

The Great River Summer Current

July 30, 2010



August 1st is the Festival of Lammas

"The Festival of Lammas has its origin in the Celtic festival of Lughnasadh - a feast instituted by the sun-god Lugh. This was a harvest festival celebrating the fruitfulness of the Earth Mother and took the form of a 'first fruits' offering. The Anglo-Saxon Christians transformed this into the 'Loaf-Mass' which has given us the name Lammas. A loaf was baked with grain reaped at the very beginning of

the harvest and not allowed to stand for the customary three Sundays;
this loaf was offered at the Mass.

St. John the Baptist sowed the seed for a change of heart at
Midsummer, and since then, this seed has had time to ripen into a
resolve. An initiative is always needed to turn a resolve into a deed,
but when are we ever *really* ready to take an initiative? Forty days
after Midsummer, the Festival of Lammass reminds us that it is possible
to bake a loaf with grain that is not fully mature, and offer it with
trust at Life's table.

The rest of the harvesting will continue, and the tempered seed will
finally be gathered, sifted and weighed before being cast in future
seasons. Meanwhile, let us value even the immature offerings of our
heart, for their spontaneity and vitality!"

~ from *All Year Round*



A Great Summer Camp!

The children met a story teller, a leprechaun, a queen, a bridge keeper
and a forest fairy as they searched for crystals needed by the queen
in order to restore the fallen bridge that goes across the great river.

Thank you for a magical summer. We'll see you next year!

Dear GRS Families,

As promised, here is the article about creating a simple summer based upon an interview in the Chicago Tribune with Waldorf mentor Kim John Payne. The Nelson Waldorf School in British Columbia has incorporated Payne's philosophies into their entire curriculum in an approach called the Code of Compassion.

Enjoy the article!

Summer, Come Back

It's time to wallow in this season of gentle, blissful breathing

By Barbara Mahany, Tribune Newspapers

May 28, 2010

So, you're checking your watch, keeping your eyeballs glued to the calendar. You are counting down the days, the hours, the minutes to summertime, aren't you?

You think, "Aha! At last, the season of kick-back days and don't-hurry-to-bed nights."

You've got plans for a lemonade stand. Maybe even squeeze it from lemons. Heck, you'll show the kiddies how to build a fort in the trees.

Sit out under the stars, keeping watch on the fireflies.

Hulloooo. What year did you think this was?

Your dreams are so Long Ago.

This is 2010, people. Kids need to be fed, packed, shooshed onto the camp bus, oh, just after daybreak. And don't forget about the dueling sports dates, with soccer starting on one field at 5, while baseball gets underway, three miles away, at half past that very same hour.

What happened to summer?, we cry into our store-bought lemonade.

Unwilling to give up our hopes and our dreams, we dialed up a fellow we'd like to claim as our summertime hero.

Kim John Payne just happens to have written the book on dialed-down parenting: "Simplicity Parenting: Using the Extraordinary Power of

Less to Raise Calmer, Happier, and More Secure Kids," (Ballantine Books, \$25).

Payne lives, breathes and preaches the simplicity gospel.

"Think about your most golden summer moments," he begins, his British accent working its lullaby magic. "It's a time of the year when you can breathe out. Otherwise we live in a state of emotional asthma — you can breathe in but you can't breathe out.

"Summer's like the antidote to nervousness and anxiousness — except when it's not," he says, stopping us short. "Except when it's jam-packed."

Parenting, he says, has become "competitive sport." Summer, he argues, "is a time to demilitarize, to put down the parental arms race. It's one of the few times when we can give our children permission, a chance to rediscover the gift of boredom."

Excuse me, was that the B word, he dared to unfurl, as if a yo-yo whirled on a string?

"Boredom," he goes on without notice, "is merely the precursor to creativity."

Payne's prescription for summer — and the rest of the year — is this: One-third of a child's life should be busy; one-third, creative time; and one-third, downtime.

"When you give the gift of boredom, and a child comes back complaining, 'I'm bored,' simply respond, 'Oh, that's a pity.'

"My advice to the parents is to be more boring than the boredom, (and) flat-line the response. Within 15 minutes of boredom, they'll break out into something creative. If we can just bear with it, not leap (to the so-called rescue). With countless numbers of kids, the creativity they find goes on for hours, whereas the activity we find for them lasts maybe half an hour."

If you want to give your child an ideal summer, all you have to do is close your eyes and imagine it. "We all carry an imprint from our own long ago," says Payne.

He would hope that an ideal summer is one that gives a child these

essentials: self-constructed activities (a box or a blanket, and, poof, you've got the start of a fort or a clubhouse); alone time, the rare chance for a kid to be alone with his or her thoughts; dreamy time, a chance to stare at the clouds or out the window and dream; connection to nature, it needn't be fancy, a walk along a river bank, a corner under a backyard bush.

Make time for family stories.

Whip up co-created meals, when everyone gets in on the act, instead of the rush-to-the-table ones of the whole, long school year.

Begin a chapter book.

Cook outdoors.

Start a 2,000-piece jigsaw puzzle.

Build a makeshift shelter — and sleep in it.

Take a deep breath in, then let it out slowly. So flows the beauty of summer at its simplistic best.

Savor it.

Childhood only comes once. Give the children you love the treasure of taking it easy, the way summertime was meant to be.

Taking it down a notch

Kim John Payne, a school counselor for 18 years and a private family counselor-therapist for 15 years, is spearheading a global Simplicity Parenting campaign (simplicityparenting.com), one he calls "a campfire movement, it creates warmth village to village."

Not one to leave parents out on a limb, Payne scribbles this list of ideas on his bring-back-simple-summer pad:

It's a fact of life that kids these days go off to camp. So pay attention to the camp you choose. Look for a camp with strong connections to nature, and plenty of downtime. You might try a camp with a focus on a single activity, say, canoeing. And, says Payne, there's a whole movement toward "simple camp;" he suggests northwaters.com

("a really good example," he says). Waldorf schools (whywaldorffworks.org) run camps where Payne says the kids are likely to come home "soothed, not jazzed."

Rhythms and rituals are deeply important to young children, even in summer. Aim for family dinner. Relax the rhythms, but don't let them go, Payne advises. Carry on with stories at bedtime. And bath time at the end of a hot busy day. All help a child absorb what's happened that long summer day.

Kids need to decompress, says Payne. In the evenings, pull out the board games. Turn off the TV. Try for an unplugged summer. Or maybe just a week. (OK, so how about one screen-free weekend?)

— B.M.

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Summer Tent Making

GRS Parent Offering Yoga Classes!



Please join me for a Beginner/Intermediate Hatha Yoga experience!

Wednesdays from 7:00-8:15 PM, beginning July 28

Lengthen, tone, balance, align, and detoxify with yoga.

Learn to move with the breath and focus your concentration.

Inspire yourself with a healthy body and balanced mind.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Location: The Pilates Space

208 Slater St. (just East of Bank, above Suisha Gardens)

Cost: 6 week session \$84.75 ~ Drop in available upon request ~

Rolling enrollment in effect.

Info: lisa.hebert@gmail.com or 613-816-3872

***classes will continue through the fall/winter in 6 week sessions ***



Submissions to the Current

Please send your submissions for the August 15th issue of
the Current to Darla Barrows at:

greatrivercurrent@gmail.com