

# Co-op Community News

From the Parent Advisory Council  
of the North Seattle Community  
College Cooperative Preschool  
Program



November 2008



*70 years of parents and children learning together.*

## PARENT EDUCATION CELEBRATES ITS 70<sup>th</sup> BIRTHDAY!

Representatives from North Seattle Community College were in Tacoma on October 23, 2008 to take part in a very special birthday celebration marking 70 years of parenting education in Washington.

The celebration took place at Clover Park Technical College in Tacoma. Gov. Chris Gregoire declared it Parenting Education Day statewide to commemorate the significance of the 70<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Keynote speaker at the event was state Rep. Ruth Kagi (D-Shoreline), chairwoman of the House's Early Learning and Children's Services Committee and winner of the Outstanding Legislative Leadership Award from the Washington State Association of Head Start and the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program.

The celebration was hosted by the Organization of Parent Education Programs (OPEP), a professional organization of program coordinators from state community and technical colleges. OPEP has been meeting since the 1970s to share information, curriculum, and ideas for enriching the parent-child educational experience.

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## 2008-09 Calendar

### November

- Nov 4 Election Day
- Nov 10 PAC meeting
- Nov 11 Veteran's Day  
**(No School)**
- Nov 27-28 Thanksgiving Holiday  
**(No School)**

### December

- Dec 6 Parent Coordinator  
Training
- Dec 8 PAC meeting
- Dec 22- Winter break
- Jan 2, 2009 **(No school)**

### January

- Jan 12 PAC meeting
- Jan 19 MLK Jr. Birthday  
**(No School)**

### February

- Feb 9 PAC meeting
- Feb 14 Valentine's Day
- Feb 16-20 Mid-winter Break  
**(No School)**
- Feb 24-26 In-house registration

### March

- Mar 9 PAC meeting
- Mar 9-12 Cross-Over registration
- Mar 21 Open Registration for  
the 09-10 school yr.
- Mar 30-Apr 3 Spring Break  
**(No School)**

### April

- Apr 13 PAC meeting

### May

- May 10 Mother's Day
- May 18 PAC meeting
- May 25 Memorial Day  
**(No school)**

“...70th Birthday”  
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“Parent cooperative pre-schools provide support and resources to families in the early years of childhood, helping develop a strong foundation for future years,” said Michelle Barnes, coordinator of parent education programs at Pierce College. “These programs strengthen families and enhance a parent’s ability to provide the best possible environment for the healthy growth and development of their child.”

Parenting education began in 1938 when a group of Seattle women formed a preschool group. Now, 70 years later, that effort has grown to include more than 170 cooperative preschools and parent programs coordinated by 26 of the state’s community and technical colleges. More than 14,000 families are touched by these programs each year.

## How About Evening Co-op?

By Chris David

North Seattle Community College Parent Educator And Teacher, Latona 3-5’s Cooperative Preschool

**T**here is a well-kept secret in the North Seattle Co-op System. We have three preschools that have evening sessions. Northgate Toddlers and Northgate Multi-age Pre3-5, both located on campus at North Seattle Community College (NSCC), meeting Wednesday nights from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. The third option is Meadowbrook Pre-3’s meeting Tuesday nights, 6:00 to 8:00 and Friday mornings, 9:30 to 11:30 in the lower level of the Lake City Christian Church.

The Northgate groups meet in beautiful classrooms designed specifically for young children. The Multi-age classroom has child size toilets and low sinks for hand washing. A covered outside play area adjacent to the classroom is another big plus. The Toddler classroom is spacious, recently remodeled and filled with materials perfect for this age group. Aldona Mitchell is the teacher for the Northgate Multi-age and Monica Harris is the teacher for Northgate Toddlers.

The Meadowbrook Pre-3’s classroom has a great new location on the corner of NE 125<sup>TH</sup> and 20 Ave. NE. It is a large light and airy room with large windows. Outside there is a giant sandbox, a barked hillside under evergreens and a large flat area for riding

toys. Lisa Behrens is the new, young and enthusiast teacher for the Meadowbrook Pre-3’s. Lisa is a parent of two children who have been through the coop system.

Evening co-ops are very similar to their daytime counter parts; parents work in the classroom and attend parent education classes. They are ideal for working couples, the single parent and very busy stay-at-home parent. More than one parent has said, “I wanted to do a day co-op, but with a baby at home I didn’t know how I could handle it. The evening group is just the answer.

A Meadowbrook parent said, “My spouse stays home with the baby and I get one-on-one time with my older child.” Or, as another parent said, “My partner comes to class on Tuesday night; I have the night free and Friday mornings, too!”

The Northgate groups, both parent and children, meet once a week. One week the parent stays on the floor as an assistant teacher in the classroom. The next week the parent attends a parent education discussion group with a parent instructor from the college. During discussion time parents get to know each other, share current issues going on in their children’s lives and discuss child de-

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## “Evening Co-op”

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velopment. There is much relief when adults realize that their child’s behavior is normal development. People share what works for their child and we all learn from each other. Because many couples participate together, some discussion sessions are focused on couples’ issues. Parents look forward to parent education every other week.

The Northgate Multi-age Class includes a wide age range, ages two up to five, so often siblings come to class together. There is a family feel to the evening groups. One family commented on the great activities provided for their child and how their child looks forward to coming each week. Adults felt relaxed because they know the space is safe for their child play. They can sit back and watch their child explore, discover and learn. With a smile, Dad said, “It is such a nice place to be.”



## A Message From Becky Callahan

### First Recipient of the Val Donato Award

It was an honor to receive the first Val Donato Award, as a faculty member of the North Seattle Community College Parent Education Program. Over the years, Val has carried a strong vision of parent education and has been integral to instilling quality and integrity in our campus and community programs. I have worked with Val for over twenty years and have often used her as a resource and mentor in my own professional development. I have watched her guide and work with the many talented and dedicated members of our faculty as we have strived to strengthen our own preschool cooperative programs and developed connections to many child care sites. I see the Val Donato award as a way to ensure the continuation of the important contribution that parent education adds to our campus and community.



*Becky Callahan, recipient of the first Val Donato award, with Health & Human Services Division Dean Robert Finemen and Parent Education Program Coordinator Val Donato.*

I will be using my award on materials from the Mr. Rogers Neighborhood and Family Communications Program. These will enrich parenting presentations at our preschools and child cares which focus on helping children manage anger and learn self control. Mr. Rogers was a part of our families’ life and as a professional in the early childhood community I have often been inspired by his work. He represents so much that is good and gentle about the way we support the young children and families in our parent education programs.

I look forward to continuing my work with young children and their families and am honored to have the opportunity to enrich and expand my professional resources with this award.

*— Becky Callahan, Parent Educator  
North Seattle Community College*



*Mary Ellen O’Keefe, NSCC Vice President for Instruction, speaks to the group of Instructors and Teachers about the value of the Parent Education Program and Val’s 30+ year contribution to the program’s success.*

## *Scholarship Fund Help Needed*

The Scholarship Fund was established to help increase diversity in co-ops by providing financial assistance to those who would not otherwise be able to participate in coop preschool. It has grown from \$9,000 awarded in the year 2000-2001 to the same amount quarterly in recent years.

Unfortunately, the current economic crisis has affected our coop membership and scholarship requests increased drastically for Fall Quarter resulting in all awards being reduced from previous levels.

PAC Scholarship Committee is continuing to examine the best way to allocate available funds so that families with financial need continue to receive assistance. The PAC Scholarship Committee had to reduce the amount of awards from what would have been typically given out this quarter in order to accommodate the increased numbers of applications. The PAC Board members are working with the PAC membership to consider whether to raise the PAC scholarship contribution amount above the current \$25.00.

Coops and individuals are being asked to consider giving to the PAC Scholarship Fund to help offset the shortfall for this year and beyond.

Coops are being asked to consider giving from extra funds they may have, increasing fundraising efforts or some other activity to make donations so that scholarships can be available at or close to previous award levels.

Any funds or pledges that are received before December 1, 2008 can be applied for the 2008-09 school year. Any funds received after that date will be applied to future scholarship awards.

**Tax deductible donations can be mailed to:**

**PAC Scholarship Fund  
Attention PAC Treasurer  
NSCC Parent Education Program  
9600 College Way North,  
Seattle, WA 98103**

### *NSCC Co-op Preschool Openings for 2008-09*

<b>Toddlers</b>	<b>Contact</b>	
Broadview	Kelli Robson	<i>broadviewtoddler@gmail.com</i> or 364-2191
Northgate	Bryan Sera	<i>bpsnews@pobox.com</i> or 619-2445
Victory Heights	Joanna Gubas	<i>victoryheightstoddler@gmail.com</i> or 985-8312
<b>PRE – 3's</b>		
Meadowbrook	Lis Sullivan	<i>meadowbrookpre3@gmail.com</i> or 985-6949
<b>3 -5's</b>		
Broadview	Gina Vega	<i>gbreitbeil@yahoo.com</i> or 365-1189
Crown Hill PM	Lori Goodman	<i>lorijogoodman@gmail.com</i> or 781-9231
Ingraham	Trina Nonis	<i>trinanonis@comcast.net</i>
Meadowbrook	Sushma Jain	<i>sushma_jain@hotmail.com</i> or 522-7744
Victory Heights PM	Sorena Kaur	<i>sorenakaur@yahoo.com</i> or 234-5568
Wallingford PM	Lara Simmons	<i>lara.g.simmons@comcast.net</i> or 524-4390
<b>5's &amp; Multi-Age</b>		
Meadowbrook 5s	Britta Hirsch	<i>brittalynh@gmail.com</i> or 320-7667
Northgate Multi-Age	Lisa Howard	<i>lhoward3@msn.com</i> or 240-3578

## **Contact**

**Editor:** Stiroh Moly Lang  
**Layout:** Kathy Gorohoff

Email submissions to:  
[molylang@gmail.com](mailto:molylang@gmail.com);

Email photos to:  
[Kgorohoff@hotmail.com](mailto:Kgorohoff@hotmail.com)

NSCC Cooperative  
Preschool Program  
[http://coops.northseattle.edu/](http://coops.northseattle.edu)  
206.527.3783  
(NSCC Parent Ed Office)