



# Newsletter~April 2011

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## Upcoming Events

- ◆ **April 18-22:** Spring break, no school
- ◆ **May 7:** Kid Gear Swap, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.
- ◆ **May 14:** Spring picnic, at Sugar House Park's Hidden Grove, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
- ◆ **May 17:** 2s' Last day of school, 4B graduation
- ◆ **May 18:** 3s' last day of school, 4A graduation

## Message from the President

I have a love/hate relationship with our Friendship Manor parking passes. As many of you have experienced firsthand, the parking "authority" prowls our little section of the parking lot *conveniently* at drop off/pick up times, putting a boot on any car that doesn't have a yellow tag displayed. For more than a year, we have been trying to deal with the enforcers of the boots (and their high price ticket for removal) to work out a solution to the parking issues. As of yet, we haven't found an answer that is perfect for our CCNS community. (Trust me, we are just as frustrated as you!)

So how can it be possible that I have a love/hate relationship with the parking passes? The dislike is obvious but what about the love? What I love is seeing the bright yellow tags hanging from rearview mirrors as I am out and about driving around Salt Lake. As soon as I see the tag, I know that I am passing a car with a family that attends our great school. I see a silver Passat wagon almost daily when I am on my way to the elementary school. There is a black Suburban that must live close to me because I see it quite often when I am running a quick errand.

While grocery shopping at Dan's on Foothill, I have seen a gold, a white and a blue minivan. I have even noticed the tags while out in the Fort Union area in a Subaru wagon and an Explorer. There is a red BMW wagon that I see all the time - so often that I wonder if I am stalking her (or she is stalking me!).

I truly do love seeing you, your cars and the Friendship Manor parking passes outside of the regular school setting. It makes me feel that I am among friends wherever I go! Maybe you too have noticed the yellow tags and feel the same as I. If you haven't, perhaps you'll start seeing them out on the roads of our city. When you do, you'll know the other car chooses to send their child to the best preschool ever!!

**Andrea Frampton**  
CCNS president



## When a Child in Your Class Seems Different...

By Tracy Golden, M.Ed., MSW

*Part III in a three-part series on autism*

It is often the case that children with autism are included in typical school settings, rather than being isolated in special education programs and resource rooms. This means that a child with autism might be in your child's preschool class, kindergarten, or any other grade in school. It can be difficult for children to understand why one of their classmates is acting differently than they are. If a child has a physical disability, it is visible and concrete. For example, if a child is in a wheelchair, it is fairly straightforward to explain to your child that the other child has a medical problem and cannot walk. On the other hand, with autism, there is generally no telltale physical sign that indicates that the child is "different." Instead, the child might have behavioral problems, struggle with impulsivity, appear aloof and disinterested in classmates, and say inappropriate things out loud in class.

As parents, we want to help our typically developing children have understanding and empathy for children with special needs. There are a number of ways of approaching this with your child. If your child comes home from school and says, "Why is Johnny so different?" and you know that Johnny has an autism diagnosis, one way of explaining this to your child is to tell him or her that children have different ways of learning and thinking, and that this is the case with Johnny. You might say that Johnny is working on certain behaviors and trying to learn how to do the best he can in his classroom. You can also encourage your child to include Johnny in their playtime and not to participate in making fun of him or teasing him.

Other ways to help your children become more comfortable with autism would be to invite the child with autism to your children's birthday party, have him or her over for playdates, and to include him or her in any other activities that typically developing children participate in.

The following reference is a short book, written by a sibling of a boy who has autism, to help kids understand autism and how it can make kids act:

**Sometimes My Brother: Helping Kids Understand Autism Through a Sibling's Eyes**  
[Paperback]

[Angie Healy](#) (Author)

This might be a good resource to have in your home or to suggest be kept in the child's classroom so many kids have exposure to it.

## Utah Educational Savings Plans

By Wendy Wilde

Utah has one of the best Educational Savings Plan in the country, and it is super easy, too. The following information comes from the plan's website:

[www.uesp.org](http://www.uesp.org).

Educational Savings Plans (a.k.a. 529 Savings Plans) are made up of mutual funds that grow tax free and can be used for any qualified higher education expenses, such as tuition, room and board, and miscellaneous college expenses.

You do not need a financial adviser or broker to set it up for you. You can open and maintain it all online. You can set up a payment schedule that suits your lifestyle, once a month, once a year, et cetera. There are no enrollment fees, no withdrawal fees, no minimum investment to open or maintain, and no ongoing deposit requirements.

Earnings on your account are exempt from federal income taxes as long as the money is used for qualified higher education expenses. Utah taxpayer/resident earnings on your account are also exempt from Utah state income taxes if used for qualified higher education expenses.

Parents, grandparents, relatives can all open and/or contribute to a 529 plan, even if they don't live in state. You can change the beneficiary at anytime to another member of the beneficiary's family, including parents. There are gift and estate-planning options. You can withdraw the funds at anytime and for any reason.

The 529 is a turnkey solution to investing for college. There are few reasons to not take advantage of such a good program, especially if you have no other college investments set up for your child.

## CCNS Gear Swap



Please help our school by taking part in our Gear Swap! Out with the old, in with the new! With a \$5 suggested donation (note, if you can't afford it, you don't have to pay), come and trade in your old stuff that doesn't fit your child or your child's desires any longer for something that does. The Gear Swap will be held Saturday, May 7th, from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Gear can include clothes (sized 0-7years), toys, sports stuff, books, et cetera (sorry, we cannot accommodate furniture or other large items). Invite your friends and family – everyone benefits!



## Rats!

By Deanna Simonis

When my son mentioned to his kindergarten teacher that he had gotten two pet rats for his birthday, his teacher looked up at me in surprise and said, “Wow, you’re a really nice mother!”. What she didn’t realize was that the rats had been my idea. Having had them as a child, I knew them to be intelligent, funny, entertaining and relatively easy to care for. Far more charming than our guinea pig, and certainly easier than the dogs, our rats are surprisingly personable and interactive for such small animals.

Today’s pet rats are descendants of the ubiquitous Norway Rat – the very animal you see scurrying along the streets downtown and in cities around the world—and are thought to have been domesticated first in England in the 1800s. It wasn’t until relatively recently, the 1970s and later, that the popularity of pet rats increased. Today there are a number of varieties of rats differentiated by coat type, color and body form, but true breeds have not yet had time to develop.



One of the newer varieties of rats is the Manx, or tailless, rat. Considering the number of people who have mentioned to me their dislike of the long, snake-like tail of the typical rat, this would seem a positive development. However, Manx rats can have health problems associated with their rather unnatural condition.

Rats are very social animals and enjoy the company of both humans and other rats. Most guides strongly suggest that rats be bought in pairs, and one source insisted that anyone choosing to purchase just one should plan to spend several hours a day interacting with their pet. The latter advice seems extreme, but our rats do show a great deal of affection for each other, cuddling, sleeping and playing together constantly. Anyone thinking about becoming a rat owner should prepare to be owner to at least two.

Although it’s generally preferable to purchase rats from hobby breeders rather than pet stores, finding a private breeder in Utah has been difficult for me. Petsmart conveniently segregates their stores by sex; for example, the 3300 South store (near REI) sells only male rats (and guinea pigs), and the Redwood Road location sells only females, reducing the chance that you will purchase a pregnant or incorrectly sexed animal.

So far, our rats have been relatively low-impact, inexpensive pets. We purchased a large cage from the pet store, use newspaper and hay as bedding, and feed a mix of fresh food and rat chow. Rats are omnivores, and as anyone who has had a problem with wild rats knows, they eat pretty much anything we eat. The kids love giving our rats “treats” such as slices of apples, baby carrots, or a crust of bread. The rats love it, too, and have grown quite fat over the past several months.

Although rats have a relatively short life span, generally just 2-3 years, we’ll enjoy our brief time with these amusing little guys and be happy for the enjoyment they brought to our lives.





2A  
Enjoying a Snowy Day  
Photos by Sage Sitton





Hey Parents! We would love to include the great photos you take on field trips and when co-oping in the classroom. Email them to Joe Gillespie at [loriandjoegillespie@hotmail.com](mailto:loriandjoegillespie@hotmail.com) or Sarah Workman at [sarah.white@comcast.net](mailto:sarah.white@comcast.net)



2B  
Field Trip to the Utah  
Museum of Fine Arts  
Photos by Sarah Workman

