

Spring At Playschool



The mission of Charlestown Playhouse, Inc. is to provide an accessible, safe and nurturing play-based early-childhood program. Our goal is to support both children and their families through their participation in our diverse community

Board of Directors

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Stay informed about Playschool events and Playschool volunteer opportunities-sign up to be on our email list-just send your email to charlestownplayhouse@verizon.net



Hello friends. Although the weather doesn't say so, the calendar says spring so we are going with it! The children have been keeping track of March's Lion & Lamb days, trying to trap the Leprechaun, celebrating Dr. Seuss, learning about Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and getting nice and muddy, in true Playschool fashion. We are looking forward to warmer days, more play yard time, Founders Day and May Day celebrations, and more mud! The children are also hard at work on spring auction projects- and moms and dads are looking forward to this fun night out. See more info. about auction inside!

Professional Development

A lot goes on behind the scenes with our wonderful directors and teachers-it might seem like Playschool is effortless but they all put a tremendous amount of work into making Playschool the amazing environment that it is! Some of the things the staff has been working on include:

- Playschool is offering a Brain-based learning series in April and June for teachers in Early Education within the five county region.
- We are scheduling opportunities for professional development for Playschool teachers to observe at other educational programs in the area.
- We hosted a parent-facilitated Family Forum in February on Learning the Skills to Advocate on Behalf of Your Child.
- We have scheduled Staff development for a training on Reporting Abuse and Neglect required by the Pennsylvania Department of Education

Playschool Springs into Action in Support of Charlestown Day 2014

Mark your calendars - **Charlestown Day 2014** will be held October 4th, 2014 at Charlestown Park (behind the Valley Forge Christian College). The day will kick off with a 5k run/walk around beautiful Charlestown Township. There will also be a 1- mile Fun run/walk through Charlestown Park. A Kids Dash will take place after the 5k. Prizes will be awarded for all three events by age group. Festival activities will include bouncy houses, pony rides, petting zoo, music, food, craft and other vendors, fun demonstrations, and special appearances.



Charlestown Day 2014 is one way you can help support **Drive Around Safe and Sound: the Charlestown Playhouse Initiative for Child and Commuter Safety**, our program to build a new drop-off and parking area. A huge thank you to our early event sponsors! Valley Forge Financial Group and Kennedy Ford have signed on as Champion Sponsors while Frees Insurance, Charlestown Paving, National Penn Bank and Penn Liberty Bank have already joined at the Sprinter level. We greatly appreciate your support of our community!

How can you get involved? Join our team!

Charlestown Playhouse is the sole beneficiary of Charlestown Day 2014. It is our opportunity to both join in a community celebration and to benefit our Drive Around Safe and Sound initiative. Join the organizing team for Charlestown Day 2014 to make the most of this opportunity for Playschool! We are seeking:

- Introductions to Potential Event Sponsors
- Publicity Committee Volunteers
- Sponsorship and Outreach Team Volunteers
- Children's Activities Volunteers

Contact Amy Kokas at amykokas@ayhoo.com or Erika Benowitz at e_benowitz@yahoo.com.



Dear Alumni and Supporters,

It is so exciting to be able to update you on the progress we have been making this school year on creating a new drop off area for our community. It is equally exciting to highlight how supportive our internal and external communities have been in working toward our goal. For those of you who have driven by our school in the last year, you will be all too familiar with the heavy increase of commuter traffic on Charlestown Road due to the opening of the new turnpike slip ramp. This change has strengthened our community's resolve to take action.

In January of 2014 our new child drop off design was recommended by Charlestown Township to the Board of Supervisors after roughly a 6 month period of review and some revisions. In February, our design was officially accepted by the Board of Supervisors. With this go ahead, we have been able to secure two comprehensive bids so far, begun the process of looking into bank financing and further grant opportunities, as well as contacted our state senator and legislator to advise us on what funding resources for transportation we may also qualify for.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank a few current Playschool parents who have been tireless advocates for this project since its inception back in 2010. Karen Beam, a local architect, has used her expertise to design a beautiful staging area for children to wait under for our new drop off area. She has researched zoning codes, advised us with materials, and has been an articulate and thorough advocate for us with the Township and Historical Society. Don Pell, past Board Chair and owner of Donald Pell Gardens has used his enthusiasm and expertise for the past several years for Playschool in a myriad of ways: finding local contractors, interfacing with financial resources, networking for our cause and guiding our Board to be able to take on this project. Last but not least is Dave Harmanos, an engineer with GeoSystems Consultants Inc, as well as our acting Treasurer for over 5 years. Without his fiscal management, keen

sense of focus, expertise in engineering and passion for Playschool, we would never have made it where we are today with this project. He will be leaving Playschool and Board this year and he will be missed.

This list would not be complete without mentioning people in our community who have been paving the way for this project to move on to the next bend in the road. The Charlestown Township has named us as sole beneficiary of Charlestown Day 2014, providing us an important fundraising opportunity. The event will be October 4th 2014 at Charlestown Park and will be a Harvest Festival and a 5k Run. Thank you to the leadership of Charlestown Day 2014 — namely, Bob Jones, Karen Schlichter, Laura Assayag, Jen Nelson, and Sue Staas. We also want to thank Ellen Behrle for her leadership and counsel.

— Heather Sheldon, Chair of Charlestown Playhouse Board

Back by popular demand: the Charlestown Playhouse ONLINE AUCTION!

Last year's first online auction was a resounding success, your generosity and involvement last year played a huge part of that achievement, and we are ever so grateful!

This year's Online Auction begins on April 13th! Don't miss out on incredible local deals! www.biddingforgood.com/CPHAuction
Donations still gladly accepted and sponsorship levels are available!



We are also excited to announce our **35th Annual Spring Auction Dinner** (and 2nd Annual Mad Tea Party)! Friday, May 2nd, 2014 from 7pm to 12am at Franklin Commons in Phoenixville. Certainly you remember from your days at Playschool that the Auction is the highlight of the season — not only as a core fundraiser, but also a cherished night out with dear friends!

Please consider supporting the Playschool Auction by attending the Live Event and bringing your Playschool friends! Enter Alice's Wonderland and attend our Mad Hatter's Tea- your mad hat is welcomed and encouraged!

Go to www.biddingforgood.com/CPHAuction for more details and to purchase your ticket, or contact Jennifer Monson at jenn.monson3@gmail.com.

A HUGE thank you to the Detwiler family for their contribution of \$15,000 towards our parking lot project. Your generosity is inspiring and so very appreciated!!

What is the Worst Thing That Can Happen?!

by Don Meyer, Ph.D. | February 01, 2014

"There is only one thing that makes a dream impossible to achieve: the fear of failure." – Paulo Coelho



Gail Perrone is married to my former dentist, Dr. Leonard Perrone. After Dr. Perrone retired some years ago, he and Gail moved to Georgia. I have never met Gail but she recently sent me a great story which I would like to share with you.

Years ago Gail took a night school photography class and one of the assignments was to shoot a whole roll of photographs of one person. After much thought, she decided a wonderful subject would be "Miss Betty," the founder of the Charlestown Playhouse here in the Phoenixville area.

Elizabeth Foster Stonorov, fondly known as "Miss Betty," was a legend in our community. The Charlestown Playhouse is a private academic pre-school and kindergarten that 30-year-old Miss Betty started in 1936. By the time Gail decided to photograph her, Miss Betty was known far and wide.

The very thought of asking Miss Betty filled Gail with trepidation. While going for a walk one day with a friend, Gail shared her desire and also her anxiety. Right then Gail's friend stopped walking, turned and looked her in the eye and said, "Gail, what is the worst thing that could happen if you asked her?" Gail realized that the worst thing that could happen is that Miss Betty would just say no.

Gail describes it this way, "I summoned the courage, stopped at the Playhouse and asked her to be my subject for the assignment. Of course she wasn't particularly happy, but she said yes. I could just come whenever to take the photographs. On the day I photo-

graphed her she complained that her hair didn't look very good and she didn't have a comb, etc., but she graciously allowed me to follow her around.

The day ended with Gail taking Miss Betty home and shooting a few final pictures as "Miss Betty walked across a narrow pedestrian bridge carrying her basket." Looking back on that entire experience, Gail said, "That roll of photographs contains wonderful memories for me and I learned a valuable lesson; what is the worst thing that can happen?"

I love that story. And, I have been pondering that question ever since. How easy it is to obsess with the "worst thing that can happen" and, in the process, miss what might be the best thing that could ever happen.

"The worst thing one can do," according to Jim Rohn, "is not to try, to be aware of what one wants and not to give in to it, to spend years in silent hurt wondering if something could have materialized — never knowing."

What if Gail had not listened to her friend? A moment in her life which she remembers to this day would have been missed. How easy it is to allow fear or anxiety to prevent us from what could become one of our best experiences. What if I had not asked Evie to marry me because I was afraid of what she might say? What if we had decided not to have children because we were afraid we could not be good enough parents?

As Will Rogers said, "The worst thing that happens to you may be the best thing for you if you don't let it get the best of you." Or, in the words of Art Buchwald, "Whether it is the best of times or the worst of times, it is the only time we've got."

Do you have an adventure ahead of you but you are hesitant to take the first step? Perhaps you should ask, "What is the worst thing that can happen to me?" And, if we can live with that, we can certainly live with anything on this side of that.

Joseph Campbell said, "The cave you fear to enter holds the treasure you seek."

Think about it.

Dr. Don Meyer is President of Valley Forge Christian College, Phoenixville, Pa. Responses can be mailed to president@vfcc.edu
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Welcome to Spring!



CHARLESTOWN PLAYHOUSE
2478 CHARLESTOWN ROAD
PHOENIXVILLE, PA 19460

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US POSTAGE PAID
SOUTHEASTERN, PA
PERMIT #50

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"No Effort" Ways To Support Playschool

Charlestown Playhouse is registered with **Giant's A+ Rewards Program**. Last year we made over \$1000 with this program. We are currently collecting Bonuscard numbers for registration. Please email Karen Dogra at kski1414@yahoo.com to submit your Bonuscard number; or you can go online and register your Bonuscard at <https://www.giantfoodstores.com/aplus/> with Playschool ID# 05601. Tell your friends! Tell your neighbors!

In the 2012/2013 School Year we earned \$279 from **Boxtops for Education**. How does it work? For every box top you clip Charlestown Playhouse receives \$.10. If you can — drop these in the mail to **2478 Charlestown Rd. Phoenixville, PA 19460**

Do you have a **Target REDcard Credit, Debit or Visa**? If not, you can sign up for either card as another way for Playschool to earn money. Here's how it works: Visit <http://www.target.com/tcoe> or call 1-800-316-6142 to designate our school (School ID: 153106), then use your REDcard whenever you shop. When you use your REDcard (Target Credit Card, Target Debit Card or Target Visa Credit Card) to save 5% on your purchases everyday and Target will donate up to 1% of your purchases to our school! We welcome and encourage participation from grandparents, alumni, friends and neighbors.

Save the Date!

Friday May 2nd Spring Auction Mad Hatter-Franklin Commons

June 7th-June party!

Oct 14th-Charlestown Day 5k

Volunteer!

We would love to have friends join us at Bazaar, Sale, or many other fun Playschool events — email charlestownplayhouse@verizon.net for more information.

