

## Valentine's Party

Mark your calendars for Saturday, February 12<sup>th</sup> for Aldrich's Annual Valentine's Party! The Valentine's Party is a drop-off event from 10-12 pm for currently enrolled 3-5 year old Aldrich students. We will celebrate with crafts, games, music, stories and snacks. The cost is \$10.00 per child. Sign up ends on February 8<sup>th</sup> and refunds will be given until February 8<sup>th</sup>.



Parent volunteers are what make this event possible. Please contact Emilie Dailey, at [emiliedailey@yahoo.com](mailto:emiliedailey@yahoo.com) or Laura Baudoin, at [laurz26@hotmail.com](mailto:laurz26@hotmail.com) to volunteer.

## School Cancellations

Weather related school cancellations will now be posted on our website, [www.aldrichnurseryschool.com](http://www.aldrichnurseryschool.com). Closings will also continue to be posted on KTTC and KAAL television. Always use your own good judgement about driving and the weather situation.

## Family Fun - By the Slice!



Mark your calendars for Tuesday, February 22 from 5-8 pm! BB's Pizzeria (across the parking lot from ShopKo North) will be hosting a fundraiser for Aldrich. They are donating 50% of their pizza slice sales to the school. Bring your family and friends for a great, easy dinner that will benefit Aldrich! Only **individual slices of pizza** are a part of this fundraiser. We hope to see you there!

# **Join us for "The Aldrich Children's Museum"**

## **May 7th, 2011**

This year's annual carnival will be entitled "The Aldrich Children's Museum" and will be held on **Saturday, May 7th from 10am-2pm**. This event is our largest fundraiser and the proceeds help support our Financial Assistance Program. It is guaranteed to be a fun day with giant inflatables, lunch, a raffle with many prizes, and a bake sale. It's a great way for us to come together as a school and a community.

**This year, as part of the Children's Museum theme, we are planning new and exciting Discovery Rooms, including:**

- A Trip to the Zoo
- Under the Sea
- Rochester Children's Museum
- The Children's Theatre
- Music
- Art and Face Painting

**We will also be holding a Silent Auction. Each class will have a different theme and your child is invited to donate related items. Basket themes for each class are:**

- Room 1 AM – Princesses
- Room 1 General - Play The Music
- Room 2 AM - Things That Go
- Room 3 AM - Arts and Crafts
- Room 4 AM - Let's Plant a Garden
- Room 5 AM - Play Sports
- Room 6 AM - Summer Fun
- Room 7 AM - Hit the Road
- PM - Pirates
- PM - Kids in the Kitchen
- PM - Read Me a Story
- PM - Science & Nature
- PM - Family Fun Night
- PM - Dinosaurs

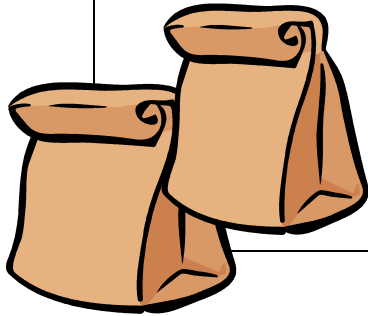
**To help control costs, we are asking for donations of the following items:**

- Raffle - Donations last year ranged from a variety of product baskets, to gift certificates, to cash donations (that were used to purchase many gifts for the raffle). Raffle donations can be dropped off in the office. Please include the estimated value of the item.
- Large stuffed **zoo** animals
- Walkie talkies to borrow on day of event
- Cash donations

**To help make the carnival a success, we need many volunteers.** There are lots of opportunities to help on and before May 7th. You could assist with organizing the bake sale items, manage a Discovery Room, or prepare lunch. If you would like to help with this exciting event, please contact Laura Baudoin at [laurz26@hotmail.com](mailto:laurz26@hotmail.com).

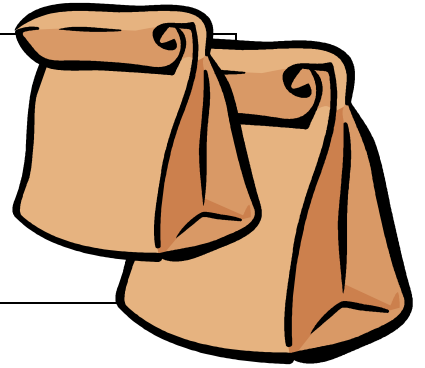
## Lunch Bunch

The Lunch Bunch program has reached the halfway mark this year and continues to be a fun option for students and parents! The cost to attend Lunch Bunch is \$9 and Pizza Lunch Bunch is \$12.



### Upcoming Lunch Bunch Dates:

February 9, 10, 11, 16, 17, 18  
March 9, 10, 11, 23, 24, 25  
April 13, 14, 15, 27, 28, 29  
May 11, 12, 13, 18, 19, 20



## You Are Invited

Aldrich has an open door policy and we welcome parents and guardians to spend some time in your child's class. Please check with your child's teacher to schedule a visit. Enjoy this opportunity to share in your child's beginning school experience!

## Barnes and Noble Book Fair Fundraiser

On Saturday, March 19<sup>th</sup>, we will be teaming with Barnes and Noble at Apache Mall to raise money for Aldrich. It will be a day filled with story times, crafts and other special activities. All store purchases on Saturday, March 19<sup>th</sup> will bring in a donation for Aldrich. Friends and family can also help raise money for Aldrich by using our bookfair ID number with any online purchases from March 20-24. Mark your calendars and look for more information to come in the March newsletter.

## Aldrich Dates to Remember

<b>February 12:</b>	Valentine's Day Party
<b>February 21:</b>	No School – President's Day
<b>February 22:</b>	BB's Pizzeria Family Fun by the Slice
<b>March 18:</b>	No School – Conference Day
<b>March 19:</b>	Barnes & Noble Book Fair – Apache Mall
<b>May 7:</b>	Aldrich Carnival



## **Aldrich is Updating its Look!**

Have you noticed all the changes that have taken place at Aldrich since last June? Wallpaper was stripped from the entryways, office, and Conference Room. The hallway, entryways, offices, Conference Room and Playroom 1 have been painted. There are new chairs and a table across from the office. We are especially excited about the Information Center between Rooms 1 & 2. You can use the new counter to fill out forms, write checks or sign up for Lunch Bunch. Our message boards will have relevant information such as "Tuition is Due" or "Sign up for the Valentines Party". **This is also where you can now drop your payments for tuition, Lunch Bunch, or parties in the slot ~ just make sure cash is labeled or brought to the office.**

## SCRIP

Going out for Dinner for Valentine's Day? Support Aldrich while you're at it!! Buy a Scrip card at the front office and use it to pay for your dinner. A portion of the money goes directly to Aldrich. It's that simple!

We have the following restaurant cards on hand and many more.

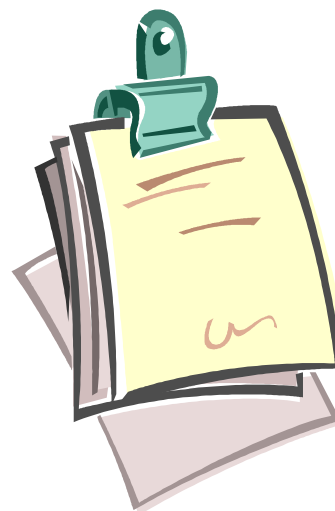
Applebee's	Arby's	Chipotle	KFC	
Noodles	Olive Garden	Panera	Red Lobster	TGI Fridays

## **Volunteers Wanted**

Aldrich parents undertake many volunteer tasks for the benefit of our children during the year. If you are a new parent, caregiver or friend who would like to be added to the volunteer list please e-mail Laura Baudoin, Volunteer Coordinator, at [laurz26@hotmail.com](mailto:laurz26@hotmail.com). Everyone's help is appreciated from maintenance to decorating to fundraising. Volunteers are an integral part of the success of Aldrich. Please let Laura know if you have any questions.

## Parent Surveys

Thank you to those of you who completed surveys this fall. We received approximately 120 completed surveys. This information is helpful to us, as it shows us in which areas we are meeting your needs, and which areas may need some thought or improvement.



Our accreditation organization, the National Association for Child Care Professionals (NACCP) requires that we collect surveys from at least 60% of our parents. We did not yet receive the required numbers, so we will be putting surveys out again. We would appreciate it if everyone would complete a survey this spring. Feel free to fill one out again, even if you did one in the fall.

Before the surveys go out again, I would like to address some items that were marked “Don’t Know”, to help you understand some of our policies and procedures.

1. The program provides information to help parents better understand their children’s development and learning in a variety of ways, such as meetings, workshops, articles, etc.  
*Aldrich meets this criteria...*
  - *through the various Parent Outreaches provided by the Board of Directors: “Ready for Kindergarten” in October and “Family Zumba” in January*
  - *through articles in the all-school and teacher newsletters*
2. Family members are given opportunities to use their skills and talents to contribute to the program.
  - *Aldrich has an open-door policy. Parents are welcome to spend time in the classrooms sharing skills and talents, reading to children, helping the teachers, etc.*
  - *Aldrich has volunteer opportunities available for parents, such as Lunch Bunch and Library days, parties, and the carnival.*
3. Parents are given opportunities to share their feedback about the program through on-going suggestions and annual written evaluations.
  - *Parents have the opportunity to complete a survey at least once a year.*
  - *There is a Parent Input box on the Information Center.*

4. Parents are notified when their child has been in an accident and/or has been exposed to communicable illnesses or parasites (such as lice).

- *If a child is injured while at school, an Injury Report form will be sent home with the child. (In case of very minor injuries the teachers will just talk to the parents at pick up time.)*
- *If a child has been exposed to communicable illnesses or parasites, all children in that class would receive a notice in their cubbies.*



5. I have been given a copy of the program's plan for moving children to another location in emergency situations.

- *We have an agreement with ReaLife next door that in case of emergency, we can bring all children there.*
- *Because most parents don't know our procedures we will include this in the Parent Handbook for 2011-2012.*

6. The backgrounds, cultures, and experiences of the children and their families are often reflected in lesson plan activities and classroom materials.

- *Children are often asked to share experiences they have had with the class*
- *Teachers invite parents/family members to come into the classroom to share information about their backgrounds and culture.*
- *Books, puzzles and pictures which represent the backgrounds and cultures of children in that room are available.*

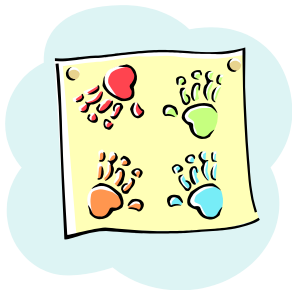
7. Teachers give directions using positive words, for example "Walk" rather than "Don't run"; "Gentle touches" rather than "Don't hit."

- *The teachers do a great job of stating things positively.*

8. I am permitted access to the program and to my child's classroom during all hours of operation and am made to feel welcome.

- *Aldrich has an open-door policy. Parents are welcome and encouraged to spend time in their child's classroom. If you have questions, please contact your child's teacher.*





## From the Director: The Aldrich Curriculum and Philosophy

At Aldrich we trust a child's innate curiosity to be the springboard for learning. Within every activity there are opportunities for problem solving, critical thinking, joy and humor. Through play and engagement with others, children learn to identify their feelings, advocate for themselves, view problems from multiple perspectives, and resolve conflict. Aldrich Memorial Nursery School (AMNS) values the development of a diverse community of adults and children. Together, we emphasize learning rather than teaching, and process rather than product.

The play-based program at Aldrich takes a developmental approach to the education of young children, helping them master the basic learning and social skills that form the foundation for all future learning.

The philosophy at Aldrich Memorial Nursery School is based on:

- The developmental theories of **Jean Piaget**
- The developmental theories of **Erik Erikson**
- The Developmentally Appropriate Practice Guidelines as put forth by the National Association of the Education of Young Children (**NAEYC**)
- The findings of the *Families and Work Institute* research on **Rethinking the Brain**.

These theories are stated in the Aldrich Program Plan. There are copies available for you to check out in the Aldrich library.

I will address different parts of our philosophy in the next few newsletters. This time let's take a look at the developmental theories of Jean Piaget.

**Piaget** labeled the stage that occurs between ages two and six as the 'preoperational' stage. Language development is one of the hallmarks of this period. He also felt that children learn best through the handling of concrete objects rather than abstract theories. During the preoperational stage, Piaget believed that children become increasingly adept at playing and pretending. For example, a child is able to use an object to represent something else, such as pretending a broom is a horse. Role playing also becomes important during the preoperational stage. Children often play the roles of "mommy," "daddy," "doctor," and many others.

**Piaget** believed the ultimate goal of education should be the development of persons "who are capable of doing new things" and "who are creative, inventive discoverers." **The goal is to insure that each child has opportunities to use his or her intelligence as fully as possible at each**

**level of development.** At Aldrich, the experiences provided are open-ended, allowing the child, with the teacher's encouragement, to continue with each as far as his/her interest and ability allow. Rather than *giving* knowledge to children as though they were empty vessels to be filled, children *acquire* knowledge about the physical and social worlds in which they live through playful interaction with objects and people. Children are motivated by their own desire to learn and make sense of their world. The teachers serve as guides or facilitators preparing the environment so that it provides stimulating, challenging materials and activities for children. Teachers also observe to see what children understand and where their interests lie, and then teachers plan additional activities to encourage the children's thinking even further.

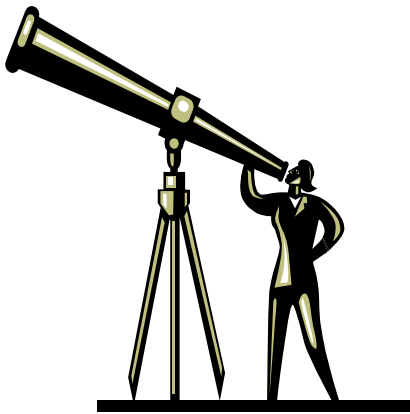
All the Aldrich classes have teacher directed group times. This time is important because children learn to:

- listen to an adult while sitting with a group of children
- follow directions
- take turns speaking and listening
- speak in front of a group of their peers

I'm sure you have noticed that at Aldrich we also provide teacher guided 'free choice' activities. In fact, the majority of the class time allows for child directed play. This is the way children learn the best. During their free choice time children are learning to:

- socialize
- take turns
- be creative through art media
- be creative through dramatic play
- use their five senses
- develop their small muscles (playing with playdough, cutting with scissors, building with Legos, stringing, using tongs and/or tweezers)
- learn mathematics (sorting, counting, learning about sizes and shapes, and more)
- practice writing skills (holding pencils, crayons, markers, etc., playing with playdough, fingerpainting, and more)
- be independent and practice self-help skills (during snack, bathroom routine, taking outdoor clothes off, and more)

**These are many of the ways that  
Children Learn Through Play.**



## Strategic Planning

Aldrich has begun a strategic planning process that will shape and refine its vision and will align it within a framework, optimizing the potential for 21st century early childhood education. We will be reviewing all the internal and external factors that influence what we do, and developing a comprehensive plan of action, to help us meet the challenges of today and capitalize on the world of opportunities for the generation of tomorrow.

The development of the strategic plan will be facilitated by Debra Ruegg, the Director of Consulting from First Children's Finance – a non profit organization based in the Twin Cities, governed by child care and business leaders. The planning team will be comprised of MBA students from Augsburg College, Aldrich's Director and Assistant Director and the Executive Board of Directors.

As we navigate through this critical endeavor in the weeks and months to come, we greatly appreciate your participation and support in the various forums that will be created to engage Aldrich families, alumni, staff, board members and others, crucial to the planning process and ultimately, instrumental to the success of our institution.

**“The Economic Policy Institute’s report, Exceptional Returns: Economic, Fiscal, and Social Benefits of Investment in Early Childhood Development presents empirical calculations that estimates a return of \$8.74 for every \$1 invested in quality early childhood education programming.”<sup>1</sup>**

We hope to play that part in your child’s future.

We will continue to provide further updates and information as we move through the strategic planning process. If you have any questions, please contact Bonnie Stauff at: [bonnie@aldrichnurseryschool.com](mailto:bonnie@aldrichnurseryschool.com)

<sup>1</sup>*Early Childhood Education Boosts Economy: Investment in Quality Preschool Programs Yields High Earnings*, <http://www.suite101.com/content/early-childhood-education-boosts-economy-a205422#ixzz1CaSC2u6r> (Feb 24, 2010, accessed Jan 25, 2011)