time with loved ones." Of course, while it's always wonderful to spend time with family and friends over the holidays, there is something to be said for taking time to be alone, too. Certainly, when we don't spend time alone, we can become irritable and exhausted. Like Kevin, when you take time to be with yourself, you will find that you can better appreciate time with others.

Buy yourself a present

Still feeling a little blue this holiday season? All right, let's pull out the secret weapon movie. Sometimes there's nothing to brighten up your holidays quite like that gift you deeply long for but have never received. In Bob Clark's 1983 hilarious comedy, "A Christmas Story," little Ralphie Parker (Peter Billingsley) is dying for a Red Rider BB gun. Although his parents and teachers warn that he will "shoot his eye out," Ralphie is relentless in imagining his dream coming true. The dozen or so universally hilarious childhood memories will perk you up enough to grab your car keys, drive to the mall, sit on Santa's lap and ask for that ridiculous childhood toy you always longed for. It's never too late.

Happy holiday movie season, everyone!



NEW! MUSIC CLASSES

SUPER KICKERS

Soccer classes for girls and boys 18 months and up

We offer:

- Over 35 Classes, 7 Days a Week
- \$15/Class Includes Free T-shirt, Medal Soccer Tournaments at the end of the season
- Free Bouncy House on Saturdays
- Private Groups at No Extra Charge!

Summer | Fall | Winter | Spring | Outdoor parks, East Elmhurst, Jackson Heights, Middle Village, Flushing Meadows

7702 37th Ave, Jackson Heights, NY | www.superkickers.com • 718-350-1535

FREE TRIAL CLASS

Family Speech Center

Evaluation & Therapeutic Services For Children & Adults

Niki Stagias-Coulijanidis, M.A., CCC-SLP • Errika Nathenas-Dimitrakis, M.S., CCC-SLP

SPEECH-LANGUAGE THERAPY

- Articulation/Oral Motor Therapy
 - Myofunctional Therapy
- Early Childhood Intervention (0 - 3 Yrs.)
- School-Age Language Disabilities
- Foreign Accent Improvement Program
 - Adult Language Disorders



Office Visits By Appointment (718) 939-0306

25-32 168 Street, Flushing, NY 11358



KIDS FUN HOUSE

Christmas Party Friday December 17th

www.kidsfunhouse.com

11am - 2pm - Toddlers 4pm - 7pm - School aged kids

- Santa Claus visit • Gift for every kid
- Characters visit • Craft, dancing, cotton candy
- Face painting and live entertainment
- Hot food for kids
- Coffee and cake for adults (max. 2 adults per child)

Tickets \$15 per child \$12 if prepurchased before December 11th

62-73 Fresh Pond Road, Ridgewood, 718-418-5437



PARENTS
HELPING
PARENTS

SHARON C. PETERS, MA

My child is bullied but wants no help



Dear Sharon,

My 12-year-old daughter is being picked on by a group of girls in her school. She is being bullied by them in a variety of ways, and she's afraid of them, but she won't let me do anything about it. She won't let me contact the school, and she becomes hysterical when we discuss it. What should we do?

Dear Parents,

I am sorry to hear that girls are picking on your daughter at school. Unfortunately, this is a common problem.

Most children, especially tweens, are embarrassed or humiliated by the thought of "telling" on another child and/or acknowledging that they are not able to handle a difficult social situation. Nevertheless, it is usually difficult and sometimes impossible for a targeted child to deal with repeated bullying in the absence of adult intervention.

Of course, the details of specific situations can be quite different, but I know of many cases when a parent has gotten help by contacting her child's school (sometimes even without her child's permission or knowledge). In most of these instances, the parent had a strong prior relationship with one or more staff members who she knew could be effective at offering assistance.

I often suggest that parents in your situation begin by reaching out

to a teacher, counselor, or administrator you respect and who would be able to maintain your family's anonymity. I have heard many stories of caring educators who have kept an eye out for a problem and figured out ways to intervene without anyone knowing that they received information from a parent. I also know of examples of schools that have succeeded in involving multiple staff members in thinking through solutions to bullying and who were willing to give parents feedback about progress and/or steps a child might take to help resolve the problem.

While waiting for help from school there are, of course, steps to be taken at home, as well. Here are a few ideas to keep in mind as you offer support to your child:

- It can be hard for a parent to listen to her 12-year-old recount all of the gory details of bullying without getting upset. However, if parents can manage to listen to stories and sympathize with difficulties in a relatively calm way, it can help a child get out her stress and feel more relaxed at the end of a long day.

- Sometimes parents are quick to offer solutions to complicated problems like this one. Parental suggestions can be useful, but it can also

be helpful for Mom and Dad to elicit their child's thoughts about possible ways to handle the challenges coming her way. If parents can help their child produce a few of her own solutions, it can build her confidence and self-esteem even under such understandable stress and strain.

- Including adult friends, relatives and other children who have witnessed or survived incidents of bullying in family discussions can help as well. Putting a number of heads together to generate possible solutions can produce a variety of ideas that can help.

- Having close, thoughtful friends around can also be useful. Bullies are less likely to be effective if there are good friends that a child can talk to and stay with when aggressive behavior is happening. Setting up social occasions outside of school with caring friends can shore up a child's confidence and help her go toward friendly and supportive peers in difficult times.

• • •

I wish there were simple answers to the complicated problem of bullying, but I do believe that getting help while offering consistent support to your child can make a big difference over time.

Sharon C. Peters is a mother and director of Parents Helping Parents, 669 President St., Brooklyn (718) 638-9444, www.PHPonline.org.

If you have a question about a challenge in your life (no issue is too big or too small) e-mail it to Dear Sharon at SWeiss@cnglocal.com.

A Living Hell

That's how going through a divorce has sometimes been described. Sadly, and in far too many cases, truer words were never spoken. Even more unfortunate is the fact that hiring the wrong lawyer will often contribute to that hell. In both emotional and financial terms, the toll it can take on those involved is like a nightmare come true. But it doesn't have to be that way.

Allow us to introduce ourselves. For more than a decade **The Law & Mediation Offices of Teresa Ombres** has been helping couples and individuals get through these difficult times with a philosophy that is unique and an empathy toward its clients that is uncommon in the field of divorce law. The services offered and the processes available to clients are diverse and we help you to determine which are most appropriate to your circumstances.

There are three distinct processes (the traditional *litigation* process; the *divorce mediation* process; and the more newly emerging *collaborative law* process) and each is discussed in detail so that clients can make an informed decision. Our goal is to always minimize the emotional stress and the financial cost of each case, and to bring matters to an amicable conclusion in as short a time as possible. We strive to maintain civility and foster understanding and cooperation among all parties at all times. When children are involved there is a special emphasis on protecting them from the harmful effects of family crisis.

The Law & Mediation Offices of Teresa Ombres

When divorce is unavoidable

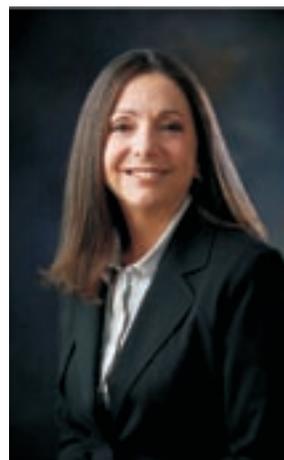
718.767.7667
www.DivorceLab.com

38-39 Bell Blvd. Bayside, NY 11361

Some things you should know about us: We're not a very large firm and this allows us to give each client the attention he or she deserves. Teresa is assisted by a small staff of accomplished attorneys, highly skilled mediators and dedicated legal assistants, all committed to a common purpose... *smoothing the course of divorce for every client.* We do not subscribe to a jack-of-all-trades approach to law. A prudent person wouldn't rely on the family doctor if the patient was in serious need of a cardiologist or a neurosurgeon. We believe that same logic applies in legal matters. In an age when one in every two marriages ends in divorce we feel clients are best served by a focused professional whose legal expertise is not diluted by extraneous activity. For that reason our practice is limited to *only* matrimonial and related family matters.

There is only so much information that can fit in this advertisement. If you or someone you know is considering divorce please visit our website. Learn more about the different processes available to you. Read our mission statement. Meet our staff. Hear what our clients have to say. Then decide if you feel we can help. Or, call to speak with Teresa who will be happy to answer some of your questions.

Finally, we make this promise to each client: Whether you choose to litigate, mediate or collaborate, you'll find that we are committed to achieving for you what all who embark on this road want and deserve: ***Divorce with dignity.***



A graduate of Fordham University and New York Law School, Teresa is a member of the New York State Bar Association, the Queens Bar Association, the Family and Divorce Mediation Council of Greater New York, where she served for many years on the Board of Directors, and the New York State Council on Divorce Mediation. She is also an original member of the New York Association of Collaborative Professionals and a founding member of the New York Chapter of the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts where she serves as Treasurer.

Seasonal minefield

Some tips for
special needs
families
navigating
the holidays

BY REBECCA MCKEE,
MSED, BCBA

For those of us who have the joy of sharing our lives with a family member who has Autism Spectrum Disorder or another special need, we know the feeling of living Halloween way before autumn arrives, or having to listen to Christmas carols the first day of October.

For many, the idea of happy holiday happenings can quickly turn into too-much-too-soon and lead to a downward spiral. Here are some simple strategies that may ease the overwhelming excitement, and allow one to celebrate the holidays in a timely, successive order:

- Always keep a calendar, not only for listing appointments and birthdays, but for also listing what people generally do during specific times of the year. For example, in October, I would write at the top of the page: "People decorate their homes with pumpkins. Maybe we can go apple picking. People talk about baking and eating apple pie and pumpkin bread. We can watch 'The Wizard of Oz' and scary movies. Everyone looks at Halloween costumes and buys bags of candy." You should continue this throughout the year.

- When each major holiday ends, prepare for the next holiday. When Thanksgiving ends, write the following the day after: "Start taking down Thanksgiving decorations and talking about Christmas. Start writing a list about what Christmas decorations to get."

- Include your family member in functional tasks during the busyness of the holiday season as much as possible, such as creating a food shopping list pertaining to Thanksgiving dinner or Christmas cookie recipes, or having him push the cart and find the items in the supermarket. In other words, try to use his excitable, nervous energies as much as possible in a positive, proactive way.

- As each holiday ends, have your family member recycle the catalogs and magazines, as this is a physical way to symbolize its ending.



- Limit his choices of music and movies to a seasonal selection or those that are relevant all year. Lay-out the "TV Guide" to demonstrate when most people watch Christmas movies. A good rule to follow is: in someone's bedroom anything can happen, but in the living room we have to follow certain rules. So, on Christmas Eve, nobody in the family wants to watch a movie about Easter!

- Proactively preparing each person about the upcoming changes in his or her schedules is the best

bet. Letting them know the location of the holiday dinner is a must. If visitors are coming over, please let them know. Making these changes known via a written note and/or photographs are gladly appreciated.

- Always provide items and activities to keep your family members occupied during these holiday meals. We can amuse ourselves with conversation but sometimes others cannot. Keep that in mind.

Follow these rules so that YOU and the rest of your family can enjoy yourselves!

Looking for fun
with the kids?

WIN TICKETS



For you &
your family (4)
to local
family friendly
shows

Visit our website
www.webfamilyny.com
and register to win

Attention All Writers!
**We're looking for
personal essays**
about you, your family and life
in your community.

Partner with us and share your
stories and your memories.

Email family@cnglocal.com to
have your piece included in our
magazine and on our website.



"EXUBERANT! EXPLOSIVE JOY!"
—The New York Times

STOMP

THE INTERNATIONAL SENSATION

**"Go!
Have The Time
Of Your Life!"**
—NY Newsday

**40
Sundays
@7PM**
Tue-Fri @ 8
Sat @ 3&8
Sun @ 3&7

ORPHEUM THEATRE
Second Avenue at 8th Street
[ticketmaster](http://ticketmaster.com) (800) 982-2787
www.stomponline.com

Cedarwood
cottages
with delight-
ful junior suites on
600' of white sand
beach only 30 min-
utes from Montego



Bay airport. Pebbles is the perfect choice for a fam-
ily holiday spiced with adventure. For the small
ones a full time Vacation Nanny is assigned to take
care of everything from diapers to shell hunts. Full
games center with Xbox and GameCube for teens.
For adults, all inclusive means sailing, camping out,
tennis, soccer, scuba; reggae music, Jamaican, Ital-
ian and Continental Cuisine; all drinks; complete
kids, teens & preteens program, native shows, free
WiFi property wide.



www.fdrfamily.com
800/654-1FdR (1337)
888/FdR-KIDS (337-5437)

Best Little Family Resort in Jamaica. Period.



GROWING UP ONLINE

CAROLYN JABS

An iPhone for baby?

These days, cellphones are for more than just calls. But are the devices good for toddlers?

This holiday season, there will be lots of delighted squeals when someone in the family opens a package containing a new mobile digital device. Often, those squeals are from toddlers and even babies who are as mesmerized by new technology as their parents and older sibs.

Little kids have an uncanny ability to manipulate touch screens, and programmers are responding with a robust collection of so-called “baby apps.” All of this begs the question:

Is mobile access to interactive

technology good for toddlers? In the meantime, parents can draw on what we do know about child development to make wise decisions on behalf of kids. Here are some suggestions:

Defer to development

Common sense says you shouldn't give electronic equipment to a child who drools or reflexively puts things in his mouth. Ditto for the child who is still conducting if-I-drop-this-what-will-happen experiments.

Pick time & place

Little kids often have to accompany their parents to places that strain their patience.

Even a car ride can be a trial for a toddler. In these settings, a mobile device may be a merciful way to pass the time. It's also an opportunity for parents establish limits: “You can hold Mommy's phone while we're in the car and then you'll give it back to Mommy.” Like other limits, this one will work only if you enforce it. The best way to create a cellphone junkie is to give your child random access to the device. Instead, think through the rules you want to establish and keep them simple. Be consistent.

Encourage mobility

Despite their name, mobile devices actually discourage mobility. Kids who use them tend to stay planted firmly on their fannies, staring at a tiny screen. The American Academy of Pediatrics continues to recommend that children under the age of 2 have no time in front of screens of any size. For children over 2, the recommended daily allowance is one hour. Both of these rules are regularly violated even by very conscientious parents, in part because everyone — including those parents — needs a little downtime now and then. Kids, however, need much, much more uptime. A child who is running, climb-

ing, bouncing and playing may need more supervision than one who is glued to a screen, but research shows that active play promotes both physical and mental development. Screen time may also promote certain kinds of development but the benefits are unclear and unconfirmed, so moderation makes sense.

Talk!

Of all the things children learn in their first six years, language is one of the most important. Here the research is crystal clear. Talking to little children — even infants — encourages more rapid and more complex neural development. Fooling with a mobile device or, for that matter, any other toy, is more enriching if parents talk about what's happening and, with older children, encourage them to talk, too. Not only is this fun but it lays the ground work for the idea that, instead of being the main event, technology is valuable because it supports relationships.

Maintain ownership

Unless the kid is paying the bills, the phone belongs to the parent (older children should be reminded about this rule, too). You set limits about lipstick, sharp knives, and the TV remote, so spend some time thinking about whether, and when, you want to allow access.



Despite all the innovations in technology, the ingredients for a good childhood remain surprisingly constant: loving, engaged parents; sensible, consistent limits; safe and abundant opportunities to explore the world. For children who have those essentials in place, a little time spent with — or without — a mobile interactive device won't much matter.

Carolyn Jabs, MA, has been writing about families and the Internet for over 15 years. She is the mother of three computer-savvy kids. Other Growing Up Online columns appear on her website www.growing-up-online.com.

© Copyright, 2010, Carolyn Jabs. All rights reserved



technology good for tots?

For many parents, a first rush of pride — look what he can do! — gives way to unease, especially when kids clamor constantly for the phone. A recent article in the New York Times told the story of one tot who hid her mom's phone under her bed so she would be able to use it whenever she wanted.

The research about how cellphones and other mobile devices impact young brains

THE FLYING KARAMZOV BROTHERS
Their looks can kill. Their show can slightly injure.

**"A TRIUMPH!
 100 MINUTES OF
 CLEVERNESS AND COMEDY!"**
-The New York Times-

TICKETMASTER.COM ★ 800.982.2787
 MINETTA LANE THEATER ★ FKB.COM

"A GREAT SHOW IS ALWAYS IN FASHION!" *New York 1*

Daryl Roth presents

Love, Loss, and What I Wore
 an intimate collection of stories
 by
 Nora Ephron and Delia Ephron
 based on the book by Ilene Beckerman
 directed by Karen Carpenter

NYC's Most Exciting All-Star Rotating Cast Including:
 Tichina Arnold Didi Conn Aisha DeHaas Barbara Feldon
 Tovah Feldshuh Kate Flannery Alicia Goranson
 Ashley Austin Morris Loretta Swit Maria Tucci

The Perfect Show for Mom's Night Out

Telecharge.com or call (212) 239-6200 Groups (646)747-7400
 LoveLossOnStage.com • WESTSIDE THEATRE 407 W. 43rd St.

"DAZZLING MUMMENSCHANZ AND DELIGHTFUL!"
- The New York Times

LIMITED NYC ENGAGEMENT!
 3 WEEKS ONLY • DEC 20 thru JAN 8
 www.Mummenschanz.com

GETTING TICKETS
 WWW.SKIRBALLCENTER.NYU.EDU
 212.352.3101 OR 866.811.4111

NYU SKIRBALL CENTER
 566 LAGUARDIA PLACE
 (At Washington Square)
 NEW YORK, NEW YORK

"ENCHANTING"
 - NY TIMES

Gazillion
Bubble Show
 THE NEXT GENERATION

Wed at 11 & 2, Fri at 7, Sat at 11, 2 & 4:30, Sun at 12 & 3.
 For groups & birthday parties visit our website or call 1-866-6-GAZTIX
 GazillionBubbleShow.com
TELECHARGE.COM or 212.239.6200
 NEW WORLD STAGES NW 340 WEST 50th ST.

Affordable child care is possible

Finding the best care for your child when you're on a budget

BY CANDI SPARKS

One of the most difficult — and most important — decisions a parent can make is finding reliable and safe child care. Unfortunately, child care can become a budget buster, and finding affordable care in these tough times is difficult. When you cannot be the caregiver, the choice of how your child spends his day guides the search for child care. So will family finances.

It helps to identify what type of program is needed, and then figure out how to work that into your budget. Although a paid position generally creates higher expectations of what will and will not be done with your child and in your home, the different positions — nanny, au pair, sitter, casual sitter, family friend, relative, or child care programs — all have different pay scales and infrastructures.

If you don't have a huge budget, try to craft a position for a child care provider and add perks to go with the job. If the caregiver has access to the family car, gets a ride after sitting, or can use your swimming pool

or art studio, it might be attractive enough that she will lower her fee. If your position comes with paid sick days, vacation days, and holidays, these perks may put you in a better negotiating position. Leverage whatever perks you can during the interview process.

Relatives

A relative — for instance, a mother-in-law — may assist for free, but then might feel comfortable to criticize parenting skills (but not yours, of course). Or, you may not be overjoyed that Uncle Jim still smokes cigarettes in the house. Yet, you don't want to take any chances with your precious child, so what's available for free may not always be the best choice. If you can find someone good for free, consider yourself lucky. Adela, in Queens, had to opt out of free family child care when her son, Gian, starting using some unsavory language he picked up at his cousin's house.

Nanny

The most popular type of child care for working families with young children, which has been popularized by reality TV, is the nanny. Brooklyn resident Mary was able to keep her nanny at a lower price for several years by throwing in benefits like vacations with the family.

"She is one of the family," said Mary. "The boys love her and she is very good to us."

Mary found that the child care relationship turned into "family care." Her situation beautifully illustrates that the search for child care can also consider what other needs the family may have in connection with this person. If a mother's helper is needed to assist with shopping, laun-

dry and child care, this is a different position than one that will focus solely on child care. Some nannies will cook and clean for the child, but may not be willing to do so for the entire family. Most nannies are hired by referrals.

Day care

When you don't have room in your budget for full-time care with paid vacations, an affordable option is drop-in day care, which provides flexible and part-time care. This option allows you to pick and choose the day and time slot combination that is needed. It is ideal for those who work at home or stay at home and only need a few random hours of child care. A drop in center provides a safe and healthy environment and usually has some creative activities for the children. The drop-in day care also provides a chance for your child to socialize with others, and many are connected with nursery schools or summer day camps.

Casual sitter

A legal live-in or nanny will need to be paid on the books with health insurance and regularly scheduled time off. On the opposite end of the spectrum is the person who is looking for immediate cash without the hassles of it being a job on the books — like high school and college students. The student may be most affordable, but may not be the most reliable in keeping to a schedule. Exams, social obligations and lack of interest may eventually clash with your expectations. The potato chips on the sofa may someday irritate your sensitivities. But your reactions may pale in comparison to the savings in child care expenses. The easiest place to find a student

Resources

Check out these websites for finding child care options:

- A good resource for finding a variety of child care workers who run the gamut from casual sitters to live-ins is www.care.com.
- There are two agencies that will assist parents in locating community-based child care and educational programs: Office for Children and Fam-

ily Services (212) 383-1788, www.ocfs.state.ny.us and Administration for Children's Services (877) 543-7692, www.nyc.gov.

- For finding nannies in New York, www.nycnannyfinder.com is great.

- If you're considering hiring a nanny, you'll want to be aware of the nanny tax and employment guidelines, and www.4nannytaxes.com is a great resource.



is in the neighborhood, or even at a local college. Many schools have employment and career offices that will keep a list of students available for child care services. To cover yourself and your child, interview more than one person and keep a list of five alternate candidates that you have interviewed at all times. You never know when you need backup for the backup.

Interviews

Unfortunately, child neglect and abuse lingers in the back of every parent's mind when selecting child care. Providers should pass at least a minimal background check and

you should check more than one reference before any hiring decision is made. Make a list of interview questions for this person as well. For example, questions like, "Have you ever had a medical emergency on the job, and what did you do?" "What would you do if there was a blackout while you are sitting?" Also, lay down your ground rules and expectations during the interview process. The more you talk about things, the clearer they will become and will help solidify your position for the candidate.

These are tough times, but a family can easily go from family care to full-time nanny to a sitter and on to

a nursery school program over the course of the child's development. I recommend negotiating at every step in a way that will not compromise the quality of care, but won't break the banks, either. If you feel that you need to transition from one provider to the next, try to keep a good relationship going and line up your replacement nanny before you fire the current one. Remember what is best for your child. After all, your child is priceless, but your budget is limited.

Candi Sparks is the author of the "Can I Have Some Money?" book series. You can follow her on Twitter and Facebook as Candi Sparks (writer).

It helps to identify what type of program is needed, and then figure out how to work that into your budget.

Autism support

Queens group helps families cope with the disorder

BY MARY CARROLL WININGER

When a young child is diagnosed with autism, the amount of therapy and special attention he needs can initially seem overwhelming to his parents. But a new support group in Queens, that's aiming to empower, educate the caregivers of autistic children, just might be the answer for those who feel that they have nowhere to turn.

Autism, a neurodevelopmental disorder, affects the way information is processed by the brain, and it's characterized by delays in social

know anyone who had it. I started scouring the Internet to learn more information."

While Zariah's preschool did offer workshops detailing what parents of autistic children could expect, the Queens-based mom found them lacking.

"I didn't think it was enough," says Ocampo. "There needed to be a way to connect with other parents and show them how to cope and adapt."

So, she decided to take matters into her own hands. Ocampo founded the group on Nov. 1, 2006 as an informal support group through meetup.com. Back then, it was called

One recent workshop involved a board-certified behavioral analyst speaking with the group about what parents and caregivers should do when autistic children have issues with sensory over-stimulation.

"He broke it down for us and introduced ways in which parents can reinforce good behavior," says Ocampo.

New York Lawyers for the Public Interest have also spoken to members about the legal issues they face. And the group can direct parents to products and services for their children that are free, or for which they could be reimbursed. "There are things that kids with a documented disability are entitled to have," asserts Ocampo.

Members know how to have fun, too.

"We take our kids on outings — movies, parks and zoos — places where we want our kids to develop social skills," she explained.

With all of the programs and support the group offers, it's not difficult to find members who flourished there.

"I can think of one example in particular," muses Ocampo. "[A mother] came to us two weeks after her son was diagnosed. When she first came to [the group], she just cried. She vented and talked with us. Then, she left for a year to cope and grieve. After that year, she came back with a bang. She started out doing office support for [us] and in January 2011, she will become our treasurer as part of our board of directors. It has been an honor to see the transformation in her, and to see her child progress. She and the other team members [have become] the best advocates for their children."

The knowledgeable and supportive members give Queens families of autistic children a haven, as well as a place to gather strength. For more information, visit www.qcpac.org.

Mary Carroll Wininger is a writer based in New York City. She is a frequent contributor on topics ranging from etiquette to feng shui.



Members of the Queens County Parents Autism Coalition celebrate their accomplishments at an awards ceremony.



interaction and communication. The exact cause of the disorder is still unknown, although it remains an area of active research. Symptoms of autism can appear in a child as young as six months.

Queens County Parents Autism Coalition is an organization that seeks to strengthen families who have loved ones living with autism through support, education and networking. Group meetings, lectures and the occasional trip to the local park are all part of its support method.

The South Ozone Park-based group grew out of one mother's quest to find local support when her daughter was diagnosed with autism a few years ago.

"[My daughter] Zariah was diagnosed with pervasive developmental disorder on June 13, 2005," explains Cheryl Ocampo. "Back then, I didn't

Queens Autism Meetup Group.

"At first, it was just two or three of us meeting at a coffee shop to talk about our experiences. Within two years, the group had taken on a mind of its own," explains Ocampo. "In November 2008, we were incorporated as a non-profit [and changed the group's name]. Today, we partner with the Queens Special Education Parent Center to educate and empower parents of children with special needs. [Of course, our group] offers more of a concentration of support for families dealing with autism."

The group allows parents the time and space to vent and talk, but also provides information on caring for children with autism.

"We arrange for meetings and workshops where parents can receive training," explains Ocampo.

www.webfamilyny.com

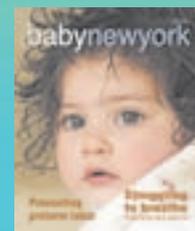


Are you ...

- Looking for family friendly activities?
- Wanting to connect with other parents?
- Interested in parent focused articles to inform and intrigue?

**Our growing Web Community is waiting for you!
Places to post, vote and have your voices heard
too. Check It Out Today!**

**Education, Activities, Party, Camp, Special Needs,
Baby; these are just a few of the reasons why MOMS
are coming to www.webfamilyny.com**



Going beyond the apple

15 fabulous gifts under \$10 for your child's teacher



The best gifts come from the heart, not the pocketbook.

BY DENISE MORRISON YEARIAN

Finding a gift your child's teacher will enjoy at a price you can afford can be a challenging task. But it doesn't have to be. Following is a list of 15 fabulous 10-dollar and under gift suggestions.

1. You're an angel. Get a list from the teacher of practical things she can use in the classroom then create an angel tree. Children who want to give a gift can choose an angel item that will benefit the teacher and the classroom.

2. Contribute to charity. Teachers like it when families donate to a charitable organization in the student or classroom's name. Suggest names of charitable organizations that focus on helping children then let your child choose one to give to. Follow up with a note to the teacher letting her know about your giving efforts.

3. Practical potpourri. Teachers don't often realize what they need to have on hand until it's too late, so an assortment of practical sundries makes a great gift. Ideas include Chapstick, a lint roller, safety pins,

Tide-to-Go, Static Guard and a small tool kit. Or consider a collection of health and wellness items to keep the classroom flu-free this winter: tissues, hand sanitizer, disinfectant spray and Clorox wipes.

4. Conference day coupons. Conference times make it difficult for teachers to grab a hot meal or squeeze in a healthy snack. But parents can help by giving post-dated special delivery coupons. Send in a paid-for pizza one night during conference time. Or create a homemade fresh fruit basket and deliver it to the school when teachers are there for 13 hours straight.

5. Medley of rewards. Create an assortment of rewards and incentives the teacher can use in the classroom such as stickers, character pencils and mini erasers. Websites such as www.OrientalTradingCompany.com have a large variety of products and may offer free shipping.

6. Time-honored efforts. Most teachers welcome volunteer efforts. Create a coupon offering your services to make copies, grade papers or prepare classroom supplies after hours. Or offer to come in once a

month to read to the class, help with science projects or tutor students who need a little assistance.

7. Crazy about cocoa. Chocolate, either in candy or baked goods, is a top choice amongst teachers. If you make something yourself, include the recipe so they can duplicate it when they are craving chocolate in the future.

8. Thumbs up planter. Purchase a terra cotta pot and have your child place random thumbprints on it using different colors of paint. Use a permanent marker to turn the thumbprints into different bugs and flowers. Fill the pot with a live plant and attach a note that says, "Thank you for helping children grow."

9. Best bet bookends. Every classroom needs bookends but they can be costly. If you can't find a set on sale, pick up a couple of bricks from the home improvement store and cover them with a layer of soft foam and school-themed material.

10. You've got talent! If you have a special skill, talent or interest, gift it to your teacher. Are you a hair stylist? Offer a haircut. Manicurist? Offer a manicure. If you like to bake, treat

your teacher to a baker's choice club membership. For Christmas, whip up a batch of cinnamon rolls and include a coupon for one baked good every month between now and school year's end. In the future, deliver the baked item on the same day each month so your teacher knows when to expect it.

11. Take note! Writing supplies are a useful luxury. Purchase a pack of pretty stationery, blank thank you notes or paper with matching envelopes so the teacher can write letters to her parents. Or personalize the gift by having your child draw a watercolor picture. Scan it on the computer, crop the image, print it on Vellum paper and then mount it onto colored cardstock and give it with matching envelopes.

12. Bestow books. Purchase your child's favorite book and donate it to the school library. On the inside cover, have your child create a sticker that says, "Donated in honor of (teacher's name) by (child's name)," along with the date.

13. Reel fine. Make a movie-themed package and include a 5

Group gifts

Need some collective classroom gifts suggestions? Consider these:

- Invite several families to join you in taking out a children's magazine subscription for the classroom. Websites such as www.Amazon.com and www.MagazinesUSA.com offer deeply discounted rates to such publications as Highlights,



Ranger Rick, Your Big Backyard and more.

- Pick up a small, flip-style photo album and fill it with crowd-pleasing recipes submitted by other families in the classroom. Title it, "Class of 2009 Cookbook" and package it together with a couple of kitchen accessories: spatula, mixing spoons and

measuring cups.

- Teachers love to help other students learn. Gather money from other families and purchase a gift certificate to a local cosmetology school for a manicure, pedicure or haircut. Package it with a comb, brush, deep hair conditioning packet and the school's brochure of services.

- Gift certificates are a popular present this time of year. Suggest students in the classroom all purchase 5 dollar gift cards to the same educational, book or dollar store or local eatery. Collectively it will make enough to buy something useful or give the teacher a night out on the town.

dollar gift card to a nearby video rental store, a box of microwave popcorn and Swedish Fish or Milk Duds candy. Stop by a local movie theater and purchase a clean popcorn bucket for a minimal cost to use for themed packaging.

14. Great games. Keep kids occupied indoors during inclement weather by purchasing classroom games. Find out what games and activities the teacher does and doesn't

have then watch for sales in store flyers, look on Ebay or find them at a garage sale.

15. Kid crafted. Teachers agree the best gifts come from the heart, not the pocketbook. Cards with sincere sentiments or pictures drawn by students are the most cherished presents of all.

Denise Morrison Yearian is the former editor of two parenting magazines, an educator and the mother of three children.



Belle Arti
Center for the Arts

"From Carnegie Hall to Forest Hills, The Place to be for Music"
First and Only Music Center of European Heritage in Forest Hills
REGISTER NOW FOR SPRING SEMESTER SPECIAL DISCOUNT






AGES 2-5
Musical Aurora®
As Seen on TV, NBC, Today in New York
"Awakening the Mind through Music"™
A Unique Program for Children
Fun Activities Include:
Musical Games, Songs, & Dance

AGES 4 AND UP
Piano Violin Voice
Cello Guitar
NEW* Music Therapy
* Therapeutic Piano Lessons
* Chorus

Call for More Information! Come Visit Our State-of-the-Art Location
108-10 72ND Avenue • Forest Hills, NY • 718-261-2237
www.belleartiny.com



ALL STAR STUDIOS

dance, theater,
and **MORE!**

Ask About
Our Fabulous
Birthday
Parties!

108-12 72ND Ave Ground Level
Forest Hills, NY 11375

www.allstarstudiosnyc.com 718.268.2280

Bugging out again

Greenpoint cartoonist Neil Numberman dishes on his new kids graphic novel

BY CHUCK O'DONNELL

Greenpoint's Neil Numberman didn't want the characters in "Joey Fly Private Eye 2: Big Hairy Drama" to freeze their thoraxes off.

There's a cold snap hitting the big city in this second installment of the Mickey Spillane-inspired noir spoof. Joey Fly and his scorpion sidekick, Sammy Stingtail, go slogging through the snow as they try to solve the disappearance of leading lady Greta Divawing.

Numberman went out onto the streets of Brooklyn and took shots of people bundled up in hats and scarves to reference when he drew the kids' graphic novel. So if there's a pair of red thigh-high boots on a praying mantis that look familiar, maybe they were yours.

Numberman and writer Aaron Reynolds first Joey Fly book, "Creepy Crawly Crime" was nominated for an Edgar Allan Poe Mystery Award in the juvenile category.

In this whodunit, which is currently out through Macmillan imprint Henry Holt, Numberman brings a bit of Brooklyn alongside more fun, more bugs and a hornets nest of suspects.

Brooklyn Family: What are Joey and Sammy up to in the sequel?

Neil Numberman: They are approached by a gigantic, hairy tarantula, Harry. Harry is the owner and director at the famous Scarab Beetle Theatre. His lead actress has gone missing, and he's convinced Joey Fly is the only one that can find her in time for opening night. So Joey and Sammy are back on the case. There are quite a few suspects: a villainous stinkbug who's dedicated to the craft of acting, a lovesick gypsy moth who's making eyes at Sammy, a geriatric mosquito janitor and even the



Greenpoint-based graphic novelist Neil Numberman brings back his popular "Joey Fly" character in his latest kid's comic book.

"It's the type of book I would have loved to get on Christmas morning."

giant mustachioed tarantula.

BF: How did you improve over the first book, art-wise?

NN: I was really uptight with the first book, because I had never worked on anything that big before. It was 96 pages; the most I had done up until then was three pages. I'm still happy with it, but it's got nothing on the second Joey Fly, art-wise. Between the two books, I've made a lot more comics and I loosened up considerably. The panels are a lot more fun and all over the place, [and] the word balloons are dynamic when they need to be.

BF: How do you take Aaron Reynolds's script and make it better/funnier/funner?

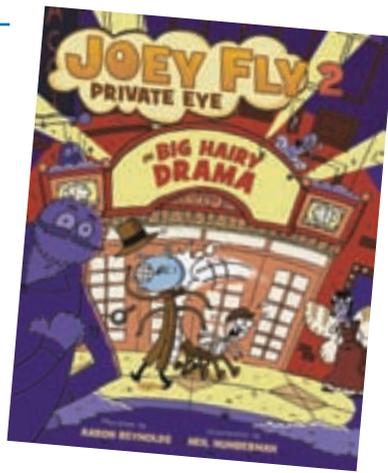
NN: I try to pack each page with plenty of hidden jokes and hints, so folks can take a look at it more than once. I also like to slip in some of my own stories, told entirely through the drawings. It's partly a way for the readers to have fun, and partly so I have fun making it.

BF: What did you mean when you said you were "born to draw this book?"

NN: Aaron wrote a great story with weird and compelling characters, that also happen to be insects and arachnids. It's the type of book I would have loved to get on Christmas morning and run up to my room and sit by the heater in my new slippers and devour. So, when I say I was born to draw this book, I mean any quality story that can be read again and again, with characters that I'm fascinated with and that inspire the imagination. I've been drawing animals and people and monsters since I was 3, maybe since I was 2 (according to my mother), and I've never stopped. So in that respect, I feel like I'm doing what I was born to do.

BF: You mentioned that you took photos of Brooklynites walking on the street to use as inspiration. Where did you go to take the shots and how did this help?

NN: My studio at the time was right on the river in Williamsburg, and I caught people going to work up Bedford Avenue. Fabiane's on Fifth had a great breakfast, and a



nice place to sit and snap pictures where I could keep warm, but see all the folks on their way to work. (Bedford is quite hopping at 9 am) Even though I was in hipster central, and I needed '30s era clothes references, winter clothes tend to be a bit more ambiguous. So after a couple mornings there, I got a hundred or so shots. They were useful for a lot of the theatre scenes toward the end of the book.

BF: How did a nice kid from Jersey who studied illustration at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia end up in Brooklyn?

NN: I needed to set my sights a little higher than Philadelphia. So I applied to the School of Visual Arts's graduate illustration program, as much for the extra education as a reason to move up here. I knew an acceptance letter would light a fire under me, and when I got mine from SVA, it was all the reason I needed to move to New York. I lived in Manhattan for awhile, but after school, I needed an art studio. I mentioned this at a party in Brooklyn, met a guy that had one with extra space in Williamsburg, and I had my spot. I shared a 100-square-foot room with another illustrator and friend, S.Y. Choi, but we outgrew it last year.

BF: What is your workspace like now?

NN: I work out of home. It's a perfect little set-up for me. My studio's in a pretty big room next to my bedroom. I miss working around other friends, because I can always bounce ideas off them, but the upside is I have a workspace and an apartment that's all my own. My desk looks like a space station, with two computer monitors and a television, which I love. The more screen space in front of me, the better.

For more information about Neil Numbeman, visit www.neilnubeman.com.

"PURE FUN!" - Entertainment

Eve Plumb in

Miss Abigail's guide to Dating, Mating, & Marriage!

Starring Eve Plumb!
"Jan" from The Brady Bunch

A brand new 90-minute laugh-out-loud comedy!

MissAbigailsGuide.com or 877-9-MISS-ABIGAIL (877-964-7722)
SOFIA'S DOWNSTAIRS THEATER, 221 West 46th Street, NYC

DAY CARE COUNCIL OF NEW YORK, INC.

Our Professionally Trained Phone Counselors Can Offer You **FREE** Child Care Referral Information On:

- The Location Of Child Care Programs
- Infant/Toddler Programs
- Licensed And Registered Family And Group Family Day Care
- After School Programs
- Nanny Services
- Nursery Schools
- Summer Camps
- Head Start Programs
- Becoming A Child Care Provider

Offering Child Care Information And Technical Assistance To The Five Boroughs Since 1952

212-206-7818
(Mon. - Fri. 9:30 AM - 5:30 PM)

12 West 21st Street, 3rd Floor, New York, N.Y. 10011
(www.dccnyinc.org)



OUR RELATIONSHIPS

JOAN EMERSON, PhD

Relating to in-laws

You may try to keep the holidays about family, love and giving, but what if you (secretly or not) can't stand certain members of the family?

Unfortunately, the holidays can remind us just how difficult extended family relations can be.

You love your spouse and support him, but to you, his family may have totally different views, seem to be very judgemental, or act in crazy ways. You may even feel that they treat you, your spouse or your kids, in ways that cause intense discomfort. Part of that discomfort may come from noticing that your spouse is less observant and more accepting of his family's behaviors than you are, even though he is — at least in your eyes — often the victim.

If some of these situations hit close to home, remember that there are ways you can see past it and enjoy the holidays.

If your spouse has kids from a previous marriage, his loyalty to those kids is something that is unwaveringly deep and non-negotiable. Guilt, and ways of compensating for it, juggling the custodial arrangements, and, often, dealing with the ex-spouse, can be very difficult for you to watch.

With your spouse's family coming over, you might be trying to prepare yourself for a barrage of abuse from his (in your opinion) crazy parents or siblings. Here, again, is something that can upset you more than him. He'll tell you he's used to it, he can handle it, and not to worry. Yet, it can be consistently galling to watch the person you love receiving and reacting to, what you clearly see as, a kind of emotional victimization.

Your spouse's ultra-close relationship with his parents (by spending too much time with them or being too dependent on their help) could also make you feel uncomfortable — especially if you have a different set of ideas about the desirable adult child and parent relationship. Although you can admire the strong bond your spouse has with his parents, sometimes you might feel secretly threatened by it and



wonder (childishly, you admit) who would win if it came to a question of "it's me or them."

And then, of course, spouses' families have different values when it comes to the style of relating during get-togethers. Some families talk openly about members' lives — who's going through a depression, who's going through a divorce, or children with particular issues. Other families prefer small talk, focusing on the food or keeping too busy during the visit to personally connect to each other. Both are, of course, fine, but may be difficult for the spouse who is more comfortable with one and now has to deal with the other.

While issues may be bothering you, what doesn't work is getting more upset than your spouse is about extended family. Even though the intent is to be helpful by pointing out how things could be handled better, how to take or give less abuse or how to stand up for oneself, once your spouse has listened and acknowledged the usually valid point, he'd like you to just let it go. If you stay more upset about the situation than your spouse, and consistently bring up the topic, it can cause intense pain and a deep anger that begins to flare up toward you, and not toward the family in question.

So what's the most constructive path to take? The answer is easier said than done: containment.

After describing some of the difficulties with the in-laws or step-kids, and feeling that your discomforts and requests have been heard and understood, and that your spouse has expressed the desire to try to accommodate you the best he can, you must keep further feelings contained. You must deal with them yourself, and bring them up again only when the timing is right and you can be gentle and positive. You must avoid being a barrier between your spouse and his family; it just causes intense hard feelings and, often, a desire to get back at you by criticizing or rejecting your family.

When it comes to holidays and gift giving, being willing to honor your spouse's wish that you'd kept your feelings from causing conflict and divided loyalties between him and his family is one of the best gifts you can give. Holiday times, when these stressors often emerge, can be a reminder to look inward and check with yourself that you're taking the high road and giving your spouse the best gift you can: acceptance.

Dr. Joan Emerson is a New York psychologist who specializes in couples therapy. Visit her website at www.Joan-Emerson.com.



Photo by Joan Marcus

Pee-wee in the 'house'

Paul Reubens's TV show hits Broadway

BY LISA J. CURTIS

One of the many pleasures of parenthood is being able to revisit joys from our youth — under the guise of introducing them to our unsuspecting kids — without the baggage of feeling juvenile or guilty about the time or cash spent. And while some experiences from yesteryear may make us wince upon being rediscovered by older and wiser eyes, Broadway's "The Pee-wee Herman Show" doesn't disappoint those of us that remember the Emmy Award-winning CBS television series, "Pee-wee's Playhouse."

Pee-wee Herman — played to comic perfection by apparently ageless actor Paul Reubens — is back at the top of his "I know you are, but what am I?" game.

The TV show, which premiered in 1986, featured Reubens as the cheeky, mercurial man-boy in the too-small gray suit and red bow tie and all of his friends — humans, puppets and animated furniture alike — that hung out in his magical clubhouse. Together they learned how to deal with bullies, endure a sick day, enjoy pen pals and much more.

Earlier this year, I introduced my son to the TV series via Image Entertainment's DVD collection. While we enjoyed watching it together, I was disappointed by some segments' dull and fuzzy quality — unacceptable in our current high-def world. So it was especially exhilarating to experience the glittering, jewel-toned eye-candy that is

the set of the current stage production. Similarly, costume designer Ann Closs-Farley has embraced the Bedazzler and her spectacularly garish costumes should be de rigeur for Halloween 2011.

Now add to THAT the electric excitement of live theater. While it may be fun to shout along with the show's characters in your home each time the secret word is heard, it is absolutely thrilling to holler along with hundreds of grinning fans in the Stephen Sondheim Theatre. It's deliciously naughty of director Alex Timbers to encourage this behavior, which flies in the face of the accepted etiquette that you not open a noisy candy wrapper — much less scream — in a theater. Pee-wee's audience enthusiastically embraces this license to exuberantly interact with the cast.

Speaking of manners, the multimedia, vaudeville-esque stage show continues the series's traditions of prominently featuring animation, a wide variety of puppets — by artist Basil Twist, and unspooling a reel of now-ludicrous vintage film — in this case, about how to behave properly in school.

The stage show incorporates nods to TV commercials old (Chia Pets, anyone?) and new (ShamWow and Bumpits). This material does get the laughs, but it also subversively serves as a reminder of just how well "Pee-wee's Playhouse" holds up in 2010 and how necessary it is to share Reubens's still-relevant comic genius with the next generation.

Amidst all of the double entendres and nudge-nudge pop culture references, the show — written by Reubens and Bill Steinkellner — offers up an authentically affecting story line: Pee-wee unrealistically hopes

to fly like his friend Pterri the Pterodactyl. In addition to Pterri, Pee-wee reunites with many of our favorite characters from the ground-breaking children's show, such as Cowboy Curtis (played here by Phil LaMarr) and Chairry (the talking wing chair). Fans are ecstatic to see a couple of the series's actors in the Broadway cast. Just as Pee-wee prefers his yarn-linked soup cans to Wi-Fi, the show's producers have wisely chosen to stay loyal to those seasoned ensemble members. In addition to Reubens as Pee-wee, Lynne Marie Stewart reprises the role of Miss Yvonne — the most beautiful woman in cartoon land — and the riveting John Paragon pulls off the role of Jambi the Genie just by employing all of the talent in his disembodied head. (In fact, several of the actors are original to the stage show of the same name which debuted at the Groundlings Theatre in 1981.)

Pee-wee prefers interacting with his long-time friends Conky the robot (Josh Meyers) and Magic Screen — which is akin to a talking Etch-A-Sketch — to the joys of the newfangled computer. And I have to agree. I was thrilled to leave the technology at home and take my son's small hand in mine while enjoying this live version of "Pee-wee."

Lisa J. Curtis is a freelance writer and editor based in Staten Island.

"The Pee-wee Herman Show" is performed at the Stephen Sondheim Theatre (124 West 43rd Street in Manhattan) now through Jan. 2, 2011. Performances are Tuesdays at 7 pm, Wednesday through Friday at 8 pm, Saturday at 2 pm and 8 pm and Sunday at 2 pm and 7 pm. Tickets are \$67-\$122. Check www.pee-wee.com/broadway for changes in the schedule during holiday weeks.

Going Places

LONG-RUNNING

Storytime: Barnes & Noble, 176-60 Union Tpk at Utopia Parkway; (718) 380-7077; www.bn.com; Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10 am & 7 pm, Now – Thurs, Jan. 27; Free.

Children enjoy stories and a cookie break.

Support Group: Central Queens YM&WYHA, 67-09 108th St. at 67th Road; (718) 268-5011 X500; Dstar @ cqjcc.org. www.cqjcc.org.

Cancer survivors discuss exercise, movement limitation issues, core strengthening, resistance training and aerobic activity. Pre-registration required.

New York Botanical Garden Train Show: New York Botanical Gardens, Bronx River Pkwy (Exit 7W) and Fordham Road; (718) 817-8716; www.nybg.org; Tuesdays – Sundays, 10 am–7 pm, Now – Sun, Jan. 2, 2011; \$20 (\$10 children, children under 2 free).

More than one dozen large-scale model trains running on nearly a quarter-mile of track along with replicas of Manhattan landmarked buildings.

Race to the End of the Earth: American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at 79th Street; (212) 769-5100; www.amnh.org; Daily, 10 am–5:45 pm; Now – Sun, Jan. 2, 2011; Donations suggested.

The exhibit recounts the most stirring tales of Antarctic exploration: the contest to reach the South Pole in 1911-1912. Highlights include photographs, paintings, and rare historical artifacts as well as actual items of clothing and tools; life-sized models of portions of Amundsen's and Scott's base camps; and a diorama featuring the largest of all penguin species alive today, the emperor penguin. There are also interactive and hands-on activities for all ages.

Friendship Group: Friedberg JCC, 15 Neil Ct. at Fireman's Memorial Drive; (516) 766-4341; www.friedberg.org; Daily, 2–3 pm; Now – Thurs, Dec. 30; Call for Fees.

Middle school students with disabilities swim in the indoor pool, hang out in the renovated teen lounge and participate in exciting art projects.

Support Group: Mid-Island Y JCC, 45 Manetto Hill Road; 516-822-3535 X 326; www.miyjcc.org; Wednesdays and Fridays, 10 am – 2 pm, Now – Fri, Dec. 24.



Passing on traditions

Get out those aprons! What's Cooking?, a children's culinary school, is offering two classes where kids will learn to bake Christmas and Hannukah treats.

This two-hour holiday workshop, held on Dec. 6 and Dec. 16 at the school's Oyster Bay location, includes a tasty menu of gingerbread houses, cookies, potato latkes with applesauce, edible dreidels and hot chocolate with

marshmallows. Shabbat Respite program provides a supportive and nurturing environment for your loved one who is suffering from Alzheimer's disease or early onset dementia including socialization, cognitive stimulation activities, art therapy and more. Led by licensed social workers, coffee tea and a nutritious kosher lunch provided. To schedule an appointment or additional information call Doreen.

Support Group: Parkway Community Church, 95 Stewart Ave; (516)-395-8303; Wednesdays, 7:30 pm, Now – Wed, Dec. 29; \$7.

marshmallows.

It's a great opportunity for children, ages 7 to 10, to learn responsibility and get in the holiday spirit.

Pre-registration is required at info@whatscookingny.com.

Holiday cooking classes at What's Cooking? [30 East Main St. near Church Street in Oyster Bay, (516) 922-2665], Dec. 6 and 16, 4:30 pm. \$49. For info, visit www.whatscookingny.com.

A dynamic discussion and support group for 40 plus individuals, who are widowed, divorced or single.

"The Bikinis": Queens Theatre in the Park, Flushing Meadows Corona Park; Box Office 718-760-0064; Administration 718-760-0686; www.queens theatre.org; Thursday, Dec. 2, 2 pm; Friday, Dec. 3, 8 pm; Saturday, Dec. 4, 2 pm; Sunday, Dec. 5, 3 pm; Friday, Dec. 10, 8 pm; Saturday, Dec. 11, 2 pm; Sunday, Dec. 12, 3 pm; \$34-\$40.

A musical beach party.

Wild Holiday Party: Queens Zoo,

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!

53-51 111th St. (718) 271-1500; queenszoo.com; Saturday, Dec. 4, 11 am; Sunday, Dec. 5, 11 am; Saturday, Dec. 11, 11 am; Sunday, Dec. 12, 11 am; Saturday, Dec. 18, 11 am; Sunday, Dec. 19, 11 am; Saturday, Dec. 25, 11 am; Sunday, Dec. 26, 11 am; Free with zoo admission.

Visitors are invited to watch as frisky felines Felix and Cleo and playful Andean bears Cisco and Spangles devour special holiday treats.

THURS, DEC. 2

Chanukah story time: Barnes and Noble, 70-00 Austin St. at 68th Avenue; 718-793-1395; www.barnesandnoble.com; 3:15 pm; Free.

For children of all ages.

FRI, DEC. 3

Bowling lessons: JIB Lanes, 67-19 Parsons Blvd. (718) 591-0600; www.jiblanes.com; 4:30 to 6 pm; Free.

Children six and up learn the game from members of the junior coaching staff. Pre-registration required.

SAT, DEC. 4

A Sunny Day Family concert: Peter J Sharp Theater, 155 West 65th St. at Broadway; (212) 864-5400; www.symphonyspace.org/justkidding; 11 am; \$13-\$27.

Elizabeth Mitchell and Family perform folk standards.

Taylor 101: Flushing Town Hall, 137-35 Northern Boulevard; (718) 463-7700; www.flushingtownhall.org; 1 pm; \$6 (\$3 children).

Learn the basics of Paul Taylor's movement and choreography. Wear comfort-

Going Places

able clothing, all levels of dance experience welcome.

Mommy and Me double Dutch tournament: Sorrentino Recreation Center, 1848 Carnaga Ave. at Beach 19th Street; (718) 471-4818; www.nycgovparks.org; 1-3 pm; Free.

Moms with children three to 15.

SUN, DEC. 5

Klezmer Hanukkah party: Flushing Town Hall, 137-35 Northern Boulevard; (718) 463-7700; www.flushingtownhall.org; 2 pm; \$16; \$12 members (\$12 children; \$10 member children).

The Alicia Svigals Trio perform holiday favorites.

MON, DEC. 6

Holiday cooking class: What's Cooking?, 30 East Main Street; (516) 922-2665; info@whatscookingny.com; whatscookingny.com; 4:30 pm; \$49.

Children will learn how to make Christmas and Hanukkah baked good. Ages: seven to ten. Preregistration is necessary.

WED, DEC. 8

Irwin Altman Middle School 172 Multicultural Night: Barnes & Noble, 176-60 Union Tpk. at Utopia Turnpike; (718) 380-7077; 7 pm; Free.

Students, parents and staff explore different cultural backgrounds.

FRI, DEC. 10

Bowling lessons: 4:30 to 6 pm. JIB Lanes. See Friday, Dec. 3.

SAT, DEC. 11

Scavenger Hunt: Juniper Valley Park, Enter at 80th St. and Juniper Boulevard North; (718) 846-2731; www.nycgovparks.org; 11 am; Free.

Children of all ages hunt for interesting items. Prizes awarded.

Franny's Feet Family Day: New York Hall of Science, 47-01 111th St. 718-699-0005; www.nysci.org; 11 am-5 pm; Free with admission.

Children enjoy hands-on activities, watch your favorite Franny's Feet episodes, and receive fun giveaways.

Queens College Choral Society: Kupferberg Center, Queens College, 65-30 Kissena Boulevard; (718) 793-8080; kupferbergcenter.org; 8 pm; \$20.

Queens Collge Choral Society presents Handel's Messiah performance.

SUN, DEC. 12

Holiday sale: Flushing Town Hall, 137-35 Northern Boulevard; (718) 463-7700; www.flushingtownhall.org; 1 pm; Free.



'Nutcracker' prince

Ballet for Young Audiences performs "The Nutcracker" at Queens Theatre in the Park from Dec. 28-30.

The production, which is a great introduction to the wonderful world of ballet, tells the timeless story of Clara and her nutcracker prince set to Tchaikovsky's classic score. Just because it runs after Christmas

doesn't make it worth passing over. Between the beautiful costumes, the thrilling music and exciting story, this is a treat at any time of year.

"The Nutcracker" at the Queens Theatre in the Park [Flushing Meadows Corona Park in Corona, (718) 760-0064]. Dec. 28-30, 1 pm and 4 pm. Tickets \$12. For info, visit www.queens theatre.org.

Looking for a special gift for that special someone? Flushing Council on the Arts has the solution.

Kids for Kids: A celebration of young genius: Frank Sinatra School of the Arts, 35-12 35th Ave. (646) 458-2815; www.stathc.org; 3 pm; \$30 (\$20 children, Children under five free).

Holiday-themed variety show featuring the Kids of Broadway and Impact Repertory Theater.

WED, DEC. 15

Jamaica Day School of Saint

Demetrios Pajama storytime: Barnes & Noble, 176-60 Union Tpk. at Utopia Turnpike; (718) 380-7077; 6:30 pm; Free.

Bring your teddy bears and slippers.

THURS, DEC. 16

Holiday cooking class: 4:30 pm. What's Cooking? See Monday, Dec. 6.

FRI, DEC. 17

Bowling lessons: 4:30 to 6 pm. JIB Lanes. See Friday, Dec. 3.

SAT, DEC. 18

The Paul Taylor Dance Company: Queens Theatre in the Park, Flushing Meadows Corona Park; Box Office 718-760-0064; Administration 718-760-0686; www.queens theatre.org; 2 and 8 pm; \$24-\$40.

Modern dance performance.

"I_NY": Queens Theatre in the Park, Flushing Meadows Corona Park; Box Office 718-760-0064; Administration 718-760-0686; www.queens theatre.org; 8 pm; Free.

Reading. Reservations requested.

"Flipzoids": Queens Theatre in the Park, Flushing Meadows Corona Park; (718) 760-0064; www.queens theatre.org; 8 pm; Free.

Ralph Pena reads a moving story about three Filipinos adjusting to life in America. RSVP required.

SUN, DEC. 19

The Paul Taylor Dance Company: 3 pm. Queens Theatre in the Park. See Saturday, Dec. 18.

SUN, DEC. 26

Holiday open house: Queens County Farm Museum, 73-50 Little Neck Pkwy. 718-347-3276; www.queens farm.org; 4-8 pm; Free.

Enjoy tours of the decorated farmhouse, a craft activity for children, and mulled cider.

MON, DEC. 27

Holiday open house: 4-8 pm. Queens County Farm Museum. See Sunday, Dec. 26.

TUES, DEC. 28

"The Nutcracker": Queens Theatre in the Park, Flushing Meadows Corona Park; Box Office 718-760-0064; Administration 718-760-0686; www.queens theatre.org; 1 and 4 pm; \$12.

Holiday classic.

Holiday open house: 4-8 pm. Queens County Farm Museum. See Sunday, Dec. 26.

WED, DEC. 29

"The Nutcracker": 1 and 4 pm. Queens Theatre in the Park. See Tuesday, Dec. 28.

THURS, DEC. 30

"The Nutcracker": 1 and 4 pm. Queens Theatre in the Park. See Tuesday, Dec. 28.



Going Places

December events at Queens Libraries

Tots and teens can enjoy exciting and educational events all month long at the Queens Library, and — best

of all — it's all free.

For additional information visit a branch near you or online at www.queenslibrary.org.

LONG-RUNNING

Crocheting for Teens: Queens Public Library at Baisley Park, 117-11 Sutphin Blvd; (718) 529-1590; Thursdays, 4 pm,

Teens learn how to crochet with Yvette Jackson and take home their own creations. Yarn and needles will be supplied.

Girl Scouts: Queens Library at Queens Village, 94-11 217 St. at 94th Road; (718) 776-6800; www.queenslibrary.org; Thursdays, 4 pm, Free. Informational meeting.

Teen Night: Queens Library at Arverne, 312 Beach 54th St. (718) 634-4784; Thursdays, 5:15 pm, Now – Thurs, Dec. 23; Free.

Meet up with friends for crafts and activities. For ages 12 to 18.

Game Players Club: Queens Library at Hillcrest, 187-05 Union Turnpike; (718) 454-2786; Fridays, 4 pm, Now – Fri, Dec. 17; Free.

Play a round of Chutes and Ladders, chess and other board games.

WED, DEC. 1

"Picture Book Time": Queens Library, Broadway branch, 40-20 Broadway; (718) 721-2462; queenslibrary.org; 10:30 am; Free.

For ages four to six years old. Preregistration required.

Toddler crafts: Queens Public Library at Bay Terrace, 18-36 Bell Blvd. at 23rd Avenue; (718) 423-7004; 10:30 am; Free.

Toddlers and caregivers listen to music, stories and crafts.

Crafts: Queens Public Library at Steinway, 21-45 31st St. at Ditmars Boulevard; (718) 728-1965; 11 am; Free.

Youngsters make handmade gifts. While supplies last.

The Power of the Pen: Queens Public Library at East Elmhurst, 95-06 Astoria; (718) 424-2619; 4 pm; Free.

Teens get hands-on help with their writing projects. Pre-registration required.

Poetry Club for Teen Girls: Queens Public Library at Langston Hughes, 100-01 Northern Blvd. (New York 25A); (718) 651-1100; 4 pm; Free.

Write poetry, learn and exploring new techniques.

Math Through Art: Queens Public Library at Long Island City, 37-44 21 St. at 49th Avenue; (718) 752-3700; 4 pm; Free.

Children 11-14 learn ways that math has influenced art throughout history and create works of art in the styles of famous artists. Pre-registration required.

Stained Glass: Queens Public Library at Pomonok, 158-21 Jewel Ave. at Greenpoint Avenue; (718) 591-4343; 4:30 pm; Free.

Children 11-14 work with professional to learn the craft of glass. Pre-registration required.

THURS, DEC. 2

Crazy Crochet: Queens Public Library at Laurelton, 134-26 225 St. at Merrick Boulevard; (718) 528-2822; 3:45 pm; Free.

All you need is a hook and some yarn.

Story time: Queens Public Library at Rosedale, 144-20 243rd St. (718) 528-8490; 4 pm; Free.

Robin Bady reads tales of the season to children.

FRI, DEC. 3

Flash Friday: Queens Public Library at Ozone Park, 92-24 Rockaway Blvd. at 93rd Street; (718) 845-3127; 3:30 pm; Free.

Children to seventh grade enjoy some computer games.

Lanyard: Queens Public Library at Elmhurst, 86-01 Broadway at 51st Avenue; (718) 271-1020; 4 pm; Free.

Teens make keychains and learn the box, butterfly and cobra designs.

Holiday craft: Queens Public Library at Pomonok, 158-21 Jewel Ave. at Greenpoint Avenue; (718) 591-4343; 4 pm; Free.

All ages create homemade gifts and cards.

Stock market game: Queens Public Library at Long Island City, 34-44 21st St. at 49th Avenue; (718) 752-3700; 4 pm; Free.

Learn about the stock market.

SAT, DEC. 4

Author and publisher's fair: Queens Public Library at Langston Hughes, 100-01 Northern Blvd (New

York 25A) at; (718) 651-1100; 9:30 am; Free.

Presentations, lectures, performances, sales and signings.

Saturday science lab: Central Library, 89-11 Merrick Blvd. (718) 990-0700; 11 am; Free.

Explore the world with the Discovery Team.

Songs of the Season with St. Luke Contemporary Ensemble: Flushing Library, 41-17 Main St. (718) 661-1200; 2 pm; Free.

Enjoy holiday favorites.

Music for the holidays: Queens Public Library at Bayside, 214-20 Northern Blvd. (718) 229-1834; 3 pm; Free.

Soprano Teresa Mazzilli performs classics.

SUN, DEC. 5

Indian concert: Central Library, 89-11 Merrick Blvd. (718) 990-0700; 3 pm; Free.

Punjabi songs and Bollywood numbers with percussion and horns.

MON, DEC. 6

Baby and Me: Queens Library, Bay-side branch, 214-20 Northern Boulevard; (718) 229-1834; queenslibrary.org; 10:15 am; Free.

Features nursery rhymes, fingerplays, songs, and playtime. For babies nine-18 months accompanied by a caregiver. Pre-registration is required.

Holiday card craft: Queens Library, Fresh Meadows branch, 193-20 Horace Harding Expressway; (718) 454-7272; queenslibrary.org; 3:30 pm; Free.

Children ages five to ten.

Holiday craft: Queens Public Library at Fresh Meadows, 193-20 Horace Harding Expway; (718) 454-7272; 3:30 pm; Free.

Children in grades K through 6 make holiday cards and decorations Monday, December 6 @ 3:30PM.

College bound club: Queens Library, Central branch, 89-11 Merrick Boulevard; (718) 990-0700; queenslibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

A series of programs for teens on navigating the path to college.

Balloon sculpture workshop: Queens Library, Forest Hills branch, 108-19 71 Avenue; (718) 268-7934; queenslibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

Ages 11 to 14 will learn basic balloon sculpture. Space is limited, and preregistration is required.

Beading workshop: Queens Public

Library at Briarwood, 85-12 Main St. between 70th Avenue and 70th Road; (718) 658-1680; 4 pm; Free.

Teens make bracelets and keychains.

Holiday concert: Queens Public Library at Kew Gardens Hills, 72-33 Vleigh Pl. (718) 261-6654; 4:30 pm; Free.

Chanukah songs of light featuring singer Irene Failenbogen.

Health workshop: Queens Public Library at South Hollis, 204-01 Hollis Ave. (718) 990-5102; 6 pm; Free.

Just because it's the holidays doesn't mean you can't enjoy healthy snacks. Learn about nutrition and food safety.

Holiday trivia with Harry the Trivia Elf: Queens Public Library at Steinway, 21-45 31st St. at Ditmars Boulevard. (718) 728-1965; 6 pm; Free.

Test your holiday knowledge. Winner receives a prize.

Romanian Christmas celebration: Queens Public Library at Sunnyside, 43-06 Greenpoint Ave. (718) 784-3030; 6 pm; Free.

Sing carols (colinde).

TUES, DEC. 7

Mitali Perkins: Flushing Library, 41-17 Main St. (718) 661-1200; www.queenslibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

The author leads a writing workshop and autographs her book. The first 20 teens receive an autographed copy. Pre-registration required.

Teen book discussion: Queens Public Library at Kew Gardens Hills, 72-33 Vleigh Pl. (718) 261-6654; 4:30 pm; Free.

"Twilight" by author Stephenie Meyer.

WED, DEC. 8

The Power of the Pen: 4 pm. Queens Public Library at East Elmhurst. See Wednesday, Dec. 1.

Poetry Club for Teen Girls: 4 pm. Queens Public Library at Langston Hughes. See Wednesday, Dec. 1.

Math Through Art: 4 pm. Queens Public Library at Long Island City. See Wednesday, Dec. 1.

Holiday concert: Queens Public Library at Forest Hills, 108-19 71 Ave. (718) 268-7934; 6 pm; Free.

Celebrate Chanukah and Christmas in song. For all ages.

THURS, DEC. 9

Crazy Crochet: 3:45 pm. Queens Public Library at Laurelton. See Thursday, Dec. 2.

Going Places

Rainforest Butterflies: Queens Public Library at Forest Hills, 108-19 71 Ave. (718) 268-7934; 4 pm; Free.

Teens explore the rainforest and all it's creatures. Pre-registration required.

FRI, DEC. 10

Stock market game: 4 pm. Queens Public Library at Long Island City. See Friday, Dec. 3.

SAT, DEC. 11

Holiday concert: Flushing Library, 41-17 Main St. (718) 661-1200; www.queenslibrary.org; 2 pm; Free.

Uncle Yao's Chorus and United Star of America Chorus.

Jingle Bell Swing: Queens Public Library at Rochdale Village, 169-09 137th Ave. (718) 723-4440; 3 pm; Free.

The whole family enjoys the performance of Richard Lanham.

SUN, DEC. 12

Open mic: Central Library, 89-11 Merrick Blvd. (718) 990-0700; www.queenlibrary.org; 2 pm; Free.

Inge Judd and featured reader David Mills.

MON, DEC. 13

Family Night: Queens Public Library at South Jamaica, 108-41 Guy R. Brewer Blvd. at 109th Avenue; (718) 739-4088; 6 pm; Free.

Board game, Wii games and light refreshments.

Holiday Jazz concert: Queens Public Library at East Elmhurst, 95-06 Astoria Blvd. at 104th Street; (718) 424-2619; 7 pm; Free.

The Magnet Band featuring Rob Scheps on Saxophone, Kim Clarke on Bass, Bryan Carrott on Vibes and George Gray on Drums.

TUES, DEC. 14

Holiday karaoke: Queens Public Library at Seaside, 116-15 Rockaway Beach Blvd. at Beach 117th Street; (718) 634-1876; 4:30 pm; Free.

Teens and tweens celebrate the holidays.

WED, DEC. 15

The Power of the Pen: 4 pm. Queens Public Library at East Elmhurst. See Wednesday, Dec. 1.

Poetry Club for Teen Girls: 4 pm. Queens Public Library at Langston Hughes. See Wednesday, Dec. 1.

Holiday karaoke: 4:30 pm. Queens Public Library at Seaside. See Tuesday, Dec. 14.

THURS, DEC. 16

Arts and crafts: Queens Public Library at Bay Terrace, 18-36 Bell Blvd. between 23rd Avenue and 18th Avenue; (718) 423-7004; 3:30 pm; Free.

Teens make ornaments and small gifts.

Winter crafts: Queens Public Library at Hillcrest, 187-05 Union Trnkp. at 71st Road; (718) 454-2786; 4 pm; Free.

Make seasonal projects and cards. For children six to 14 years of age.

Improvisation workshop: Queens Public Library at Hollis, 202-05 Hillside Ave. (718) 465-7355; 4 pm; Free.

Tweens and teens 11-14 years old learn acting and participate in theater games. Pre-registration required.

FRI, DEC. 17

Stock market game: 4 pm. Queens Public Library at Long Island City. See Friday, Dec. 3.

SAT, DEC. 18

Holiday movies: Flushing Library, 41-17 Main St. (718) 661-1200; www.queenslibrary.org; 10:15 am and 12:15 pm; Free.

Classic holiday themed movies. For teens only.

MON, DEC. 20

Briarwood Zine: Queens Public Library at Briarwood, 85-12 Main St. at 70th Avenue; (718) 658-1680; 4 pm; Free.

Create the zine featuring artwork, poetry, and writing from local children and teens.

College club: Central Library, 89-11 Merrick Blvd. (718) 990-0700; www.queenslibrary.org; 4 pm; Free.

Teens learn the ins and outs of college admissions.

TUES, DEC. 21

Book reading: Flushing Library, 41-17 Main St. (718) 661-1200; www.queenlibrary.org; 5 pm; Free.

Teen authors Selene Castrovilla and Shari Maurer discuss how they became writers.

WED, DEC. 22

The Power of the Pen: 4 pm. Queens Public Library at East Elmhurst. See Wednesday, Dec. 1.

MON, DEC. 27

Adventure Movie marathon: Flushing Library, 41-17 Main St. (718) 661-1200; www.queenslibrary.org; Noon; Free.

All flicks all day with friends. For teens only.



A beary fun bash

These bears sure know how to party.

The talented people at the Swedish Cottage Marionette Theatre in Central Park invite you to get in the holiday spirit with the marionette production of "The Three Bears Holiday Bash," now through Dec. 30.

Experience all the fun and error that occurs when Baby Bear invites Santa to Mama and Papa Bears' Christmas Show. With song, dance and puppetry, the story draws inspiration from Christmas, Hanukkah and Kwanza.

"As one of the most fascinating children's theatres in the country,

the Swedish Cottage Marionette Theatre in Central Park is the perfect place to tell this vibrant seasonal story," said David Rivel, executive director of City Parks Foundation.

This spin on the classic "Goldie Locks and the Three Bears" brings a diverse community together to celebrate the holidays.

"The Three Bears Holiday Bash" at the Swedish Cottage Marionette Theatre in Central Park [81 Street and Central Park West in Manhattan, just south of the Delacorte Theater, (212) 988-9093], now through Dec. 30. Reservations required. \$5/children and \$8 adults. For info, visit www.cityparksfoundation.org.

Holiday food drive

Children at the Montessori School of New York International and Doubletree Hotels are partnering in a holiday food drive, hoping to reach a goal of collecting 500,000 non-perishable food items to help those less fortunate.

Collection containers designed by the children have been placed in each of the three schools and in the Doubletree Hotel lobbies.

Doubletree will donate \$.10 to World Food USA for each item collected.

To help these students meet their goal drop off your contribution at any of the three school campuses.

Drop off non-perishable foods [105 Eighth Ave. in Park Slope], [347 E. 55th St. in Manhattan], [55-30 Junction Blvd. in Queens] by Dec. 31.

To Facebook or not to Facebook?

Is it ethical for a teacher to 'friend' students?

BY VERA BORUKHOV

Should teachers "friend" their students on Facebook? The question is circulating around schools everywhere.

Some people feel that their Facebook page is too private to share with anyone but their closest friends. To them I say: Exactly what is it you're posting that's so private? Facebook doesn't exist in a bubble. You can search for anyone on the site — and even find Facebook

pages on Google and other search engines.

Personally, I see nothing wrong with befriending my students on social media, as Facebook offers customized features that allow me to keep certain information private.

For instance, I can create a group made up solely of my students and then, if I'm posting something I don't want the kids to see, I can choose to block the post from that group.

I've sent out "friend" requests to my students, and I gladly accept

their requests in return. It allows me to get to know my students on a deeper level — and the better I know them, the better I can teach them.

However, as long as a child is my student, I make it a point to stay neutral about the information he or she shares online. Even if a student posts pictures of himself smoking, wrapping weed, making out, or flipping the bird, I don't get involved online. If I see something truly alarming on his page, I talk to

him privately; otherwise, it's his page and his business. Sometimes students will send me a personal message on the site. If the student is concerned about something, I give a quick response and then suggest he or she talk to me in person.

Once the child is no longer my student, then I might comment here and there if I find a status update or a picture compelling. But, if you're worried about the ethics and privacy issues involved in being a part of your teacher's or student's social network, then don't friend him or her — or do it after your student-teacher relationship is over if you want to stay connected.

Vera Borukhov is the founder of Veracity Learning Inc., devoted to providing English and Entrepreneurial education to uncover your child's genius. Contact Veracity to better your child's school experience and give you peace of mind at (718) 790-8911. For more info, visit www.veracity-learning.com. E-mail Vera at vera.borukhov@gmail.com.



PARTY PLANNERS

CLOWNS, CHARACTERS & COTTON CANDY, INC.
Best Parties! **Children's Parties** *Best Parties!*

- ★ CUTE CLOWNS
- ★ CARTOON CHARACTERS
- ★ BALLOON SCULPTING
- ★ FACE PAINTING
- ★ MUSICAL GAMES
- ★ PICTURE TIME
- ★ MAGIC COTTON CANDY MACHINE

We Come to You and Bring Smiles to Your Children!
 (718) 683-1739 • (516) 987-9288
 VISIT OUR WEB SITE AT 3CPARTIES.COM!

OVER THE MOON

- Clowns
- Magicians
- Princesses
- Princes
- Pirates
- Interactive Dancing
- Games
- Face Painting
- Balloon Twisting
- Juggling
- Stilt Walking
- Sand Art
- Holiday Parties
- Birthday Parties & More!

For out of this world children's entertainment!
 516-712-0920 • www.OverTheMoonEntertainment.com

Rico The Clown

Magician Comical Nerd

As seen on TV

- Magic • Balloon Sculpting
- Comedy • Roasting
- Educational Shows
- Adults/Kids

Rico is a University Professor of Speech and Communication

718-434-9697 • 917-318-9092

ARKASHA'S SHOW

Moscow Circus Performer For All Occasions:

- ★ Clown
- ★ Juggler
- ★ Magician
- ★ Balloons
- ★ Live Dog Show
- ★ Face Painting

917-804-0822
www.ArlekinA.com

DABBYS

"The Place For Childrens Parties"

10% Off With This Ad

Just Call **718.MY.DABBY**

11-02 Clintonville St. Whitestone, NY 11357

twitter.com/DABBYS
 facebook.com/DABBYS

CARMINI THE MAGICIAN

BEST PRICES IN TOWN

Your audience will laugh and have a great time at a fun-filled show with magic, comedy, audience participation, fun for young and old

Magic, Clowns, Ventriloquists, Balloons, Face Painting and Characters

Free Candy & Prize Giveaways

718.633.9137 • 917.754.5755

PARTY PERFECTION PROFESSIONALS

PREMIER CHILDREN'S ENTERTAINMENT

We Will Work With You To Customize The Right Party Package To Suit Your Budget

Costumed Characters • Fairytale Princess Parties
 Popcorn Carts • Cotton Candy • Snow Cones
 Bounce Houses • Sand/Spin Art • Magicians
 Pop Star Parties • Happy Clowns • & Lots More Fun

www.partyperfectionprofessionals.vpweb.com
 347-255-0558

HAPPY HENRY

"The Wizard/Magician Clown"

Close Up Magic AT ITS VERY FINEST

- HANDS-ON MAGIC
- BALLOON ANIMALS
- FACE PAINTING
- ILLUSIONS AND HUNDREDS OF COSTUME CHARACTERS

Birthdays, Bar Mitzvahs, Christenings, Children's and Adult Parties
 CORPORATE ACCOUNTS WELCOME

917-617-3698
www.HappyHenrytheWizard.com

The Twisted Balloon Company

Award-winning Balloon Art & Entertainment

Todd Neufeld
 featured entertainer

1-212-748-9798

1-800-505-TWIST (800-505-8947)
www.twistedballoon.com
 todd@twistedballoon.com

ALL IN ONE ENTERTAINMENT INC.

ALL AT A REASONABLE PRICE
 (718) 441-5764
 (718) 441-7796
www.allinoneentertainment.com

Clowns • Magicians • Cartoon Characters
 DJ Service • Arts & Crafts
 All Types of Bounce • Face Painting Sand/
 Spin Art • Balloon Artists
 Private Events • and much more!!!

WEEKDAY SPECIAL STARTS AT \$90⁰⁰
 PARTY ROOM AVAILABLE
 95-25 Jamaica Ave, Woodhaven, NY 11421

Brand New PARTY ROOM w/Soft Play Area

Have A Kid's Party That's Very Different!

PARTY PETS.com

- We bring the zoo to you!
- All ages & all occasions
- Bug & Reptile Shows
- Squirrel Petting Zoo
- Pony Rides
- Exotic Pet Program
- Nature Programs
- Pet Therapy
- U.S.D.A. Licensed & Insured

\$20 Off with 2nd party family

Hands-on learning about exotic animals from around the world

WE ADOPT UNWANTED EXOTIC PETS!

All Day Enrichment Programs Available to Schools, Scouts, Libraries, & Private Occasions • BOOK EARLY!

Call 516-766-1100 • Party Pets, Inc. • P.O. Box 439 • Baldwin, NY
 Tortoise • Chinchilla • Hedgehog • Alligator • Snakes & Dogs

PARTY! PARTY! PARTY!

Have Your Next Fabulous Party With Us

Includes:
 Hostesses • Two Sports • Pizza & Soda • Gift for Every Guest
 Special Gift for Birthday Child • Table for Adults
 Party Area For 2 1/2 Hours

We give all our parties our "personal touch" as we are committed to customer satisfaction!
 See inside ad for more information.

ASTORIA SPORTS COMPLEX
 34-38 38th St., Astoria, NY 11101 • 718-729-7163 • www.asoparts1.com

Best Clowns

Clowns • Costume Characters
 Princess Parties • Magicians
 Face Painters • Balloon Art
 Caricaturists • Toddler Games
 Cotton Candy & More

1-800-75-CLOWN or 212-614-0988
 Bi-Lingual Performers Available • Private & Corporate Events
 All Boros, L.I. & Westchester

TO PLACE AN AD IN THIS SECTION, PLEASE CALL 718.260.2587

Shows include live Birds & Rabbits

Let Joe the Magic Man make your next event a memorable one with comedy magic fun for everyone.

call 917-723-0460
www.joethemagicman.com

It figures

BY CYNTHIA WASHAM

HOLIDAY HIGHLIGHTS



75 Number of years Coca-Cola has been using Santa Claus in its ads.

80 Percent of children visiting Santa Claus that psychology researcher John Trinkaus discovered are indifferent toward him.

87 Percent of their parents who appeared happy during the Santa visit.

1957 Year a woman baking peanut butter cookies in Ohio stuck a Hershey's Kiss in the middle to create the first Peanut Blossom, one of the holiday season's most popular cookies.



600 A.D.

Approximate year Pope Gregory first encouraged the tradition of bringing greenery indoors to celebrate Christmas.

1917 The year Boys Town, for homeless boys — now Girls and Boys Town — was founded in Omaha, NE, on Dec. 12, by Father Edward Flannigan.

2 million Number of people who pay \$13.99 a year for American Greetings' e-card service featuring 30,000 e-cards, including many for the holidays.

25 Percent of people who consider "A Christmas Carol" their favorite Christmas show.

12 Percent who picked either "It's A Wonderful Life" or "Charlie Brown's Christmas."



13 Percent of Jewish couples who had an interfaith marriage before 1970.

47 Percent who have an interfaith marriage now.



75 Percent who exchange Christmas presents.

50 Percent of interfaith couples who put up a Christmas tree.

Sources: Marketing Week, Improbable Research, Interfaithfamily.com, University of Connecticut, Boystown.org, Associated Content, Bugwood.org, Notmuch.com, Mother Nature Network

Community Marketplace

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

Wanted Distributors & Sales Agent

**Earn Big Money! Set Your Own Hours!
Be Your Own Boss!**
Use Your Home Or Place Of Business
To Earn Extra Income
Selling Ladies Lingerie & Accessories
Customer Service 24 hours
Tel. 1-800-396-5947

E-mail: bjmlingerie@hotmail.com • www.bjmlingerie.com

CHILD CARE



JUSTICE 4 CHILDREN
DAY CARE
Open 24 Hours • 7 Days a Week
Licensed Group Family Day Care • Reasonable Rates
Tuition includes all meals • Educational Programs
Scheduled Activities • Trained Staff
www.Justice4Childrendaycare.com
Justice 4 Children Day Care I 111-26 Sutphin Blvd. Jamaica, NY 11435
Justice 4 Children Day Care II 56 Lynwood Drive Valley Stream, NY 11580
Allison V. Justice • 917-597-1410

TUTORING

Help your child excel in school!

English tutoring for K-12th
grade students to:

- Dramatically expand vocabulary
- Make classic literature understandable
- Improve grammar and self expression

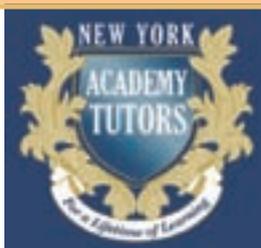
★ *Excellent preparation for standardized tests* ★
★ *Instructed by a licensed teacher* ★

At Kidz Yoga, 27-14 23rd Ave, Astoria NY 11105
Call 718-790-8911 • Veracitylearning.com

TUTORING

- Home Tutoring
- All Subjects & Levels
- Test Preparation
- Term Papers
- Foreign Language
and Music Instruction
- Licensed & Insured

**SUMMER ACADEMIC
PROGRAMS**



Call (877) 774-TUTOR (8886)
Email: tutoringny@ymail.com

**TO PLACE AN AD
IN THIS SECTION,
PLEASE CALL 718.260.2587**



Coming in January

**Activities And
Afterschool Programs
for Your Children.**

Call to advertise 718-260-2587

New & Noteworthy

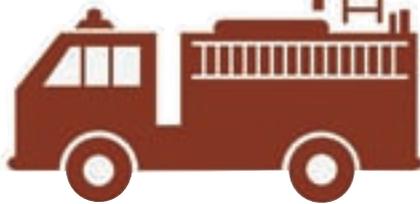
Tall order

Don't mark up a wall to keep track of your child's growth. This Fire Truck Growth Chart is a fun, decorative way to note every inch your little boy (or girl!) grows.

The decal adheres to walls, windows and other surfaces, and comes with adhesive markers so you can keep track of your child's growth without leaving a mark, as well as reuse for another little fire-fighter.

The chart comes in a variety of colors — through red is sure to be a desirable option — can measure up to five feet. It also comes with four ladder pieces, five numbers and five hose markers. The only thing missing is the fire hat!

Fire Truck Growth Chart by DECOMOD-walls. \$30 plus shipping. For info, visit www.etsy.com/shop/decomodwalls.



Rockabye baby

Cramped for space in your apartment but still want a baby swing? The mamaRoo has you covered.



This hi-tech product doesn't take up as much room as your typical baby swing, primarily because it isn't really a baby swing — it sways from side to side, or up and down, mimicking the movements of parents — perfect for comforting and calming your baby when you don't have your hands free.

The mamaRoo has five motions, ranging from "Car Ride" (a figure eight) to "Ocean Wave" (around in a big circle). It also comes with a toy mobile with plush toy balls decorated in the style of classical artists (Van Gogh, Monet and Seurat), built-in nature sounds, or a hookup for mp3 players so you can choose your own music.

The mamaRoo is suitable from birth to 25 pounds. \$199. For more info, visit www.4momsonline.com/mamaroo.

Chair style

This colorful chair makes a wonderful addition to a child's room.

Inspired by the art of New York artist Keith Haring, the wooden seat, made by French designers Unica, comes in a variety of bright, primary colors, including yellow and orange — but just the one, fun shape, which is perfect for sitting.



Haring, who was prominent during the 1980s, was first recognized for the chalk drawings he created in the subways. At least with this chair, you can have a permanent piece of the collection.

For more information on the Keith Haring chair, visit www.unica-home.com.

Go green

You dress your kids in all-natural clothing, use all-natural body lotions, and your toys are all handmade. But how green are your cleaning products?

GrabGreen has your covered.

Patricia Spencer developed the line of eco-friendly home cleaning products when her two daughters were younger after she was shocked to learn

that the detergent she used on their clothing failed to meet her health standards — with her concerns ranging from rashes resulting from use to un-needed plastics in the detergents.

GrabGreen products include laundry detergent, bleach alternative, dishwashing detergent, fabric freshener sprays, and more, and are made with naturally derived ingredients, are free of phosphates and chlorine, and are 100 percent cruelty free, with no animal testing involved. So you can clean your house with a clean conscious.

For info on GrabGreen, visit www.grabgreenhome.com.

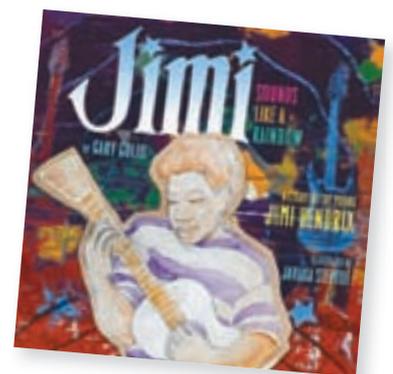


Jimi lives on in new book

A new generation can meet legendary guitarist Jimi Hendrix in a bold new picture book for kids.

In "Jimi: Sounds Like a Rainbow: A Story of the Young Jimi Hendrix," author Gary Golio and illustrator Javaka Steptoe show how a quiet boy from Seattle with a love of sound and color became one of the greatest guitar players of all time.

Golio brings the young Hendrix to life, revealing how passion, friendship, and a father's love helped Hendrix make a connection with music that would one day set the world on fire. Steptoe's full-color original art uses mixed media on recycled plywood to create arresting visuals perfectly suited to this story of a



groundbreaking musician.

"Jimi: Sounds Like a Rainbow: A Story of the Young Jimi Hendrix" is suitable for ages 6-9. For info, visit www.garygolio.com.



The new issue of
New York Special Child
Is Coming Soon!

Please call 718-260-8336
or email us to get more info,
find out where you can pick up a copy,
have a copy mailed to you, or get distribution.

To advertise call 718-260-4554
family@cnglocal.com

Happy Holidays at



EXTENDED SHOPPING HOURS!

GREEN ACRES HOLIDAY 2010						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
At Green Acres we VALUE your time! Use this handy calendar to plan your shopping at over 150 great stores!			24 9:00 AM to 10:00 PM	25 THANKSGIVING CLOSED	26 4:00 AM to 11:00 PM	27 7:00 AM to 10:00 PM
28 10:00 AM to 9:00 PM	29 10:00 AM to 10:00 PM	30 10:00 AM to 10:00 PM	1 9:00 AM to 11:00 PM	2 9:00 AM to 11:00 PM	3 9:00 AM to 11:00 PM	4 8:00 AM to 11:00 PM
5 10:00 AM to 10:00 PM	6 9:00 AM to 11:00 PM	7 9:00 AM to 11:00 PM	8 9:00 AM to 11:00 PM	9 9:00 AM to 11:00 PM	10 8:00 AM to 11:00 PM	11 8:00 AM to 11:00 PM
12 8:00 AM to 11:00 PM	13 9:00 AM to 11:00 PM	14 8:00 AM to 12:00 MIDNIGHT	15 8:00 AM to 12:00 MIDNIGHT	16 8:00 AM to 12:00 MIDNIGHT	17 8:00 AM to 12:00 MIDNIGHT	18 7:00 AM to 12:00 MIDNIGHT
19 8:00 AM to 11:00 PM	20 8:00 AM to 12:00 MIDNIGHT	21 8:00 AM to 12:00 MIDNIGHT	22 7:00 AM to 12:00 MIDNIGHT	23 7:00 AM to 12:00 MIDNIGHT	24 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM	25 CHRISTMAS CLOSED
26 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM	27 10:00 AM to 10:00 PM	28 10:00 AM to 10:00 PM	29 10:00 AM to 10:00 PM	30 10:00 AM to 10:00 PM	31 10:00 AM to 7:00 PM	1 NEW YEAR'S DAY 10:00 AM to 9:00 PM

Department store hours may vary. Please visit greenacresmallonline.com for complete hours, special events, directory, etc.

SAVE MORE! Get your FREE Holiday Values Coupon Booklet at Customer Service, while supplies last!

