



Editor, Carmelina Myers CCC Program Director of Education



## Director's Desk Spring/Summer 2018

Dear CCC Families and Friends,

Spring came and went quickly and summer is already half over. It seems time is really flying by. Before we all know it, we will begin yet another new school year here at the CCC.

As we prepare for our new year, it is good to also reflect on the year that has passed.

Last year many of you joined us as we celebrated our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The celebration was a wonderful day filled with old friends and tons of fun and as new memories were made.

During the year our enrollment steadily grew as we now offer childcare to over 500 children.

This growth led to our big news for the upcoming year, the opening of another CCC site! The new site at Oak Ridge Commons in Vista will eventually add 70 infants, toddlers and preschoolers to our Center. We are very excited to be undertaking this new initiative. The Center will hopefully open in mid- October and be a welcome addition to a very underserved area. There is a lot of excitement and positive vibes about our expansion out in the public. Our 50 year history is one where we strive to offer the best , most flexible , responsive and high quality childcare options for working families in our community. Our expansion will allow us to bring all these attributes to more of the area and thereby greatly improve the options for working families as we move into our 2<sup>nd</sup> 50 years!

We have chosen Jessica Sousa, current prek lead teacher at our Kitchawan program to be the director at the new site. Her strong Early Childhood Education background and experience combined with her fantastic performance at the CCC led us to think she will make an excellent director. With Jessica at the helm, the new site will be able to quickly become another member of the CCC family, bringing our philosophy and mission into this new area. We are happy to have her talent to help us as we expand and grow our CCC brand.

All in all, it looks like an exciting year of growth ahead. We look forward to working in partnership with our CCC families and staff to enjoy the best year ever as we care for the children in our community.

Enjoy the rest of your summer.

Polly





# Country Childrens Center

Yorktown • Katonah • Bedford Hills • Lewisboro



Now enrolling for the Fall at the Commons of Vista!  
Formerly Oak Ridge Shopping Plaza  
Infant, Toddler, Preschool and Pre K Programs

before and after school programs  
music nature cooking  
kindergarten readiness  
individualized learning  
play based learning

For more information please call **Karen Marino** at (914) 242-0520 x 501  
or visit our website [www.countrychildrenscenter.org](http://www.countrychildrenscenter.org)





# The Everyday Joy of Outdoor Nature Play at the CCC!

When parents and teachers think back to their own childhoods, chances are their fondest memories are of outdoor places. Such memories might include secret hiding places, digging for worms or just lying on the grass watching the clouds drift by. It is these outdoor experiences that fed the imagination and contributed to the health and well-being of many adults today. Currently, research is showing that there is a growing problem with children having regular contact with natural outdoor environments. In addition, there is a dramatic decline in the amount of time today's children spend outdoors, and there is plenty of scientific evidence showing that the natural world plays a pivotal role in promoting children's health and well-being. At the CCC, we believe children need to be connected with nature and have it become an important part of each child's early learning experience. Our program provides quality care that targets the development of the whole child not only within the indoor environment but the outdoor environment as well. At each of the CCC locations, the outdoor environment is wonderfully designed to encourage children's rich learning and nurture their sense of wonder about the natural world we live in. As you step foot onto the CCC properties, you will find countless outdoor opportunities for children to garden, hike, watch animal habitats, and collect the treasures nature has to offer. Each CCC location holds a unique aspect to their natural outdoor environment so children can connect with nature and diversify their outdoor experience.



## Gardening, Digging and Painting in the Great Outdoors of Kitchawan Barns with Infants ! Caroline Paterno, Site Director

During the first few years of life, infants are trying to make sense of their world by soaking up every noise, every sound and every experience that they have. So, not only is being outdoors enjoyable for infants, it's critical for development. Outdoor exploration is often a challenge for many teachers of infants because of the constant supervision and ensuring surfaces are safe and free of hazards. With eight infants ranging from three months to eighteen months, the infant teachers at Kitchawan have skillfully found creative ways for all the babies to explore and experience the outdoors safely. Because the Kitchawan gardens have raised beds, infant teachers, Martha and Aura, use this feature to their fullest advantage. The design of the gardens made it convenient for babies of all abilities to touch and feel what is growing while they experience the fun of digging in the dirt. Martha and Aura have also made painting another amazing outdoor experience for the infants. With the storms that came through this winter, the logs and tree stumps are used as canvases for sensory painting experiences. The infants paint the different tree surfaces with either brushes or their hands depending on their ability. This experience allows the infants to feel and experience painting in a whole new way while enjoying the great outdoors. These activities are just a glimpse of what, not only the infants, but all the children encounter daily in the great outdoors of Kitchawan Barns.





**Nature is a beautiful thing and the Farm certainly has its share of the bounty! Noreen Bisignano, Site Director**

From nature trails with trees-a-plenty to sprawling fields and everything in between, the Farm is blessed with nature, and children and staff make sure to take advantage. Each class has access to a plot in the Farm garden where the children can dig in the soil, pull weeds, and plant and grow their own plants. With a new mud kitchen, the children engage in sensory play while making mud pies. The nature trail is another of the Farm's resources which is utilized often by the children for taking hikes, climbing over bridges and rocks, jumping off the tree stumps, all while seeing the horses in the nearby horse farm. The Farm also has its own menagerie of animals- there are Flemish rabbits, roosters, chickens (who bless teachers with eggs for cooking projects), baby chicks, and ducks galore. If you stop by the Farm, you can experience nature in all it's glory...and just may be greeted by a chicken or two!



**Bedford Hills and Beyond..... Nature Exploring Shanna Krizan, Site Director**

"Who knew this was all back here! You can't tell from the road how much property you have! It's so pretty!" This is what's heard during every tour of the Bedford Hills Site. It is true, that one would never expect, when driving down the busy "thoroughfare" of Route 117 that this quaint residential looking house would be host to such an expanse of a backyard filled with large play areas, a nature trail, a rolling hill, gardens and even an art barn. Using the outdoor space as an expansion of

the classroom learning environment enhances the learning space and the children's wonder and ability to see the world as a much bigger place...beyond the walls of the center. It allows teachers to teach beyond the walls and into the great outdoors making things like science much more real and tangible while adding to gross motor development in a way that cannot be learned indoors. At Bedford Hills the Nature Trail is a special feature of the outdoor environment. It is used to discover and learn, collect, exercise and breathe in fresh air. The children love to take hikes along the path which leads them into the play area while giving the children a different view of the playgrounds below. This wonderful trail is even a home to a maple tree that has become a resource for children to learn about the tapping of maple trees for syrup. Collecting items along the path has become an exciting activity for the children. The treasures found along the way are brought back to the natural outdoor table made of tree stumps to study, create and build. The children's joy of this daily activity has even led to a Bedford Hills family hike day. Held on June 16<sup>th</sup>, children, staff and families gathered at a nearby preserve where children shared their hiking and observation skills with siblings and parents. Not only was it a great day of fun, but the perfect opportunity for children to share with their families the everyday connections and encounters they have with the great outdoors.

### Eagle Scout Brings Outdoors at the White House to New Life! Pam Belmonte, Site Director.

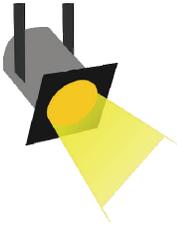
Over the past several years, the White House has been fortunate to have former students return to CCC to earn their Eagle Scout badges by enhancing the outdoor areas. From the very first project that blazed a new nature trail to an awesome outdoor amphitheater, the children have had many opportunities to learn in the outdoor areas as they would in the classroom. The latest project completed at the White House was the Outdoor Tree Circle done by Thor Ademac, a John Jay High School Senior and Eagle Scout. He repurposed all the fallen trees and leftover logs on the property to create benches and seats for children to gather in circle for outdoor story time, special events and even gross motor skills like climbing, balancing and jumping. The Outdoor Tree Circle was recently used for a few special events which included a dedication ceremony for Thor, a visit from the Easter Bunny and even a visit from a special author. These outdoor areas have not only enhanced the program but have also left a lasting impression on former students. Whenever the White House staff meet former CCC students, the one thing they always say and remember is “We loved playing outside everyday!”



### More Than Just a Regular Playground at Watson Kristen Pollock, Site Director

The natural surroundings of CCC Watson lends itself to the perfect natural outdoor environment that has become the site for an ideal outdoor classroom. With the open green space, children and staff find themselves taking daily walks to explore the wonder nature has to offer. While listening to the sounds of birds and beyond, children are often found gathering pinecones, leaves, and flowers for projects or just to investigate with magnifying glasses. The beautiful mature maple trees found on the property are also used yearly by CCC's science and nature teacher, Ms. Pat, to teach children about the tapping of maple trees in order to make our very own maple syrup! One unique aspect of Watson's outdoor area is a large pond that is home to an amazing ecosystem that gives children a perfect place to learn about pond life. Each year, children spend time in the spring watching and studying how the frogs, turtles and insects live together in this natural system of pond life. These outdoor features of CCC Watson's properties allow children to go beyond the typical playground. They bring the children's focus back on nature while learning and playing outside.





# *In the Spotlight*



Wishing CCC's Very Own Baby  
Whisperer, Pat Lopez, A  
Happy Retirement

## *Ode to a Baby Whisperer*

*Pat Lopez is a person as special as can be  
She's quiet and gentle but serious about babies, that's plain to see  
She's been at the Center for some 20 plus years  
And for all of that time, she's been admired by her peers  
The babies she's held are too many to track  
But each one wants to see her whenever they stop in or come back  
Her mild and kind manner is rare and a gift  
How we will survive without her has us all miffed.  
But move on she must, to be with ones of her own  
And we know she deserves it, long enough has she been with us  
with her love on loan  
The parents just adore her and have given her this name  
The name will forever be hers, her own claim to fame  
We will so miss you Pat, thanks for all you that you've done  
Your passion has allowed the babies to thrive, every last one.  
So with a tear in our eye and a smile in our heart  
We say a bitter sweet goodbye as at last we must part  
Be well, and remember the CCC and the Farm are just a phone call  
away  
We are your family and will always be there if ever you need us on  
any given day.  
We love you Pat  
Our forever CCC "Baby Whisperer"*



# It's Summertime at The CCC!!

From friendship building to physical activity, children are diving deep this summer into areas they love! Summertime at the CCC provides another unique venue for growth allowing kids to become independent and self-confident while socializing and even learning new skills.

## Camps Got Talent!



## Science & Technology



## Archery



## Swimming



## Picnics & Painting



# 5 Fun Things to Do With Your Kids This Summer!

Looking for some fun outdoor activities for you and your family? Be sure to try these simple, imaginative, and fun activities!

## 1. Have a Star Party!

The sky is the perfect place for a scavenger hunt. First, visit [spaceplace.nasa.gov/starfinder](http://spaceplace.nasa.gov/starfinder) to download the current month's star finder. Print it, cut it out, and then follow the directions to make it into a cootie catcher. Pick a number, then follow the directions that will lead you to a constellation in the sky.



## 2. Play Firefly Tag

Choose one person to start as the firefly "catcher." Everyone else gets a flashlight and hides. The hiding fireflies must flash their light once every 30 seconds (counting silently in their head). The catcher tries to find all the fireflies. The last person tagged is the next catcher.



## 3. Dance in the Rain

Surprise your kids by taking them outside during a gentle summer shower. Dance around in swimsuits, catch raindrops in your mouth, and jump in all the puddles.



## 4. Build a Secret Fort

Drape old sheets over lower tree limbs and clotheslines. Eat dinner there. Stay up chasing fireflies and listening to "night sounds."



## 5. Hold a Car Wash

Park your car in the driveway and let your child give it a good scrub with a pot of water and sponge or with the garden hose. Get the whole family involved for added fun!





# What's happening at the CCC?

## COUNTRY CHILDRENS CENTER



### FUNDRAISER POST GAME FIREWORKS!

JOIN US ON SATURDAY, AUGUST 11th AS THE RENEGADES  
HOST THE ABERDEEN IRONBIRDS @ 6:05PM.

RESERVED GRANDSTAND

### \$20 PACKAGE:

- 1 TICKET + HAT
- + MEAL VOUCHER
- + KIDS PARTICIPATE IN  
PRE-GAME CATCH ON THE FIELD

PURCHASE ONLINE @ [GADESGROUPS.COM](http://GADESGROUPS.COM)

PASSWORD: **countrycc**

\$5 of every package goes back to Country Childrens Center



Call the Emery & Webb Dutchess Stadium Box Office at  
845.838.0094 or go to [hvrenegades.com](http://hvrenegades.com) for more information.

## KING KONE DAY!!

### Thursday, August 16th



109 NY-100, Katonah, NY

**Mention the CCC when ordering at  
King Kone to support the Center!**

