



Brooker Memorial HAPPENINGS

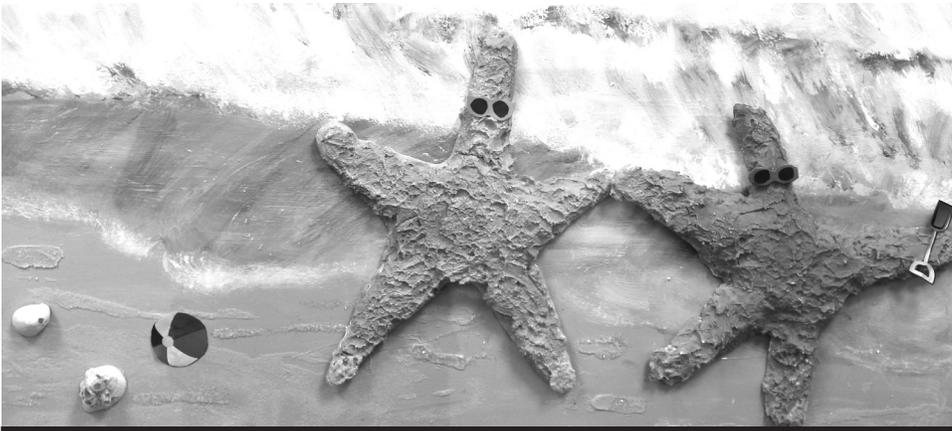
KEEPING OUR FRIENDS INFORMED

MAY 2017

Starfish Cove

Local marketing and research firm Words and Numbers recently recommended new strategies to promote Brooker Dental Center. One strategy is to make visiting the dentist more fun! Thus, Brooker staff has created a playroom called Starfish Cove. This aquatic oasis across the lobby from the dental center features a live stream from the Monterey Bay

Aquarium, colorful and playful aquatic art donated by artist Karen Rossi, sea creature photo stations, a reading nook and a Wally the Walrus bean bag toss. We will soon host an opening event to raise awareness of our new playroom, our pediatric dentistry services and what a great place Brooker is for children!



Volunteering at Brooker Memorial

In the last few months, Brooker Memorial volunteers Chuck Beyer and Judy Hogan have joined with Executive Director Cathy Coyle to create a procedure for a more accessible volunteer program at Brooker. The idea is to make known to the community the many aspects of Brooker programs and the varied volunteer opportunities associated with those programs. Volunteers offer a tremendous system of support that aids Brooker staff to meet the challenging goal of "Preparing Children for Life-long Success"! If you are interested in exploring volunteer opportunities at Brooker Memorial, please contact us at 860-489-1328, ext.130 or by email at receptionist@brookermemorial.org

Beer Fest to Benefit Brooker Child Care

Brooker Child Care and St. Maron's Church have joined together to hold the Seventh Annual Litchfield Hills Beer Fest. The event will be held on Saturday, June 3 at Elks Pond from 1- 5 pm. Sponsorships and raffle prizes are being solicited. Tickets are \$20 in advance and the day of the event. In addition to the tastings, there will be food, live music, prize drawings and a silent auction. The joint sponsorship of the event is intended

to lessen the workload for both organizations' staff and volunteers, while increasing the amount of funds raised. Brooker's share of the proceeds will support our Child Care Music and Yoga enrichment classes, healthy snacks, and activities and field trips. For information about sponsorships or to purchase tickets, please call 860-489-5437 or on line: www.brookermemorial.org/link.

Our Doors are Open

We are pleased that many community groups are taking advantage of our new building to hold their meetings, support groups and other activities. Some of the groups currently meeting at Brooker are Hospice Bereavement Support Group, Fit Together's obesity prevention program, Literacy Volunteers and GED classes. For information about using space at Brooker, please call Jan Lyon at 860-489-1328, ext. 129.

The Brooker Memorial Mission is "To prepare children for life-long success through education, health services, family support and programs of excellence."

Children's Wall Murals

Last summer the Mad River Selkie artist group collaborated with the Torrington Police Activities League (PAL) on a community awareness art project. Artist Karen Rossi and PAL Executive Director Lindsay Raymond helped PAL students produce three large panels of tactile art displaying children among town

buildings and streets. The panels were donated to Brooker and with Ms. Rossi's guidance; Brooker's kindergarteners personalized the murals adding a sun, rainbow, bug, butterfly, several more children and even a photo of the original Brooker building. The panels have been installed in the Child Care Center.



Spring in the Garden!

"I love spring anywhere, but if I could choose, I would always greet it in the garden!" Ruth Stout

Ah...The Brooker Garden! Started in 2011 to become a nature-based addition to the Child Care program, the garden provides hands-on opportunities for Brooker teachers to teach just about everything. It is always a place of discovery, a place where lessons are boundless, a place where children and adults can find peace and beauty. It is a place to learn to care for our earth where one can meet nature's insects and crawlers, taste-test familiar and unfamiliar fruits and vegetables and learn gently about the cycle of life.

Last year a committee of volunteers supported the Child Care staff by sharing the garden tasks and helping to set up opportunities for garden lessons throughout the spring, summer and fall. The organic garden consists of ten raised beds, a large

herb garden, a pumpkin patch, a sunflower garden, a flower border garden, many created by plants that volunteers brought from their own gardens, and an active compost garden.

Volunteers interested in gardening, whether experienced or novice, are welcome to take part in this delightful activity. One may volunteer on a regular basis or simply take part in a particular task, such as spring readiness, staking or harvesting. We have a watering committee that is structured so that four people sign up for a specific day of the week and alternate on that day to water and check for garden concerns. Volunteering for the Brooker Garden Committee is pleasurable with volunteers doing as much or as little as fits comfortably into their lives. If you would like to know more, please call us at 860-489-1328, ext. 130 or send an email to receptionist@brookermemorial.org.

Automated Appointment Reminders

In January, Brooker Dental began using an automated call program to remind patients of their up-coming appointments. Using patient home or cell phones or email addresses, it sends a message one hour after making the appointment, including whom it is with and the date and time. Two weeks prior to the appointment, it automatically sends out another reminder, to which patients can confirm. It also includes a same day reminder and the opportunity to leave a review following the visit. In the first full month of use, our appointment retention percentage improved significantly!

Acts of Kindness

The children enrolled at Brooker Memorial's Early Learning and Child Care Center were visited by a cast of costumed characters on February 8th. Twenty-nine students from Litchfield High School's Acts of Kindness Club came dressed as classic storybook and movie characters including Trolls, Ninja Turtles, Princesses and super heroes. The high school students read a story for the children, performed an original dance, and sang. The children had time afterwards to hug, mingle, and dance with their favorite characters. It was wonderful to see the looks on the faces of the little ones. We were very impressed by the patience and enthusiasm shown by the students.

