

CONNECTION

Sharing the day-to-day learning experience
at

Community Homes & Services
PO Box 744, Novato CA 94948
415-408-3604

www.communityhomesandservices.com

We Planted Candy Corn!

With Bruce, Cat, Hayley, Martha, Michelle, Nino, Zachary, Randall, Bruce, Judy, and Jennifer

Have you ever wondered where candy corn comes from? Well, this fall, it grows in our garden! When Bruce and Judy harvested the last of the towering sunflowers from the Life College garden, they thought the stalks were too interesting to compost, so they set them aside to dry and waited for an idea for how to use them to strike. They also saved the corn husks from the corn plants, which were too cool to toss.

Nino, Hayley and Michelle carved and painted giant 10" foam candy corns. Since the wind and/or critters took our stash of corn husks, we bought a big package of them at a local market. Assembly involved a little trial and error, including poking holes in the corn husks and weaving them onto the sunflower stalks, and staking the foam candy corn onto the tippy tops. Then the garden crew got to work planting candy corn!



How Does Our Garden Grow?

Candy corn has been around since the 1880's. It was originally called "Chicken Feed"--the packaging had a brightly colored rooster and the slogan said "Something Worth Crowing For". Before landing on the corn kernel shape, the creator of candy corn tried chestnuts, peapods, and turnip shapes. He used to feed trial batches to his chickens, who apparently loved the corn shaped the best! These days, candy corn is made with commercial machinery, but each piece used to be poured one color at a time, and formed by hand. Candy corn is one of the better-for-you Halloween candies--it's fat-free, and each piece is about 7 calories. More than 9 million pieces of candy corn are made every year.



October 30th is National Candy Corn Day. If you are a fan, and your candy corn sweet-tooth hasn't been totally satisfied after Halloween, good news--there are other holiday versions out there! Keep an eye out for red and pink Cupid Corn for Valentine's Day, pastel Bunny Corn for Easter, and red and green Reindeer Corn for Christmas. If you're feeling truly adventurous, try Tail Gate candy corn, with fruit punch, vanilla ice cream, hot dog, hamburger, and popcorn flavors, or Thanksgiving Dinner candy corn with green beans, roasted turkey, cranberry sauce, ginger glazed carrots, sweet potato pie, and stuffing flavors!



Here is a link to an interesting history of candy corn from Mental Floss: [How Candy Corn Became a Halloween Staple](#)



Halloween Word Scramble

Instructions: Unscramble the letters to find the Halloween words from the list below.



o o n m

— — — —

w l o

— — —

o o b

— — —

w t h i c

— — — — —

a b t

— — —

o m r b o

— — — — —

n c a d y

— — — — —

Word List

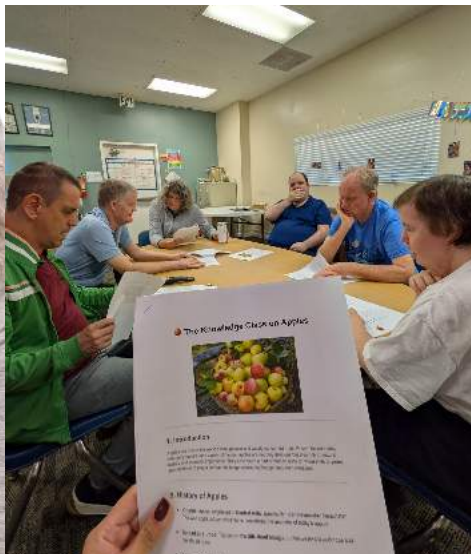
bat	moon
boo	owl
broom	witch
candy	



© www.BigActivities.com

National Apple Day Celebration – October 21

with Adara, Dave, Gina, Gregory, Ian, Mike, Peter, Jehann, and Rebecca



To kick things off, we held a Knowledge Class all about apples. We explored their history, fun facts, nutritional value, and we learned the names of different varieties—like Gala, Fuji, Granny Smith, and Honeycrisp. Did you know there are over 7,500 types of apples in the world? Or that apples are part of the rose family? Who knew?

Today, we turned our knowledge into something delicious—we baked a fresh apple pie together! The room smelled amazing, and everyone got involved, from peeling and slicing to mixing and decorating the crust.



Check out our pie!

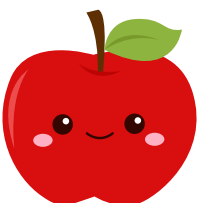


We Made Apple Pie!



Zoe and David were especially excited. They both bring apples in their lunches almost every day. When asked if apple is her favorite fruit, Zoe lit up and said, “Yes!” with a big smile. It was a fun, hands-on way to connect learning with everyday life—and celebrate a fruit that brings people together.

Happy National Apple Day! 🍏





KATIE CHURCH

CH&S STUDENT PPP

Katie is blessed with unforgettable charisma. Just to know her is to like her... She makes it easy. She has her mother's dazzling smile, and her own unique passion for life that never fails to shine through! Katie definitely brings out the best in others with her charm, kindhearted grace, and thoughtfulness. She is fun to be around and she makes everyone feel included.

Katie really takes funny to the next level. Just when you least suspect it, she will pop in with something hilarious that will have the whole room rolling. She promotes cheer wherever she goes... So watch out, everybody, it's contagious!

Intelligent and creative, Katie always brings a lot to the table. She can certainly be counted upon to put the perfect "Katie touch" on, well, anything she touches!

She is:

A !

Devoted to her friends

Silly and fun

Cool and classy

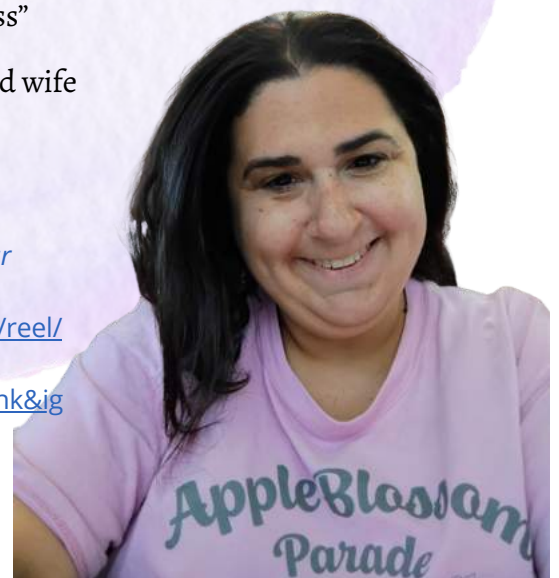
The "hostess with the mostess"

An amazing sister, daughter, and wife

#awesomesauce



Watch Katie's PPP video on our Instagram account
https://www.instagram.com/reel/DOHLL5TkgKu/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRIODBiNWFIZA==



Equine Therapy Volunteerism

with Donald, James, Pam, Patrick, and Tess.

We volunteer at Giant Steps Equine Therapy Center
<https://www.giantstepsriding.org>.

Giant Steps is a magical place in Petaluma where horses help people grow stronger, braver, and more confident. It's not just about riding—it's about connection, care, and courage. Some of our students volunteers there, and we have fun while helping out!

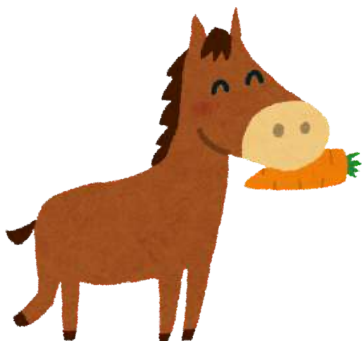
Here's what we do:

- Give the horses water
- Clean their brushes
- Scoop out stalls
- And now... we even take horses for walks!

One of our favorite moments? (Right) James walked a horse for the first time—on his birthday! 🎉 He faced his fear, totally rocked it, and had fun!



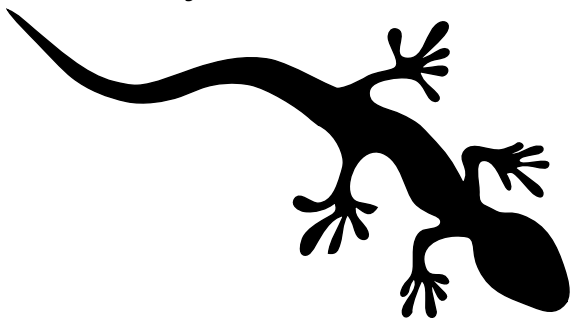
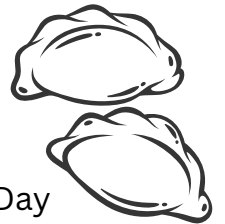
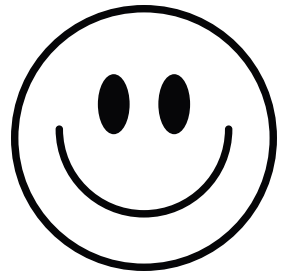
Every visit is a mix of fresh air, teamwork, and horsey pets. We're proud to be part of the Giant Steps family, one hoofprint at a time!



OCTOBER 2025 NATIONAL DAYS

**Breast Cancer Awareness Month, Raptor Month,
Positive Attitude Month**

- 10/1 - Pumpkin Spice Day, Fire Pup Day, Random Acts of Poetry Day
- 10/2 - Name Your Car Day
- 10/3 - World Smile Day, Techies Day
- 10/4 - Golf Lover's Day
- 10/5 - World Teachers' Day, Do Something Nice Day, Get Funky Day
- 10/6 - Noodle Day, Mad Hatter Day
- 10/7 - Pierogi Day, Hero Day
- 10/8 - Fruit at Work Day
- 10/9 - Moldy Cheese Day
- 10/10 - World Mental Health Day, Angelfood Cake Day
- 10/11 - Chess Day, I Love Yarn Day
- 10/12 - Farmer's Day, Gumbo Day
- 10/13 - Native American Day, Train Your Brain Day, Kick Butt Day
- 10/15 - Global Handwashing Day, I Love Lucy Day, Grouch Day, Fossil Day
- 10/16 - Global Cat Day, Sports Day, Dictionary Day
- 10/17 - Pasta Day
- 10/18 - International Leggings Day, No Beard Day
- 10/20 - Chicken and Waffles Day
- 10/21 - Back to the Future Day, Apple Day, Reptile Awareness Day
- 10/22 - INTNL. CAPS LOCK DAY, Nut Day
- 10/23 - Horror Movie Day
- 10/24 - Bologna Day
- 10/25 - Chucky, the Notorious Killer Doll Day
- 10/26 - Pumpkin Day, Mule Day
- 10/27 - Black Cat Day
- 10/28 - First Responders Day, Chocolate Day
- 10/29 - Oatmeal Day
- 10/31 - Halloween Day, Frankenstein Friday, Magic Day, Knock Knock Joke Day



Bowtie, Fusilli, and Spaghetti: What's the Difference?

October 17 is National Pasta Day! Here are some interesting pasta facts for you:

Pasta isn't just pasta. The shape changes everything—how it holds sauce, how it cooks, and how it feels to eat. Let's break down four popular types: bowtie, farfalle, fusilli, and spaghetti.



- **Farfalle vs. Bowtie:** They're the same pasta. Farfalle means butterflies in Italian, but English speakers often call them bowties. The pinched middle and ruffled edges make them great for thick, creamy sauces or pasta salads.
- **Fusilli:** This is the twisty one. Fusilli looks like a corkscrew or spiral. That shape helps trap bits of sauce, herbs, and cheese in every curve. It works well with chunky sauces, pesto, or baked pasta dishes.
- **Spaghetti:** Long, thin, and round—spaghetti is the classic pasta for red sauces like marinara and meat sauce. It twirls easily and cooks fast, making it a favorite for quick meals.

Fun Facts:

- Farfalle has been around since the 1500s.
- Fusilli was traditionally made by wrapping pasta around knitting needles.
- A single strand of spaghetti is called a *spaghetto*.
- Different shapes, different uses. Pick the right pasta, and your dish gets better! *Who knew?*

Happy October Birthday!

10/1 - Chas

10/18 - Joe

10/28 - Amy and Bert



NATIONAL TRAIN YOUR BRAIN DAY

It is estimated that the average brain thinks between 60,000 and 80,000 thoughts every day. An adult human brain weighs only about 3 pounds. National Train Your Brain Day – a fun day to get smarter!

Every year on October 13, people celebrate National Train Your Brain Day. It's a day to give your brain a workout — just like you exercise your body! Your brain is a powerful muscle, and the more you use it, the stronger it gets.

Why Train Your Brain?

Your brain helps you think, remember, solve problems, and make decisions. When you train it, you:

- Stay sharp
- Improve your memory
- Think faster
- Focus better



Just like playing sports training or exercise keeps your body fit, brain games keep your brain healthy.

Fun Brain Exercises You Can Try Today

You don't need anything fancy. Just a few minutes and some curiosity:

Word Maker

Take a word like "elephant" and try to make as many smaller words as you can from it. Example: "hat," "pen," "help"

How many words can you make out of the word

HALLOWEEN ?

(Allegedly there are 128 words you can make from "whale" to "eel." Yes, some of the 128 words are quite obscure.) What words can you make?

Write your words here:

MORE FUN BRAIN EXERCISES

Number Challenge

Pick a number like **50**. Now try to come up with 4 different ways to make 50 using addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division.

Example:

$$25 + 25 = 50$$

$$100 \div 2 = 50$$

$$25 \times 2 = 50$$

$$51 - 1 = 50$$

Now come up with different ways to use math to make the number

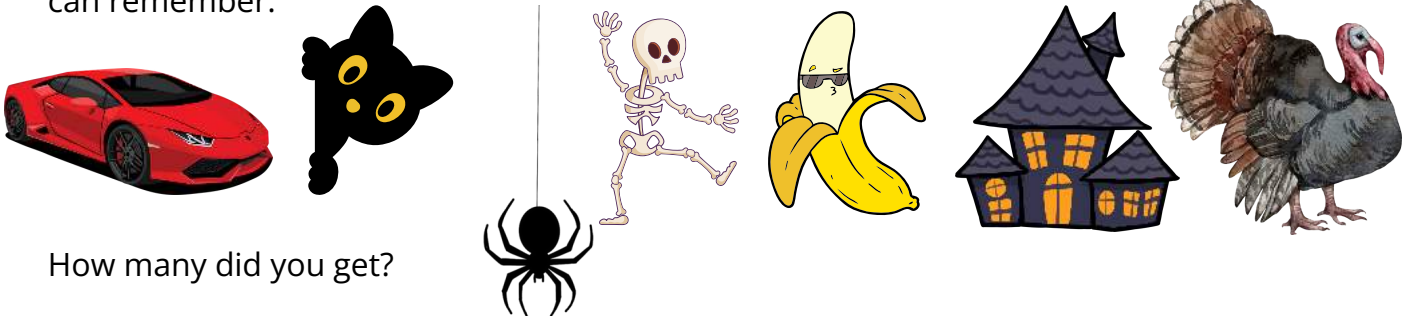
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Write your answers here:

Memory Test

Put 7 random objects on a table. Look at them for 15 seconds. Then cover them up and write down as many as you can remember.

Or look at these objects for 15 seconds then turn this sheet over and see how many you can remember:



How many did you get?

Make It a Habit

Training your brain doesn't have to be hard. Just spend 10–15 minutes a day doing a puzzle, reading, or trying something new. Over time, you may notice that your thinking gets quicker or clearer. So this October 13, celebrate National Train Your Brain Day. Your brain will thank you!

Happy Birthday Chas!



October 1 marks the birthday of our founder and co-executive director, Chas Abate—the man who started it all over 25 years ago.

Where would we be without him? Honestly, we don't want to imagine it. Chas built this organization from the ground up, powered by equal parts vision, persistence, and a level of



commitment that borders on superhuman. He's the hardest-working man we know — not just at work, but at home, too — and somehow he keeps showing up with the same energy, drive, and heart he had on day one.

We're grateful for Chas' leadership, and today we're also grateful for cake. Happy birthday, Chas!



Let's train our brains by finding different words we can make out of the letters in his name:

Chas Abate

We will help you get started, we found "ate" and "chase." Can you think of any other words using the letters in Chas Abate? Write your answers here:

What's Happening at the Project Center?

Daniel has been working on a special knowledge class that's all about his favorite television shows from the 90s. We decided to do a class on this subject because these shows are not necessarily widely known. Daniel has an interesting point of view, as well as an encyclopedic knowledge of the programs featured in the class. So let's learn about some of Daniel's favorite shows, *in his own words*...

Mighty Morphin' Power Rangers 3 Seasons (1993 -1996)



The Mighty Morphin' Power Rangers is about a cosmic being named Zordon (an interdimensional being caught in a time warp), who recruits five teenagers with attitude from Angel Grove, California to become super heroes. Zordon assembles this team because his old foe Rita Repulsa has escaped from the space dumpster where she and her followers had been imprisoned. Jason, the red ranger, is bold and powerful. He commands the tyrannosaurus Zord. Zachary, the black ranger, is clever and brave. He commands the mastodon. Kimberly, the pink ranger, is graceful and smart. She commands the pterodactyl Zord. Billy, the blue ranger, is patient and wise. He commands the triceratops. Trini, the yellow ranger, is fearless and agile. She commands the sabertooth tiger Zord. When the Zords are combined they form the mighty Megazord, which they use for kaiju battles. My sister introduced me to the show when she was 12 and I was 4. I like the martial arts and the Megazord kaiju battles. To me, the show is really about four things: action, comedy, martial arts philosophy, and heart. The show teaches good life lessons, and that's why I like it so much. My favorite episode is **High Five**, in which Trini learns how to face her fear of heights. I'd rate this show **9.7/10**.

Daniel's Favorite TV Shows

Buffy the Vampire Slayer

7 seasons (1997 - 2002)



Buffy the Vampire Slayer takes place after the events of the 1992 film of the same name. In every generation there is a “chosen one”, who stands up to the forces of darkness (see: vampires) in the world. In the show, Buffy has just transferred from Hemery High School (the location in which the events in the movie took place) to Sunnydale High School. Throughout the show, Buffy and her friends must defeat various supernatural threats while also attending school and navigating its social landscape. My favorite episode is **Angel**, in which Buffy discovers that Angel, her love interest in the beginning of the show, is a vampire. This was a big deal for Buffy and the show's viewers. I would rate this show a **9.2/10**.

Daniel Reviews 6 Seasons of Xena

Xena Warrior Princess 6 Seasons (1995 - 2000)



The first time I saw Xena Warrior Princess I was about 12 or 13. I liked the action sequences and the stunt choreography (even though the special effects were third rate and cheesy). The show is about Xena's redemption; from ruthless warlord to hero. Xena is my favorite character because of her fight against evil - whether it be man or gods. I also like the character Gabrielle, who is a warrior in training, and Xena's sidekick. My favorite episode is **Dream Worker**, in which Xena must save her sidekick and friend Gabrielle from the mystic cult of Morpheus. In the episode Xena takes part in a ceremony in which she enters a dreamscape to confront her demons. While in the dreamscape she tells Morpheus that she'd left all her past demons behind her. I'd rate this show **9/10**.

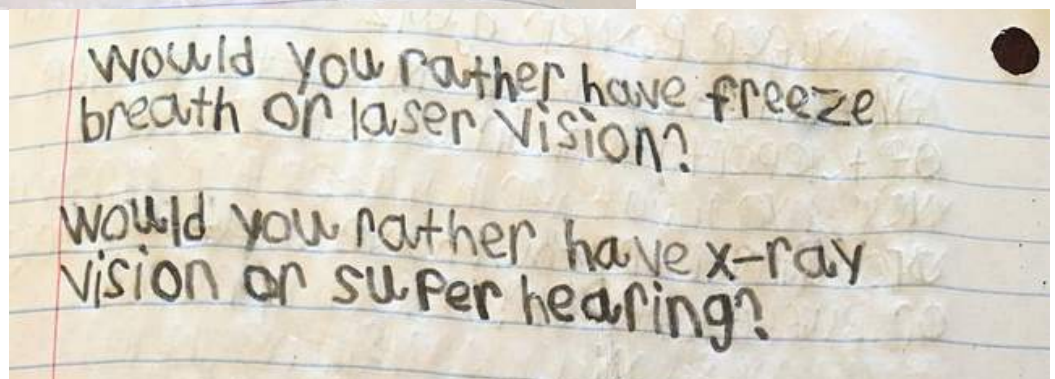
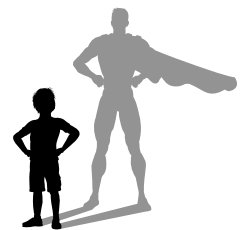
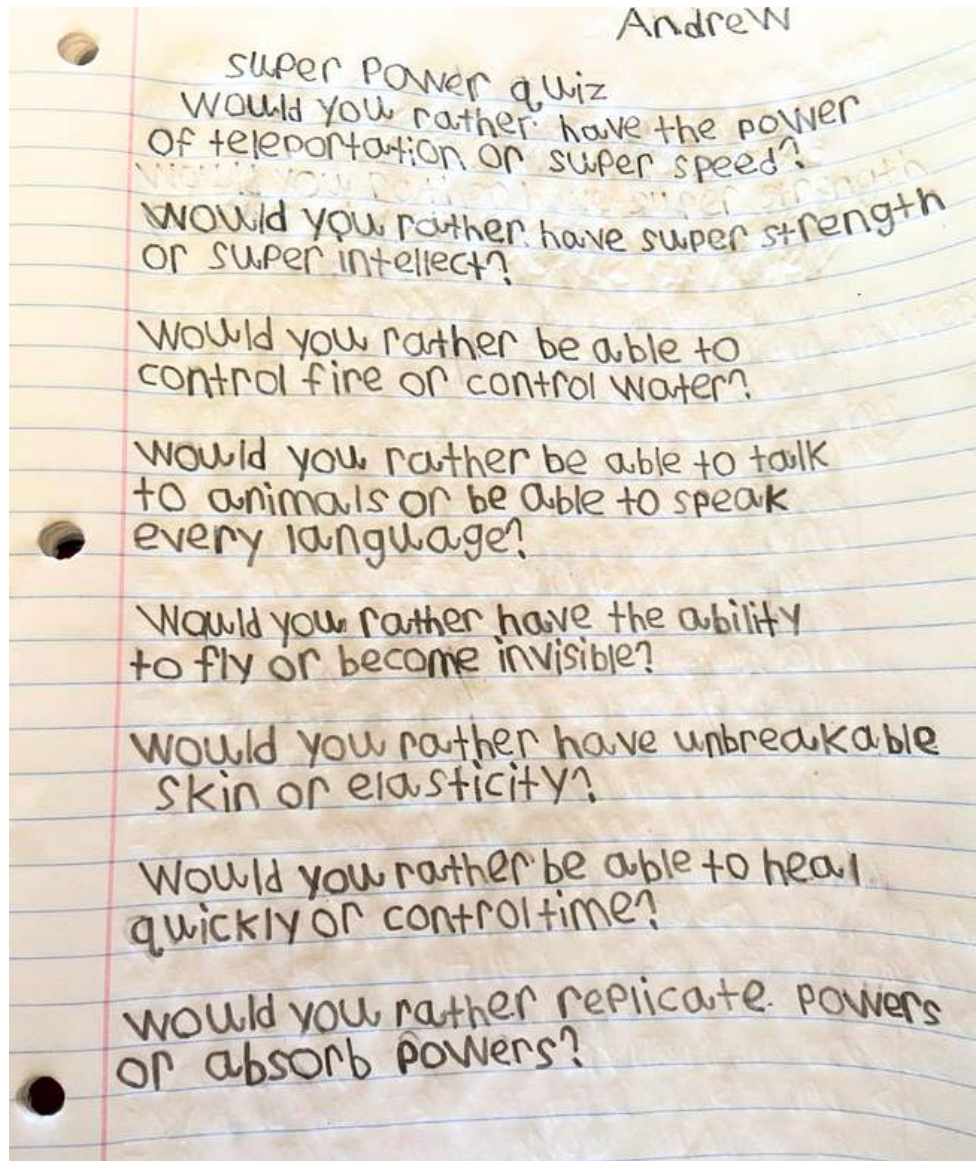
Andrew's Corner

A Superhero Quiz

This month is a special superhero-themed Would You Rather?



Bio: Andrew Newson is a student at Life College and is 25 years old. He likes comic books, video games, hiking, exploring new places with his mom.... and babies. He is an authority in all things Star Wars, Star Trek and great places to go in the Bay Area. He is currently learning Mandarin and loves to research and learn new things.



WHY BREAST CANCER AWARENESS HITS HOME FOR KATIE

For Katie, breast cancer awareness <https://www.nationalbreastcancer.org/breast-cancer-awareness-month/> isn't just a cause—it's personal.

Her mom, Trish, was first diagnosed in 2011. After a grueling year of treatment, she went into remission. From 2012 to 2014, things felt hopeful.

Then the symptoms came back.

Trish's belly started to swell. She grew more uncomfortable. At her niece's engagement party—the last family event she ever attended—she wore a poncho to cover the changes in her body. Still, she smiled. She showed up. She stayed strong. Trish had already beaten cancer once. She'd lost her hair, endured the worst, and promised she'd beat it again. She fought like hell the second time too. She truly believed she'd make it.

But not every fight ends in victory.

A few years after losing her mom, Katie turned 30. Instead of gifts, she asked friends and family to donate to breast cancer awareness in Trish's name.

That's who Katie is—someone who turns grief into purpose.

Katie's message for October (Breast Cancer Awareness Month):



Get Checked. Don't Wait.

Katie now speaks out regularly, urging women to do self-exams, schedule regular checkups, and visit their OB/GYNs. Because early detection saves lives.

What Everyone Should Know About Breast Cancer

- It's not just a women's disease. About 1 in 833 men will get breast cancer in their lifetime. It's rare—but real.
- Left breast = slightly higher risk. For reasons still unknown, breast cancer is a bit more common in the left breast than the right.
- Most lumps aren't cancer. Around 80% of breast lumps are benign—but don't ignore them. Get checked.



BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

- **Survival rates are up.** Thanks to better screening and treatment, the 5-year survival rate for localized breast cancer is now around 99%.
- **Dense breasts = higher risk.** Women with dense breast tissue may need more than a standard mammogram.
- **Lifestyle plays a role.** Staying active, maintaining a healthy weight, and limiting alcohol all lower your risk.
- **Breastfeeding can help.** Breastfeeding—even for a short time—may slightly reduce the risk of breast cancer.
- **No family history? Still at risk.** Most people diagnosed with breast cancer don't have a family history. Only 5–10% of cases are genetic.
- **You may be eligible for free screenings.** Many organizations offer free or low-cost mammograms, especially in October. Don't skip yours.

Katie's story is about more than remembrance—it's about action. *Educate. Support. Show up.* Because someone's life might depend on it. And this—this is the last photo Katie took with her mom. It means everything. A moment frozen in time, and a reason to keep fighting.



Dear Mom,
Thank you for raising me and
giving me love and compassion.
Thank you for life.
Right now, my life is hard and
challenging, but good. I am finally
maturing and I've gotten more
independent. I just want you to
know that I miss you and I love you,
Katie.



It's the Most Pumpkin Spice Time of the Year



With Colliene, Nino, Devlin, and Aidan

Welcome to pumpkin spice flavored EVERYTHING season! Love it or hate it, pumpkin spice season seems to be here to stay. While October 1st is officially National Pumpkin Spice Day, things have been popping up on shelves since early September.

Here are some notable finds for this year:

The usual pumpkin spice suspects are all available, such as coffee and whipped cream, cereal, syrup, and baked goods like bagels, and muffins. You can find pumpkin pie Pop-Tarts and Oreos, Pumpkin Spice Pringles, and Pumpkin Spice M&M's.

Laughing Cow has Pumpkin Spice Cheese Wedges, which would go well with Trader Joe's Pumpkin and Cranberry Crackers.

If ingesting pumpkin spice isn't enough, you can do your dishes in Pumpkin Spice Dawn Powerwash Spray, wash your clothes in Grove & Co. White Pumpkin and Ginger Laundry Detergent Sheets, and coat your armpits in Native Pumpkin Spice Deodorant. And if your bathroom experience is missing that certain pumpkin-scented wow-factor, there is pumpkin spice Poo-Pourri Toilet Spray!

Why should your pet miss out on the trend? They won't—there are pumpkin spiced flavored cat and dog treats galore! But, wait there's more—you can buy pumpkin spice-scented cat litter, bag it up in pumpkin spice Hefty trash bags, and hose the whole house down in Pumpkin Spice Things Up Glade Air Freshener, and/or Pumpkin Roll Febreze.

What a pumpkin spicy time to be alive!



Reading Comprehension Worksheet

Name: _____ Date: _____

Star-nosed Mole

Ready to Read READING COMPREHENSION



The star-nosed mole is a small animal that lives in wet areas of North America. It has a strange nose with 22 tiny, pink tentacles that look like a star. This nose helps the mole feel and find food in the dark. Star-nosed moles are the fastest eaters in the world, finding and eating food in less than a second. They mostly eat worms, insects, and small fish. These moles are great swimmers and dig tunnels underground. Even though they cannot see well, their special nose helps them survive. The star-nosed mole is one of the most unusual animals on Earth.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Star-nosed mole questions:

1. Where do star-nosed moles live?
 - a) Deserts
 - b) Wet areas in North America
 - c) Mountains
 - d) Jungles
2. True or False: The star-nosed mole has 22 tiny tentacles on its nose.
3. What else is special about the mole's nose?
4. What do star-nosed moles eat?
 - a) Leaves and grass
 - b) Worms, insects, and small fish
 - c) Berries and nuts
 - d) Snakes and lizards
5. How fast can a star-nosed mole find and eat food?
6. True or False: Star-nosed moles have very good eyesight.
7. How do star-nosed moles move underground?
8. Why is the star-nosed mole special?

JUMPING ON THE BANNED WAGON!

with Katie, Colliene, Aidan, Cat, Martha, Randall, Nino, and Jennifer

You're invited to check out our Little Free Library October 5th through 11th for an enormous selection of banned and challenged books! We rolled out the Banned Wagon! First, Nino helped open the secret vault of banned books that we keep stashed behind a bookcase in our unused fireplace. Next, Randall hauled them all out. Then we dove into research on the reason each book has been challenged or banned, so we could include them on handmade bookmarks.



Jump on the Banned Wagon! We especially love the flame bookmarks Bruce drew.



Nino opens the hidden banned book vault. Very Scooby Doo, no?



Nino and Michelle shred a printed copy of a banned book.



BANNED BOOK WEEK



Go on a blind date with a banned book—each includes bookish treats, like stickers, tea, and bookmarks!



Hayley holds up a finished Blind Date with a Banned Book.



Aidan, Nino, Martha and Cat with some more Banned Book Blind Dates!

We accept and appreciate donations
of any size or kind.

All donations to CH&S are
tax-deductible.

CH&S is a 501(c)(3) non-profit
organization.



[@Communityhomesandservices](https://www.instagram.com/Communityhomesandservices)

FOREST CHESS WITH BRUCE

with Bruce, Devlin, Jennifer, and Zachary

We found Bruce a forest chess set! The handmade game has a roll-up log chess board with magnetic green and cream mushroom shaped playing pieces, and included bonus tan and brown acorn cap checkers, too!

Bruce usually plays chess on the computer, (against the computer, which may or may not cheat) but we pictured a shady day playing at the park.

While this particular day was entirely too hot to take the game outside, Devlin and Zachary unrolled the chess log in the cool comfort of the library a/c.

Here's an Etsy link to the same set:
[Forest Chess Set](#)

National Chess Day is celebrated Oct. 11th.



Halloween Matching

Draw a line from the word to the matching picture



Vampire

Skeleton

Ghost

Werewolf

Zombie

Haunted house



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