

NCJC Branches Out to the Schools



The Neighborhood Centers have reached a new level of collaboration with the Iowa City Community School District. After the success of our preschool at Grant Wood Elementary, we have opened a new preschool at Mark Twain Elementary. In addition, we will be running two new afterschool programs in the schools, one each at Twain and Wood.

The Mark Twain Preschool is possible, in part, due to the new funds set aside by the state of Iowa for universal preschool. There will be twenty children enrolled; the morning is funded by the universal preschool grant and children have the option of full day preschool by obtaining child care assistance funding or paying privately.

Mark Twain Elementary already has an after school program funded through a federal 21st Century grant. In order to participate in this program, however, students need to meet certain academic criteria. Those students who don't qualify, but need after school programming, can enter our programs which can accommodate up to 60 children.

The after school program at Wood Elementary will operate side-by-side with the existing "SHARE at Wood" program, which is operating at capacity. We anticipate enrolling up to 60 children.

Early Bird Walking Club:

Fighting Childhood Obesity One Step at a Time

On October 10th, several local dignitaries joined about 50 children from Grant Wood Elementary school for the Early Bird Walking Club to raise awareness of childhood obesity and the importance of a health diet and regular exercise.

Joining the children in the brisk 20 minute walk in 40 degree temperatures were Dr. Mike Artman, Head of Pediatrics, U of I; Lane Plugge, ICCSD Superintendent; Joe Bolcom, Iowa State Senator; and Kate Callahan, Grant Wood Elementary Principal.

Dr Artman spoke briefly to the walkers about the need to address obesity as a public health issue not a medical issue.

State Senator, Joe Bolcom said he would like to see the Early Bird Walking club replicated. "I think the state should be encouraging these kinds of community-based initiative," he added.

Walking Club meets twice per week at Wood and Twain schools. About 55 children participate.





**Staff Profile:
TONY BRANCH**

Tony Branch has been working for the Neighborhood Centers for about a year and has transitioned into the position of Health & Wellness Coordinator. He will be working to increase the fitness levels of children enrolled in our after school programs by putting the "active" in activities when helping the programs plan their events.

Tony emigrated from Barbados to Canada at the age of 15 and was the Canadian men's 110 meter hurdles National Champion in 1997. He graduated from the University of Iowa in 2003 with a degree in Health, Leisure, and Sports Studies.

So what does a Health & Wellness Coordinator like to do in their spare time? "I absolutely love to climb both rock and ice," says Tony, "camping/backpacking, hiking, skiing, pretty much anything you can do outdoors. My dream is to one day climb a famous mountain (Everest, Kilimanjaro, McKinley, Patagonia, etc.)."

Words to live by: "Knowledge begins with humbleness" and "Live life to the fullest."

NCJC Featured in Catalyst

Any readers who are members of the New Pioneer Co-op may have noticed the Neighborhood Centers featured prominently on the cover of the May/June issue of Catalyst magazine. The preschool programs toured the Coralville Co-op as part of our health and wellness initiative. The full magazine – and the article about NCJC – can be accessed online by going to:

<http://newpi.com/PDFs/MayJune07Cat.pdf>

Ranch-Free Zone

While the staff who work in our summer staff have diverse backgrounds and diverse viewpoints, they can all agree on one thing: after three months of summer lunch, with Ranch dressing soaking their clothing and pores and baking in the hot July sun, they never plan to dip their vegetables in it again. . . . until this year!



Ranch dressing (a staple of summer lunch programs past) – and many other processed products – was conspicuously absent from this year's summer lunch menu. Head chef Liz Weinberg tackled the fare in our child development centers by modifying recipes and creating new ones to include as many whole and natural ingredients as possible. Then she set her sights on the summer program.

Instead of Ranch, Liz will serves her own "Farm Fresh Dipping Sauce." We don't know if it was a match for the smell of cooked-on Ranch dressing, but we DO know that it is more than a match for the taste! (see back cover of this issue for recipe and nutrition information)

Forest Whitaker Visits Broadway

Broadway goes Hollywood! Academy Award-winning actor Forest Whittaker poses with children on September 29th outside the Broadway Neighborhood Center, where he spoke with area residents about the importance of being active and involved in your community.

MARK YOUR CALADAR!

**2nd annual
NCJC Road Race
and Relay
will be held
April 12, 2008!**



NCJC Receives Health and Fitness Grant -- Again!



For the second year in a row, the Neighborhood Centers of Johnson County was awarded a health and fitness grant through the Kohl's Cares for Kids Foundation. To celebrate, NCJC, the University of Iowa Children's Hospital (our grant partner), and Kohl's hosted a kick-off event to raise awareness of the programs being sponsored through the grant.

On Saturday, September 8th, about 60 people arrived at the Kohl's Department Store in Coralville to be welcomed with a free breakfast, a free pedometer, and a chance to be entered in a drawing for a free Kohl's gift card.



Executive Director's Message

About one year ago, we received our grant from the Kohl's Cares for Kids Foundation to promote health and wellness.



Since that time, our Nutrition Coordinator, Liz Weinberg, has revised all of our menus to include whole and locally-grown foods whenever available. Our menus -- and the tastes of our children and staff -- could not be more different now. Instead of fish sticks or macaroni & cheese, our programs serve salmon, West Indian beans with coconut rice, or barley and spinach risotto.

With the generous support of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, we will be remodeling our kitchen at the Pheasant Ridge Center. The remodel will add needed space and equipment so that we can accommodate the changing menus and the expansion of early childhood and afterschool programs.

Construction is scheduled to begin in December and we expect to have the new kitchen fully operational by Spring of 2008.

*Brian Loring,
Executive Director*

Neighborhood Centers of Johnson County Board Members

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Obesity Summit: Roadmap for Change

Childhood obesity is a pressing health concern in Johnson County. With the support of Kohl's Cares for Kids, The University of Iowa Children's Hospital and the Neighborhood Centers of Johnson County have teamed together to eliminate childhood obesity. In January, 2008, we are hosting an obesity summit to bring together community leaders, legislators, educators, and parents to create a plan to help fight childhood obesity in Johnson County. Please contact Tony Branch at the Neighborhood Centers information or to register to participate.



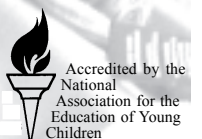
Neighborhood Centers of Johnson County
 P.O. Box 2491
 Iowa City IA 52244

Spice Mix

¼ cup onion powder
 ¼ cup garlic powder
 1 Tbsp dill weed
 2 Tbsp thyme
 2 Tbsp salt
 2 Tbsp pepper
*Whisk ingredients together
 and stir well and store in a
 covered container.*

Dipping Sauce

Tbsp Spice Mix
 1 cup fat free mayonnaise
 1 cup fat free plain yogurt
 1 Tbsp lemon juice
 ½ cup 1% buttermilk
Combine all ingredients.



Nutrition Facts: Liz's Farm Fresh Dipping Sauc

Servings per recipe: 40 Serving Size: 1 tablespoon

Amount per serving

Calories 10 **Calories from fat** 0

% Daily Values*

Total Fat	trace	0%
Saturated Fat	trace	0%
Cholesterol	trace	0%
Sodium	104 mg	4%
Total Carbohydrates	2g	1%
Dietary Fiber	trace	0%
Protein	trace	0%
Vitamin A		0%
Vitamin C		0%
Calcium		2%
Iron		0%

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2000 calorie diet.