



CA

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Fall 2022: KEEPING TRADITIONS ALIVE



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Group Game: Keeping Traditions Alive

by Callie B-H.

What has affectionately become known simply as “Group Game” was started by my grandmother, Susan Shilcock, over 30 years ago. The torch was passed to my dad, Mike Hilbert, 18 years ago when he first started working with the Bergson-Shilcock family. Today, Group Game remains a core part of CA programs. CP3 and CYP consistently join together for Group Game, while CP1 and CP2 join together on Tuesdays, and CC and CP1 combine to play with each other on Thursdays. About four times a year, we gather ALL CA programs, and we play an All Campus Group Game!



Whether it's 85 degrees and sunny, or a blustery 35 degrees, Mike believes in playing Group Game outdoors, when possible. On days with severe inclement weather, Group Game remains, it's just transitioned to an indoor game.

Group Game is often an athletic game, like Capture the Flag or Handball, but it always includes an added twist to even out the playing field. This allows for youth who are less kinesthetically developed to still be a valuable, contributing member to their team. Mike also likes to shake things up with games like Hilbert Ball, Strawberry Ball, or indoor favorites such as Whacked Out Charades or Four on a Couch.

Whether it's an old-time favorite (with added flavor), or a game created by Mike, the focus is always on fostering CA's core beliefs of teamwork and collaboration.



The emphasis of Group Game is always on “fun to fun,” with no winners or losers. CA believes that by taking the winning factor out of a game, it fosters a more collaborative and fun environment and allows the focus to be on skill development, peer bonding, and joyful physical challenges. Group Game is a highlight for many youth, with lots of laughter, ample time for physical movement, and personal kinesthetic challenge.



Philly Maker Faire

by Cali G.

The Philadelphia Maker Faire is a volunteer-organized street fair that features DIY arts, crafts, science, tech, music, and much more. The Maker Faire started in the San Francisco Bay Area in 2006. Now, there are local “Maker Faires” all over the country, the biggest being in San Mateo, California and New York City. About 200,000 attend the Maker Faires in the Bay Area and New York. Over 50% attend with children and about 44% are first timers.

Mike (Co-founder of CA) was joined by volunteers that helped him explain CA’s philosophy to Maker Faire attendees. Additionally, CA brought paper circuits as a craft to interest individuals which was a big hit (paper circuit kits were from the SparkFun website). Paper circuits (photo below) are constructed using copper wiring tape, a button battery, and an LED light. The copper tape connects the LED light with the battery to light the LED bulb.



The Philly Maker Faire took place on Saturday, October 15, 2022, at the Independence Seaport Museum (See website for more information). Cupola Academy joined the over 130 makers celebrating creativity and innovation at the Seaport Museum.



Make Your Own Paper Circuit!



Scan This With The Camera Of Your iPhone.

SHIVERFEST!

by Kelley C.



CP3 wasn't the only group making things for Shiverfest! With the help of Creative Choice (CC), CP3 made Seed Pods, which were launched into a meadow to plant wildflowers, using the previously mentioned slingshot. You can find the recipe on this very page! Constructing Your Path (CYP) also built tombstones for the event, using the Glowforge laser cutter & etcher to design them and etch them. They collaborated with CP2 (Collaborative Pod 2) on this, with CP2 decorating the tombstones, adding spray paint, and humorous names and epitaphs.



SHIVERFEST AND A SLINGSHOT

On October 15, 2022, Riverbend hosted Shiverfest. It was an event that raised money and awareness to support Riverbend's mission to educate and empower people in taking care of the environment. Riverbend also hosts and supports nature based-STEM courses. This year, Shiverfest featured pony rides, trick-or-treating, haunted attractions, food truck vending, arts and crafts, and even bug shows. Cupola Academy was invited to host a station and activity. Several programs worked together to create a seed launcher to help plant a wildflower meadow in the months to come. Collaborative Pod 3 (CP3) built two slingshots for the Shiverfest event, creating the designs and building them. Peter Bergson, CA Advisory Board Member and CA grandparent, came in to help with carpentry.

SEED POD RECIPE

- Take a pinch of clay and flatten it.
- Next, put a few seeds into the center of your flat clay.
- Take another piece of flattened clay, and put it over the seeds.
- Finally, pinch the sides of them together, and roll it into a ball.
- Enjoy your seed pods, and grow some wildflowers!

Family Holiday Recipes

by Freya B.

CA families were invited to send in their favorite recipes that they like to make during the holidays. We would love it if you tried their recipes and sent an email to CP3Youth@cupolaacademy.org with a photo!

Vegan Banana Bread

From the Palman family (Leila in CP2, Cady in CC, and Natalie in CE)

Ingredients

- 3 medium overripe bananas
- 1/4 cup organic granulated sugar
- 1/4 cup organic brown sugar
- 1/3 cup canola oil (or your favorite baking oil) *I use olive oil or coconut oil*
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cup oat flour (I just grind some oats in a small food processor).
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup chocolate chips, or your favorite banana bread stir-in
- 1/4 cup organic brown sugar (for topping)

Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 350°
2. Mash bananas. Add sugars, oil, and vanilla. Stir to combine.
3. Grind 1 cup of oats. Add to wet ingredients.
4. Add 1 cup of flour to wet (or 2 cups if not using oats).
5. Add baking soda, cinnamon and salt to wet mixture. Stir to combine.
6. Place in oiled pan or in muffin tins. Sprinkle brown sugar on top.
7. Bake for 15-17 mins (muffins) or 25-30 (bread).

All ovens are different, so check frequently! Bread is done when top and edges are browned and a toothpick comes out clean. They freeze well!

If you don't want to use oats, just replace with 1 additional cup of flour for 2 cups total of dry ingredients.

Cinnamon Star Bread

From the Greskiewicz family
(Cali in CP3 and Noah in CYP)



Sausage Stuffed Jalapenos

From the Tyson family
(Christian in CP1 and Clay in CP2)



Find these two holiday recipes by scanning the QR codes above.

Moyer Family Interview



Meet the Moyer Family: Maureen, Kevin, Ryan, Jeremy, Connor (CYP), and Amanda

How do you spend your days outside of CA?

Connor spends time taking dual enrollment courses at the local community college. His goal is to enter college with credits to lessen his work load a bit. He is currently taking part in a robotics club with a few other youth from CA. He enjoys traveling and playing golf and basketball. He is an avid Philadelphia sports fan. He mainly focuses on the Eagles and Sixers.

What curriculums have you found helpful?

Connor uses Outschool quite a bit for various courses. He did a Brave Writer course for reading. Tutors have enriched his learning experience as well. I have found connecting with other families to get input about different learning opportunities has been extremely helpful.

What are your youth(s) favorite part(s) about CA?

Connor loves how learning happens at CA. He gets to have a say in what they learn. The applied, hands on learning really works for him. It has made learning fun and exciting. He has really enjoyed the connections with others and loves their time outdoors during the program days.

How long have you been homeschooling and attending Mike and Julia's programs?

5 years

What brought you to CA?

Connor went to a small private school for grades K-6th. He really did not want to go to middle school for two years just then to have to switch schools again for high school. We began exploring other options and landed on a hybrid approach to learning. I hired a wonderful tutor to work with him on language arts, reading, and history and he began taking online science and math courses. Connor quickly fell in love with this non-traditional approach to learning. There was no going back.



This is when I panicked a bit because homeschooling was a foreign concept to me. The hybrid approach was supposed to be a two year plan. Then we were talking about homeschooling through high school. I knew he needed something more socially, as well as more hands-on learning experiences. I began researching, and then a friend told me she stumbled over this wonderful place and she brought it to my attention. I immediately got in touch with Julia and set up a tour. Connor and I fell in love with the program immediately. It was a quick and easy decision to join this community. Now here we are already in our last year with CA. I only wish I had learned about this wonderful community when my kids were younger.

What are the biggest benefits of homeschooling and CA?

Oh my goodness. There are so many benefits. I cannot possibly list them all. To see how happy and excited Connor became about learning when we made this switch was all I needed to see. This is such a great fit for the person he is. Traditional school was just not the path for him to continue down. Having the opportunity to create programs and schedules that excite him is refreshing. Flexibility with school is something I never experienced with my other kids. Our lives revolved around their school schedules which didn't leave much time to do the things they really wanted to do. Connor has had a much different experience. We have been able to travel more and just implement so many more things into our daily lives that he really wants to do. I really get it now when I hear, "The world is our classroom."

What are the biggest challenges of homeschooling and CA?

I guess I would have to say making sure Connor has a good social experience. This is definitely possible; it just takes more of a conscious effort since we don't have all the things that happen at traditional school. With this being said you just have to be creative. The great part is this has worked for Connor because when we do plan all the social events he has been part of all the planning and we have been able to create some really fun outings.

A day in the life of the Creative Choice Program!

by CA Co-Director and Facilitator, Julia Bergson-Shilcock

The Creative Choice (CC) program has had a fun-filled fall! Our program day allows for maximum flexibility, leaving room for creativity, spontaneity, and joyful, organic exploration.

Outdoor highlights this fall have included time spent investigating in the creek, catching crayfish, and a hike to the Bamboo Forest. This magical little oasis feels like a completely different world, yet is only a 15 minute hike from the Riverbend preserve. During our trek there, we went on a Rainbow Hike, looking for natural objects in each color of the rainbow.

Another beautiful day we took advantage of the post-rain moisture and found a plethora of mushroom varieties. For some, mushroom hunting was the thrill, while others delighted in identifying the various mushroom and fungi species by comparing them to pictures and books we had laid out to review, and still others took it a step further and chose to write down our findings.

Taking advantage of the mild fall weather, many youth enjoyed a multi-week woodworking project on our outdoor work benches, with visiting Domain Expert and woodworker, Peter Bergson. Youth had the opportunity to make Geoboards, which provided ample opportunities for sawing, sanding, and hammering. They got to take theirs home to enjoy the mathematical and artistic creativity that Geoboards can provide.



No outdoor exploration can be complete without a mention of our beloved frog ponds! There's nothing more joyful than hearing the delightful shrieks of young people as they catch a frog for the first (or hundredth!) time.

A few recent indoor highlights include stretching our logical thinking muscles while working with Attribute Blocks, playing Muggins (a math game), and working with the Matrix Box. Exploring homophones with magnetic letters got our brains stretching, while tinkering with Snap Circuits naturally offered countless opportunities for problem solving. Building and constructing with marble rollways, Lincoln Logs, and various other building materials is commonplace during our program hours. Recently, CC youth, Cady, showed her fellow CCers (and her Facilitators!) how to crochet! This skill is also useful in honing fine motor development, as is the Finger Braiding, jewelry making, pot-holder weaving, and clay building that has taken place on multiple occasions this fall.

We typically close our program days with Group Time, where we read a book (both fiction and non-fiction) which provides a window into many amazing worlds, and always sparks new and engaging conversations. Songs and games are also an end-of-day tradition. Cultivating a sense of gratitude and positivity, no program day is complete without Appreciations, an opportunity for each member of our group to share a highlight from the day. These snapshots help us all focus on the GOOD in our program, and our world (and they also serve to guide Julia and Laura, CC Facilitators, in our planning for future program days!).







A Look at Constructing Your Path

By Noah G., Abby B-C., and Connor M.

On Tuesdays this fall, the Constructing Your Path (CYP) program has been working with facilitators on Shakespeare's tragedy *Macbeth*, and on the first amendment of the US Constitution. Over the course of eight weeks, CYP members worked with facilitator and Shakespeare enthusiast Lucy Tyson to analyze the written text of the play *Macbeth*, as well as the various film adaptations. This unit culminated in a visit to Bryn Mawr Film Institute for a *Macbeth* on film presentation and discussion with BMFI staff, Jacob Mazer. Additionally, the CYP group has gained a deeper understanding of the bill of rights, and more specifically the first amendment, through discussions surrounding supreme court cases. To wrap up this unit, each member selected a court case related to the first amendment and created a poster to visually display the timeline of the case and the resulting decision.

On Thursdays, CYP has been working with industry professional Keith Nelson on a short 20-minute documentary surrounding the history and future of Cupola's neighboring organization, the International Peace Mission. We have learned about the process of making a documentary, different filming techniques, and how to use editing software. As a first step in our filming process, we visited Woodmont, the home of the International Peace Mission, and toured the library and grounds. Keith also worked with the teens to develop CA contributions for Shiverfest, in preparation for the World Affairs Council, and to research possible grant projects. The CYP teens have also worked with CA facilitator Dave Moyer on various Physics concepts explored through hands-on labs. One recent lab used a ballistic pendulum to measure the force and momentum of a suction dart gun.

As 2022 winds down, CYP has been exploring the (mis)understanding and (mis)treatment of mental health in history, looking specifically at the Renaissance and the Victorian Eras. They used art, literature, and historical sources to learn about this topic. They are also reading the banned book, *The Chocolate War* by Robert Cormier to extend their discussion of the first amendment.



rebus puzzles

curated by Sebastian E.

A rebus is a puzzle that uses words, letters, and numbers to represent familiar phrases and idioms. Try solving these! The solutions will be published in the next issue.

sota

**OVER N
TOLD U AGAIN**

**HEAD
LOHEELSVE**

¢TIPEDE

UTNS

stroke
STROKE stroke
stroke

**GOOD
EVIL**

noon

8:16

Introducing the Palman Family!



Names of family members and ages of youth:

Sean, Nicole, Leila (11), Cadence (7) and Natalie (3)

What program(s) does your young person(s) attend?

Natalie attends Curious Explorers, Cadence is in Creative Choice, and Leila is in CP2.

What brought you to CA?

Last year, we were looking to “level up” our homeschooling by adding in a formal program for Leila. We found CA through a network of friends and fellow homeschoolers. The Partnership Education style of learning and respect of youth and their ideas was something we already practiced at home, so CA felt like a natural extension of our household. We highly value time outdoors, so the location of CA at Riverbend was very appealing!



How long have you been attending programs run by Mike and Julia?

This is our second year.

How long have you been homeschooling?

6 years.

What are your youth(s) favorite part(s) about CA?

Leila loves collaborating with peers and learning from different facilitators. Cadence really enjoys doing hands-on work. Woodworking is her favorite! Natalie likes being close to me while she is playing and learning with her fellow "pre-school" aged friends in Curious Explorers.



How do you spend your days outside of CA?

We have very full days! We spend time with other homeschoolers in structured ways (math class on Mondays with another CA family and unit studies on Wednesdays with a different family), we utilize Outschool for a few classes, and all the girls attend their own dance classes and soccer practices throughout the week. Fortunately, there is still lots of time for free play/adventures, as well as a weekly playgroup we love on Friday afternoons.

What are the biggest benefits of homeschooling/CA?

So many! We love all the time spent together, having flexibility in our day and having the ability to tweak and calibrate our learning plan and schedule for each individual. We have more time outside moving our bodies and the girls can spend lots of time on their interests and extracurricular activities without feeling burnt out. The biggest benefit for me personally is my ability to learn right alongside my young people.



What are the biggest challenges of homeschooling/CA?

Calibrating for all those levels and interests is certainly a challenge. Also, my youngest daughter, Natalie, is not at all interested in being a cooperative member of our homeschool, which can make things tricky! Sometimes, the vast array of choices can be overwhelming for us.

