

Kids Korner

Ephrata Cloister Offers History Class

EPHRATA (Lancaster Co.) — Explore the roles of women in early Pennsylvania as history comes to life as part of the Ephrata Cloister Christmas Candlelight Tours, December 26 through 29. These special first-person tours transport visitors back in time to the mid-18th century with local students portraying members of the Ephrata Cloister, one of America's earliest communal societies. Within the original structures, guests will discover the stories of several colonial Pennsylvania women, each with choices and struggles which contributed to the development of the nation's heritage. Tours begin at 6:30 p.m. and continue every half-hour until 9 p.m. Space is limited and reservations are required.

Ephrata Cloister was founded in 1732 by the German religious leader Conrad Beissel. Gathered in unique medieval style buildings, the community consisted of celibate Brothers and Sisters, and a married congregation of families. The life of the celibate members was characterized by severe discipline and self-denial of comfort. At the zenith of the community in the 1740s and 1750s, about 300 members worked and worshipped at the Cloister. Following the death of the last celibate member in 1813 the married congregation formed the German Se-

venth Day Baptist Church. Members continued to live and worship at the Cloister until 1934.

In 1941, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania acquired the historic site and began a program of restoration and interpretation. Today, nine original buildings are part of a 25-acre complex open for visitors daily.

Tickets for the Christmas Candlelight Tours are \$6 for adults, \$5 for Senior Citizens age 60 and over and \$4 for children age 6 through 12. Limited space is available on each tour and reservations are required. By special arrangement with The Restaurant at Doneckers a dinner and tour package is available by calling (717) 738-9502. Ephrata Cloister is located in Ephrata Borough, Lancaster County on Route 322 at the intersection with Route 272. The historic site is open Monday through Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday from noon to 5 p.m. Individuals wishing more information, reservations, or individuals with disabilities who need special assistance should call (717) 733-6600.



Never Too Young To Read Lancaster Farming



Twenty-two-month-old Zachary Workman helps his grandpa, Don Cannon, read the latest issue of *Lancaster Farming*. Zachary is the son of Ed and Melissa Workman of Dover.

Toy Suggestions

HONSDALE (Wayne Co.) — Walk into any toy store or toy department and you will find hundreds of toys. With such a selection to choose from, most of us ask ourselves, "Where on earth do I begin?" The following ideas for toys, grouped according to age, are suggestions you might want to consider. It is important to take into account not only the child's age, but also his interests and abilities as he grows older.

Babies Under 18 Months: Toys should attract the baby's attention. Select toys that baby can look at, feel, chew, hold, and, of course, drop. These toys should be washable and definitely nonbreakable, with no sharp edges or small parts that can come off or be detached such as some wheels on toy trucks or eyes on stuffed animals. As the baby begins to move about, select toys that will move with him, either pulled or pushed. Other suggestions are toys that attach securely to the crib, large cloth blocks or plastic beads, picture books, chime or squeak toys, stacking or pounding toys, and cloth dolls.

18 Months to 3 Years: Select movable toys that the child can manipulate. Again, avoid toys with small parts, since the child will still place objects in his mouth. Sturdy toys are a must at this age, but shy away from overly large or heavy toys. Sound-producing toys and toys that allow the older 2-year-old to play Mom or Dad are in order. Introduce simple puzzles. For active play, try a low-built, wide-based three or four wheeled riding toy, as well as a wagon-type toy that the child can push or pull and load down with other toys. Old-fashioned dolls and child-powered cars and trucks will delight the 2-year-old.

3 to 4 Years: Play for this age child has become vigorous and he/

she is beginning to be interested in creative activities. "Make believe" is a big part of play. Select toy telephones, puppets, doll buggies, toy dishes, more advanced puzzles, large crayons and big sheets of paper, blunt scissors and finger paints, farm or village or other play sets, pull-string or friction-powered toys.

4 to 6 Years: This is the dramatic or creative age. Interest in reading and writing will begin and grow. The child will be moving rapidly at this age and his/her attention span is lengthening. Toys with moving parts and toys that are designed to be taken apart by the child will provide hours of play. Some suggestions are doll houses, construction toys, paints, jump ropes, larger-wheeled toys, simple games, easy to read books with large print and pleasing pictures, pretend money, story records, learn-to-tell toys, sleds and dress-up costumes.

It is impossible to make a list of toys that will fit each child. Because children have different abilities and interests and skills, you must decide which toy is best for your child. Observe the child at play. You will notice that your child, like most every other child, will play in different ways. Some play will be very active, some quiet, some imaginative and crea-

tive. At times your child will engage in social play with other children, while at other times he or she will be involved in construction or building or even scientific play.

In choosing the toy that is best for your developing child, try to consider each of these different types of play. If you are selecting more than one toy, think of the way in which the child will play with each toy. One father noticed that his son was fascinated with a toy car. That year the child received no less than six cars and trucks! He was obviously overloaded with any one kind of toy and his "fleet" went unused for the most part, much to the father's disappointment.

One final note: Children can be overloaded with toys in another way. This too frequently happens during the approaching holiday time. Many parents and other adults spend too much money on toys and frequently buy too many. It is far better, from the child's standpoint, to give him/her a couple of well-selected toys at the holiday time. Then, in a few months, the child will have matured a bit more and be ready for another well-selected toy. And in another few months, another toy, he or she will enjoy them more that way, and will learn more as well.



Smart Stuff

WITH TWIG WALKINGSTICK

Why do owls have such round faces?

Those fluffy, bowl-shaped feathers help these nighttime hunters hear their prey. You see, an owl doesn't hear better than people; it just makes the most of the hearing it has.

That's where the ruff comes in — the ruff is what our zoologist friends call feathers around the owl's round face. The ruff channels sound into the owl's ears, which are located just to the side of its eyes. The next time you watch a football game on television, look for people along the sidelines holding what look like little satellite dishes. Those dishes funnel sound to TV microphones, just like the ruff funnels sounds to the owl's ears.

An owl also has uneven ears — one ear opening points up, while the other points down — so it can instantly tell the direction of a sound.

Here's what happens: say the sound of a scurrying mouse reaches the owl's left ear first. Because it takes a split second longer for the sound to reach the right ear, the owl knows the mouse is to the left. The uneven ears mean the volume gets softer by the time the sound reaches the right ear, too. The difference in loudness tells the owl if the mouse is up or down, which is really helpful when it goes to find dinner.

Once an owl determines where the sound is coming from, it points its head and talons in that direction, silently grabs the mouse — and enjoys a tasty meal!

Scientifically yours, Twig

