

New, Fun, and Just Plain Cool

Crazy Wisdom Kids in the Community



By Karen L. Totten

(This column features short articles about fun and worthwhile happenings for kids in the Ann Arbor area, as well as articles about individuals and organizations doing noteworthy work with young people. If you'd like to be considered for inclusion in our fall issue, contact our CW Kids in the Community columnist at: cwkidscolumn@crazywisdom.net no later than July 1, 2011.)

Crazy Wisdom Journal readers are probably familiar with Linda Diane Feldt. Not only is she well known in the area as an herbalist, teacher, author, and massage/polarity/cranio-sacral therapist, she is also president of the People's Food Co-op. What people may not be aware of is her exceptional work involving mothers and infants.

Feldt believes that new mothers, and parents in general, deserve all the help and support possible. Her approach is preventive; she has seen great value in "early and appropriate gentle intervention in a delivery or newborn issue." There is energy in birth, she says, which we must be sensitive to. "A birth should be honored as a sacred, unprecedented experience that is both natural and normal."

One of the ways in which Feldt can be useful in a birth is with cranio-sacral therapy. Feldt studied with John Upledger, who developed a standardized research method for making such assessments.

Often, Feldt notes, babies who are experiencing difficulties breastfeeding are experiencing treatable issues. Sometimes a child will not "latch on" because of tension or trauma to the membranes of the skull during birth. "Mild trauma might not be perceptible," she notes, and so to alleviate the problem, Feldt performs cranio-sacral therapy (CST).

Cranio-sacral therapy works by relaxing and re-synchronizing the cerebrospinal fluid and its motion in the membrane system. A newborn CST session can minimize or eliminate the repercussions of difficult births, such as a c-section or long labor, and help restore good health to well babies, according to CSTdoula.com.

The therapist monitors the cranio-sacral rhythm with her hands. She corrects sources of pain and dysfunction with subtle manipulation techniques. These procedures do not hurt, but Feldt says she can see the results immediately. "When the baby is put back to the breast, mothers notice the difference." It is a one-time intervention, correcting the problem and allowing the bonding process to continue.

Feldt has attended almost 200 births in the Ann Arbor area. She provides support for both mother and child. She sees her role as doing body work and physical support. She also works with labor progression problems. "We don't try to manipulate the baby into changing position," she says, but with subtle suggestions help the child decide that turning to a more positive birth position is the right thing to do.

Feldt has been a part of most aspects of the birthing process: assisting during labor and delivery, teaching infant massage, and helping women with questions of diet and herbs, both before and after birth.

Feldt's accomplishments are manifold and quite varied. Her teaching activities span nearly three decades and currently include: serving as a health teacher at the Rudolf Steiner High School of Ann Arbor and as an adjunct instructor in Pharmacy at University of Michigan College of Pharmacy, teaching monthly herbal classes for The People's Food Co-op, and offering classes and workshops through the Ann Arbor Center for Holistic Health and Traditional Wisdom, to name a few.

Feldt is also the author of three books, *Massage: Learning to Give and Receive*, *Dying Again: Thirteen Years of Writing and Waiting*, and *Spinach and Beyond: Loving Life and Dark Green Leafy Vegetables*.

For much more information on her classes, biography, philosophy and private practice, please see Feldt's website at www.holisticwisdom.org.

Photo by Amy Hoga



Linda Feldt, who has been a pillar of the holistic community in Ann Arbor for 3 decades, is less well-known for her exceptional work with births, infants, and new moms. Her cranio-sacral therapy sessions with newborns can minimize or eliminate the repercussions of difficult births, such as c-section or long labor, and help restore good health to well babies.

Breastfeeding a new infant is a healthy, practical, and rewarding experience that creates a strong bond between mother and child. Some new mothers, however, do not have that option, because of health problems either of the mother or of the child, as in the case of an ill or high-risk child. Sometimes even bottle-feeding is not a solution because of formula intolerance.

However, there are in the United States eleven programs, called milk banks, affiliated with the Human Milk Bank Association of North America, where stored breast milk is available for purchase. These banks are supplied in part by milk depots, places where women who express extra milk can bring that milk for collection, storage, and later use by others.

The Breastfeeding Clinic of Ann Arbor (BFCAA) provides such a collection place. Established in 2005 by BFCAA Director Barbara Robertson, the milk depot screens potential donors, organizes milk collection, and sends collected milk to Bronson Hospital in Kalamazoo, where the only milk bank in Michigan is located. Expressed milk is pasteurized and cultures are taken to screen for bacteria. Milk remains frozen until needed.

In the absence of mother's own milk, donor milk offers many benefits, including optimal nutrition, easy digestibility, and immunological protection against disease. Human milk can also protect immature tissue, promote healing of tissue damaged by infection, and promote maturation, particularly in the gastro-intestinal tract.

The Breastfeeding Clinic of Ann Arbor (BFCAA) was established in 2005 by Barbara Robertson. "I am an educator and a communicator," Robertson says, "helping moms feel cared for." She notes that sometimes she functions like a detective, helping mothers find solutions to common nursing problems such as latching on, sore nipples, or milk slow to come in...

Standards for being a milk donor are strict. Those interested must be disease free, drug free (including free of prescribed medications and vitamins), be non-smokers, and live a healthy lifestyle. Donors are asked to submit to a blood test and go through an interviewing process.

Banked milk is not only for infants, but is also used by some cancer patients fighting nausea and by organ donor recipients. Milk is only available through prescription, and it is expensive, says Robertson: \$4 an ounce or more. Unfortunately, it is not necessarily covered by health insurance.

Breastfeeding, for various reasons, is a good choice for the optimal health of a growing baby. At least six months of nursing is recommended for new infants, says Robertson. The American Association of Pediatricians suggests 12 months is even better, and the World Health organization advocates breastfeeding one's child for two years.

Besides the health benefits for the child, benefits accrue for mothers as well. According to Robertson, women with six to seven years of breastfeeding (multiple children) can see a decrease in certain cancers, including breast cancer. Nursing can also help with gestational diabetes.

Of course, there are social and emotional benefits for both mom and baby: breastfeeding helps shape parenting responses and create a loving bond between mother and child. Robertson adds that mothers "have to stay tuned in to their children; they have to pay attention, if they are to be successful."

Robertson has in place at the BFCAA classes and products that support women in this experience. She teaches classes for parents, runs support groups, trains professionals, and is in private practice as a board-certified lactation consultant.

Gari Stein's "Music for Little Folks" classes for babies, toddlers, and small children have been a mainstay of the Ann Arbor kids' scene for 20 years.

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Robertson can also assist moms with practical needs, like finding the right nursing bra or getting back to work while still nursing. The Breastfeeding Center of Ann Arbor is located at 726 Brooks Street. The phone is 734-975-6534. You can also visit the website at www.bfcaa.com.

Traverwood Library in northeast Ann Arbor will be the scene on June 28 of a special Gari Stein class for grandparents and young ones called Rock-A-Bye Grandbaby. Gari Stein is an educator, speaker, and performer who is known and loved by Ann Arbor toddlers and their parents for her acclaimed "Music for Little Folks" classes. This one-time-only class, for one hour beginning at 2 p.m., is for grandparents, parents, and children from infants to preschoolers.

The purpose of the class is to introduce families to the wonderful experience of making music together. Participants will learn simple activities to engage their little ones: dancing with scarves to Mozart, shaking maracas, singing songs for daily routines, and rocking to lullabies.

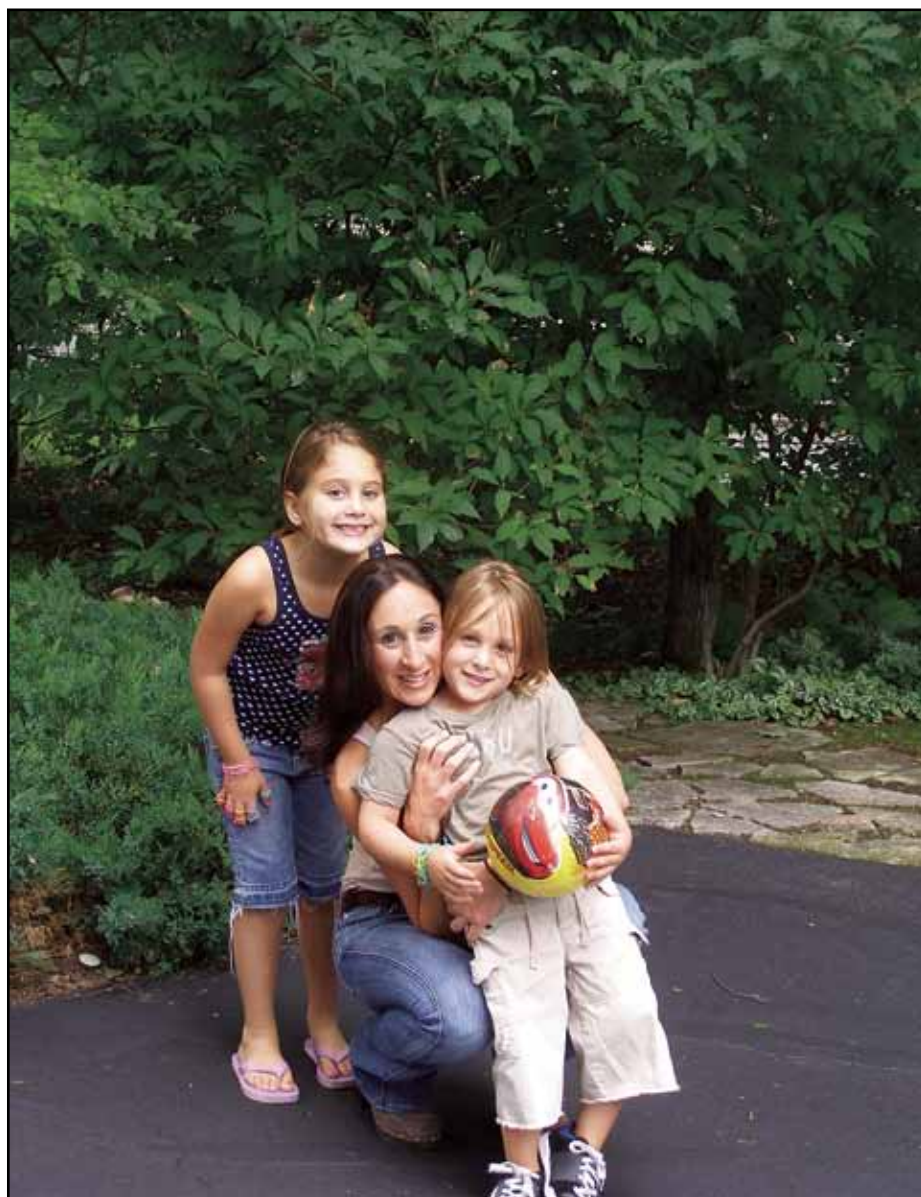
Stein, whose "Music for Little Folks" classes for babies, toddlers, and small children have been a mainstay of the Ann Arbor kids' scene for 20 years, says this class is a wonderful way to "enhance your bond with your grandchild and create life-long memories, while experiencing the joy of making music together." She notes that babies are "born seemingly pre-wired for music, and [they] learn through movement." Music "speaks what can't be expressed," she adds. "It soothes the mind, provides rest, and heals the heart, while it flows through the body, mind, and soul."

Stein herself is an educator with over 30 years of experience in the field of Early Childhood Education. She travels to conduct workshops around the country and takes her classes into day care programs and preschools, as well as running a community music program. She is the author of the book *The More We Get Together: Nurturing Relationships Through Music, Play Books, and Art*.

One of Stein's goals is to help adults find their singing voices and dancing feet as they incorporate music into children's programs. She notes, "Music brings joy to young children. It enhances their sense of self, positively affects their behavior, and strengthens their comfort in social settings."

In her classes, children are exposed to many styles of music, from classical to cajun to Broadway. Music stimulates the brain and helps facilitate learning, she says. "It enriches all areas of development — physical, social, emotional, cognitive, aesthetic, linguistic, and spiritual. It decreases stress, increases energy, and brings people together."

Stein can be reached at 734-741-1510 or interested persons can view her website at www.little-folks-music.com.



Stacy Goldberg's *What's In Your Cart?* is an innovative health education program for children and their families that serves to answer the proverbial question, "What's for dinner?"

What's In Your Cart? is an innovative health education program for children and their families that serves to answer the proverbial question, "What's for dinner?" (and breakfast, lunch or snack). The program, tailored to groups or individuals, takes the guesswork out of figuring out how to eat healthily by introducing children to reading food labels, understanding the healthy food pyramid guidelines, and finding a way through the decision-making process that goes on when one pushes the cart around the grocery store.

What's In Your Cart? was developed three years ago out of the private practice of Stacy Goldberg, graduate of the University of Michigan School of Nursing with a master's in administration from the UM School of Public Health. Goldberg was looking for an opportunity to take the educational process out of the clinical setting, and she worked out an arrangement with Plum Market stores in West Bloomfield and Bloomfield. She is seeking to expand into the Ann Arbor area.

It works like this: Children and their parents are given store tours that provide the context for a discussion of nutrition. On a typical tour, Goldberg begins with a survey of eating habits to gather information on how the children currently eat. Then, with dietary analysis in hand, Goldberg takes the clients around the store, helping them make good food choices out of the available products.

In designing her tours, Goldberg keeps at the forefront the criteria from Plum Market's lifestyle enrichment program, called the Functional Five — Wellness, Nutrient Density, Caloric Integrity, Taste, and Sustainability.

Tours can be structured around food allergies or intolerances as well, so that people coping with eating challenges can gain more insight into managing their diets. In addition, tours can be adjusted to fit any age group. Goldberg serves community and service groups as well, such as scouting troops and school classes.

The typical tour lasts one to one-and-a-half hours, and ranges in price from \$150 per hour for private tours (\$300 with added nutritional analysis) to \$25 per person for group tours. Goldberg notes that her advice works from mainstream principles and then is tailored as needed to fit the requirements of other kinds of diets, including vegan, vegetarian, or raw food preferences.

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On a recent tour with a Girl Scout troop in West Bloomfield, for example, children shared a healthy snack, discussed the food pyramid, explored various fruits and vegetables, and learned how to “eat the rainbow” (select nutritious foods with a wide variety of colors). “We give children and their parents a method and a plan to follow in the store, instead of wandering the aisles confused by the many choices,” says Goldberg.

In addition to grocery tours at Plum Market for What’s In Your Cart?, Goldberg consults both nationally and internationally for food companies, restaurants, bakeries, or anyone wanting nutritional analysis or recipe modifications. To find out more, check the website at www.whatsinyourcart.net or email Goldberg at stacy@whatsinyourcart.net.

In this extraordinary natural area [Grass Lake Sanctuary], children are invited to slow down and experience the rhythm of the surroundings, which include prairies, hayfields, woods, and a wetland.

Earth Connections Day at Grass Lake Sanctuary in Manchester is a fun celebration of nature for families from noon to 5 p.m. on June 25, 2011. There is no admission fee. The fun includes kite flying, a treasure trek, and hay rides, plus plenty of woodland trails to hike in this 145-acre nature preserve, less than 30 miles from Ann Arbor. Some snacks will be for sale for a nominal fee, including herbal snow cones (ginger-lemon, perhaps, or lavender) and pizza made with garden-fresh ingredients and baked in an outdoor oven. Sorry, no pets are allowed in the preserve.

According to Tom Egan, executive director of the Sanctuary, activities will be geared to offer children “an opportunity for deeper connection with nature, to others, and to themselves.” In this extraordinary natural area, children are invited to slow down and experience the rhythm of the surroundings, which include prairies, hayfields, woods, and a wetland.

At the same time, there will be opportunity for creative engagement with, and reflection on, children’s relationship to wind, plants, and animals. The setting provides a pace for families to enjoy each other, while also nurturing a sense of connection to the Earth.

Grass Lake Sanctuary was founded in 2007 by a group of interested people who worked to ensure this unique piece of natural land was preserved. The land was purchased from the late Dr. Clark Spike, a retired chemistry professor at Eastern Michigan University who had spent 38 years sculpting the landscape according to the way it “spoke to him” on his daily walks through the property.

Part of the Sanctuary’s vision is to offer retreat space, medical after-care, and healthy living programs where people can reestablish balance and connection within their personal and natural worlds. The goal is to establish a “culture of wellness” via an environment that demonstrates the practicality of sustainable living. Onsite there is an outdoor kitchen, a tree house, an indoor gathering area, nut trees, an organic garden, a fruit orchard, a pond, and a boardwalk.

More information, including a map of the Sanctuary, can be found by going to www.grasslakesanctuary.org. You can reach Sanctuary offices by calling 734-726-0290. You can also read the interview with Tom Egan about the Grass Lake Sanctuary that appeared in the *Crazy Wisdom Community Journal* in our September–December 2009 issue at: <http://www.crazywisdom.net/issue43pdf/generations.pdf>

Camp JUMP-IN, located in the town of Hamburg, just 15 minutes north of Ann Arbor, is offering an individualized, intensive therapy day camp for children with learning disabilities and sensory processing disorders. The camp will run from July 18 to July 29 from 9 a.m. to noon, Monday through Friday. Children must be at least four years of age and accompanied by a parent. Teens and young adults will also find this camp fun and beneficial.

The camp will provide individualized therapy in a natural setting. The focus of the program is enhancing individual foundation and functional skills. Participants will be utilizing dynamic equipment such as the trampoline and zipline, swimming, and participating in fine-motor and visual-motor activities. Additional offerings include body work, brain gym, and opportunities for social interaction.

Campers do require an evaluation prior to camp. It is recommended that campers begin a home program beforehand, so that they can receive the maximum benefit from the camp.

According to Jacquelin Kilburn, camp director and owner of JUMP-IN Professional Services, the participation of parents is important. The camp also functions as a parent training experience, as well as a support system and source for networking. Parents can learn to utilize camp techniques at home to facilitate their children’s development, as well as have opportunities to meet other parents facing similar issues.

Camp JUMP-IN has a ratio of two or three students to one professional. The camp can accommodate eight campers. Experienced occupational therapists, physical therapists, and speech therapists work at the camp. Student volunteers looking to gain practical knowledge in their field of study can also work with the program to assist campers.

All of this takes place on two-and-a-half acres of rolling land with trees and soothing natural spaces located at 10400 Hamburg Road. For swimming, campers go to the Whitmore Lake High School pool.

Kilburn, an occupational therapist for 40 years, with 20 years in private practice, was for six years the pediatric therapy supervisor at Mott’s Children’s Hospital in Ann Arbor. She says that her private practice, JUMP-IN Professional Services, is “most rewarding...[to see] people start functioning better both academically and in their motor skills.” Some insurance plans do cover costs for the private program.

In her private practice, Kilburn works with adults as well as children in a variety of therapeutic modalities, including: Kinesiotaping, which involves the use of a sticky form of Ace bandage-type tape, used to support the lymphatic system; the Wilbarger Protocol, involving a calm and soothing brushing technique, done with a specially designed brush; therapeutic listening, involving music specially formatted and played over headphones; cranio-sacral therapy; and sensory processing, among others.

Recently, Kilburn hired a physical therapist to work specifically on sports performance. Using a technique called the interactive metronome, the therapist works with athletes to improve their physical abilities. A computer is used to synchronize head and foot movement to an auditory input. Kilburn notes that improvements in timing, rhythm, and response time can be shown. Athletes from fields as diverse as dance, soccer, and baseball can all benefit. This technique also facilitates improvements in academic skills, speech and language, and focus.

If you would like more information about Camp JUMP-IN or the individualized programs and products that JUMP-IN offers, you may call 810-231-9042 or visit the website at www.jump-in-products.com. E-mail can be sent to info@jump-in-products.com. There is also more information about Camp JUMP-IN in our 2011 Camp Guide in this issue.

With names like “Radiant Life” and “Sacred Breath,” the flower essence combination sprays of Merri Walters’ Great Lakes Sacred Essences entice one to try them, even without a first sniff! The sprays, part of a group of flower essence sprays and tinctures available through the company, are gifts lovingly handcrafted with intuitive guidance by Merri Walters and her husband, Robin Grosssheusch. Made

in Michigan, along the Great Lakes Coast and at sacred sites throughout the United States and Canada, the essences bring “the powerful subtle healing qualities of nature” to bottled form. On a recent rainy, early-March day, Walters sat in her softly lit office while her cat calmly slept, and explained the process by which the essences come to be and how she began to do this work.



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