



August News

Welcome to August and the last few weeks of those “lazy hazy crazy days of summer” – not so lazy and hazy at Acorn but possibly a little crazy as we look to finish up our outdoor projects and the teachers come back to plan and prep for the reopening of Acorn. I am truly thankful for all the encouraging words, the sweat labor both inside and out, the terrific map that Sarah Koff created of our outdoor space and some additional financial donations that Acorn has received this summer. With reduced class sizes, additional teaching staff, improved outdoor classroom spaces, new flooring and additional cleaning and PPE supplies meeting our budget will be a financial challenge this year. A challenge I am willing to take on but what I am so ready for is to have children back to Acorn – Acorn needs to be filled with children laughing, running, swinging, rolling, digging, discovering and playing.

SO - Welcome to the 2020-2021 School Year! This year we will be having a modified version of our traditional Open Houses. We will be hosting one (1) hour Open House for each class starting Wednesday, September 2nd and finishing them on Thursday, September 3rd. We are inviting the Acorn student and one caregiver, who must be masked, to their scheduled Open House time. We will have each family go through carpool so you will have an opportunity to see how it will go when we officially start school the following week. I will send out specific times for each Open House at the beginning of next week as I hope by then that class lists will be finalized.

“A hundred years from now it will not matter what my bank account was, the sort of house I lived in, or the kind of car I drove...but the world may be different because I was important in the life of a child.” (Forest E. Witcraft). It is not so much that I will be recognized as being important but that the Acorn Community will be credited in making a difference for your child(ren) in this time of uncertainty. For me, over the past few months, I have learned to be a little kinder, gentler, patient and understanding and I wish to extend my greatest appreciation and gratitude to all of you – the Board, the Staff and the Acorn Families. This fall will mark the start of my 33rd school year at Acorn – I hope to make it a safe, healthy and happy one.

Sue Bendroth, Director

School Updates

Acorn School is excited to welcome back our students! We recently updated our interior to include beautiful, easy to sanitize flooring! Our classes will be conducted primarily in our newly revamped and sheltered outdoor spaces, but our easy-to-clean indoor spaces are here for severe weather conditions.

Highlights of Acorn School's interior space upgrades, following the guidelines of the CDC and The NH Department of Health and Human Services:



- We have reduced our already small class sizes to maintain an exceptional teacher/student ratio: 1 teacher to every 4-5 students. There are two teachers assigned to each class.
- We have established four separate indoor classroom spaces which allow each class to remain a separate cohort. The classes will not interact with each other.
- Each indoor classroom will have its own air purifier (thank you to **So-Clean** for your very generous donation) and plentiful windows for fresh air circulation.
- We have ensured there is enough physical space for every child and adult in each classroom, following the CDC and NH Department of Health and Human Services guidelines for social distancing.
- We have removed all porous classroom materials and surfaces.
- We have replaced our circle time carpet squares with easy-to-clean individual non-porous cushions.
- We have stocked PPE for staff, as well as non-toxic and effective cleaning supplies.



Community Spotlight

Bryce Sturtevant is a rising senior at Exeter High School and a Life Scout in Troop 185 in Stratham. To earn his Eagle Scout ranking, which 4% of Scouts achieve, Bryce has been searching for a local school in need of a project. He is very interested in educating children and ensuring our community schools have the support they need to be great.

This was proving to be a difficult task due to COVID19 related school closures. This summer, beloved Acorn

teacher Ms. Shelly reached out to Troop 185 inquiring about upgrading our TimberNook "100 Acorn Woods" outdoor classroom, and he enthusiastically jumped right in. Bryce is now responsible for planning, designing, fundraising, supervising, and implementing the building of Acorn's "100 Acorn Woods" bog boardwalk and imagination platform.

On August 1st, Bryce organized and ran an amazingly successful fundraising car wash, where all proceeds will go directly towards his Eagle Scout project at Acorn School. Thanks to Bryce's community service and leadership, Acorn students and teachers will be able to enjoy this enriching outdoor classroom space when they return to school this September, and for years to come. Bryce is setting a wonderful example of what a difference young people can make in our community. Construction will take place this month, so stay tuned for pictures of the completed project!



Special thanks to local woodworker, Jenna Aube (a former Acorn student many many years ago!) who made these beautiful, handmade child-sized picnic tables. These tables help transform the magical Garden classroom space into a functional teaching and learning environment. There will be additional seating opportunities in this space, that all encourage and facilitate natural social distancing...more details coming soon! For local woodworking needs contact Jenna Aube at jennifersweet@gmail.com/ 603-944-3424.



Back To School Checklist

To ensure we maintain proper health standards, this year we will not be having a community snack basket. Rather, we are asking caregivers to pack their individual child a (peanut/tree nut free) snack that they're able to open independently. The Mighty Oaks will continue to bring a peanut/tree nut-free lunch all days except Thursday.

****Friendly Reminder to LABEL EVERYTHING! When in Doubt, LABEL!****

- Backpack
- Snack/lunch box (*stay tuned for more snack/lunch information*)
- Full change of clothes stored in a labeled ziplock (*to be kept in the child's backpack*)
- In an effort to reduce waste, we encourage families to send their child's snack/ (snack and lunch for Mighty Oaks) in reusable containers and napkins, like **this**.
- Water bottle
- Rain pants, jacket, and boots
- Warm layers for cooler weather
- Labeled slippers (*to be kept in child's backpack*)
- Sunscreen and bug spray applied prior to coming to school (Acorn School is treated for ticks through **Bio Spray**, but it's always a good idea to do regular tick/bug checks).

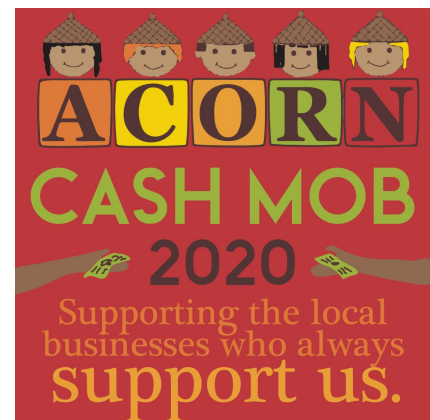
Looking for Social Distance Activities...

Check Out Acorn's Cash Mob!

Blueberry Bay Farm (Stratham): Come pick fresh blueberries, flowers, and other fresh fruits and vegetables! All produce is organic, NO chemicals or pesticides. [Click here](#) for more information.

Junior Gym (North Hampton): Come jump and play at Junior Gym. Reservations required. [Click here](#) for more information.

Sagamore-Hampton Golf Club (North Hampton): Pick up a round of golf and enjoy



the beautiful New England weather. [Click here](#) for more information.

Vernon Family Farm (Newfields): Check out there outdoor events. Variety of outdoor options such as patio picnics, patio fireplace or field picnic table. [Click here](#) for more information.

Yogasmith: Calm, strength and stretch-Check out their virtual yoga classes (and have the kids try it too!) [Click here](#) for more information.

Acorn Book Club x Water Street Bookstore

Water Street Bookstore (Exeter) is a part of Acorn's Monthly Book Club! This month our featured book is *Backyard Adventures: Get Messy, Get Wet, Build Cool Things, and Have Tons of Wild Fun!* By: Amanda Thomsen.

"Thomsen encourages kids to create kingdoms of their own making, right in their own backyards. With whimsical projects for every season and any setting, from forest to pavement, fun-seeking kids and their families will rediscover the yard as a place for inspired play, using repurposed materials and existing features of outdoor spaces. Whether they're creating tiny gardens inhabited by action figures, weaving a secret hideaway out of a loom of twine and twigs, or setting sidewalk cracks on fire with Coffeemate, Backyard Adventure lets kids of all ages turn their yards into a place they can call their own."

[Click here](#) to read more about this months book. Call Water Street Bookstore at (603) 778-9731 to order your book. Tell them you are a part of the Acorn Book Club and you will receive 20% our featured book when purchased during the month of August!

(Acorn Book Club will not meet to discuss recommended books, however if families want to connect to discuss on their own that is strongly supported!)



**Upcoming Events:
Work and Play**



**Can't Donate Time but
Would Love to Help in**

One of Acorn School's traditions is our annual "Work and Play" event. This is when parents, teachers, and children all come at the same time to help prepare the outside grounds for the opening of school. It's a wonderful community building event when families first meet, or reunite after summer break!

This summer we have been trying to think of a way to continue hosting this event in a COVID-safe way. So here it is....this year we are making this a social distance grown-up only event! Connect with us and help prepare our school grounds.

Grab your personal gardening tools (wheelbarrow if you have one, shovel, rake...), come out and meet other current and alumni parents, and help Acorn School get ready for our students and teachers! We could really use your help, and it's a great opportunity to connect with the school and community!

We've initiated a "Mom's Night" and "Dad's Night" just for fun - but please feel free to come whichever night works best for you.

Please plan to wear a mask, social distance, bring your own water/food/hand sanitizer, and enjoy a night out kid free!

[Sign Up For Adult Work and Play](#)

Another Way...

As a 501-c non-profit school, our school depends on community donations for daily operational costs. Please consider adding Acorn School to your non-profit donation portfolio. By choosing the "General Fund" option below, 100% of your personal and/or business donations will go directly to fund our daily operational costs for the 2020-2021 school year.

[Donate Here](#)

Acorn Apparel is Now Available!

Let's get in the Acorn Spirit! Currently offering t-shirts, sweatshirts and accessories. Adult and child sizes are available along with a variety of sizes and colors. These make great gifts and are super comfortable! See link below for more information.

Learn
More



Parents of Acorn

Are you looking for a way to get involved with Acorn School in various ways? Join the “Parents of Acorn!” It’s a great way to meet more families and support Acorn School. If interested in joining send an email to parentsofacorn@gmail.com

Acorn Board

Would you like to help run the school you love so much? Learn how a nonprofit preschool is run and help make positive change lasting for years to come! Apply to join the Acorn board. We are a group of Acorn (past and present) parents who come together monthly to support the school using skills we’re each passionate about (marketing, finance, fundraising, grounds, etc). We’re looking for a new member to join and hope you’ll consider it! If interested in learning more about the Acorn board or to apply, send an email to Sarah Koff at sarahwkoff@gmail.com

Important Dates:

August 11 & 12th

Adult Work and Play

August 18th & 19th

Adult Work and Play

August 31st

Last Day to Purchase Acorn
Recommended Book at
Water Street Bookstore
(20% off!)

September 2nd

Open House:

8:30 - 9:30 Mighty Oaks (Chris)

10:00 – 11:00 AM Woolly Bears

11:30 - 12:30 PM Woolly Bears

1:00 – 2:00 Chickadees

2:30 - 3:30 Tadpoles

Stay tuned for more information

September 3rd

Open House:

8:30 - 9:30 Mighty Oaks (Maggie)

10:00 - 11:00 AM Chipmunks (Shelly)

11:30 – 12:30 AM Chipmunks (Kim S. and Leigh)

1:00 – 2:00 PM Chipmunks

Stay tuned for more information

September 8th

First Day of School (Mighty Oaks/Chipmunks)

September 9th

First Day of School (Woolly Bears/Chickadees/Tadpoles)

In Case You Missed It.... Acorn 2020 Outdoor Space

Revamped Outdoor Spaces

We have been spending the last few months planning how have a healthy, fun school-year outdoors by establishing four outdoor (sheltered)-classroom sites. Welcome to Acorn 2020!

1) The Garden

A covered garden space in the field, with a new play area and its own "field potty" for quick bathroom trips.

2) Woodland Theater

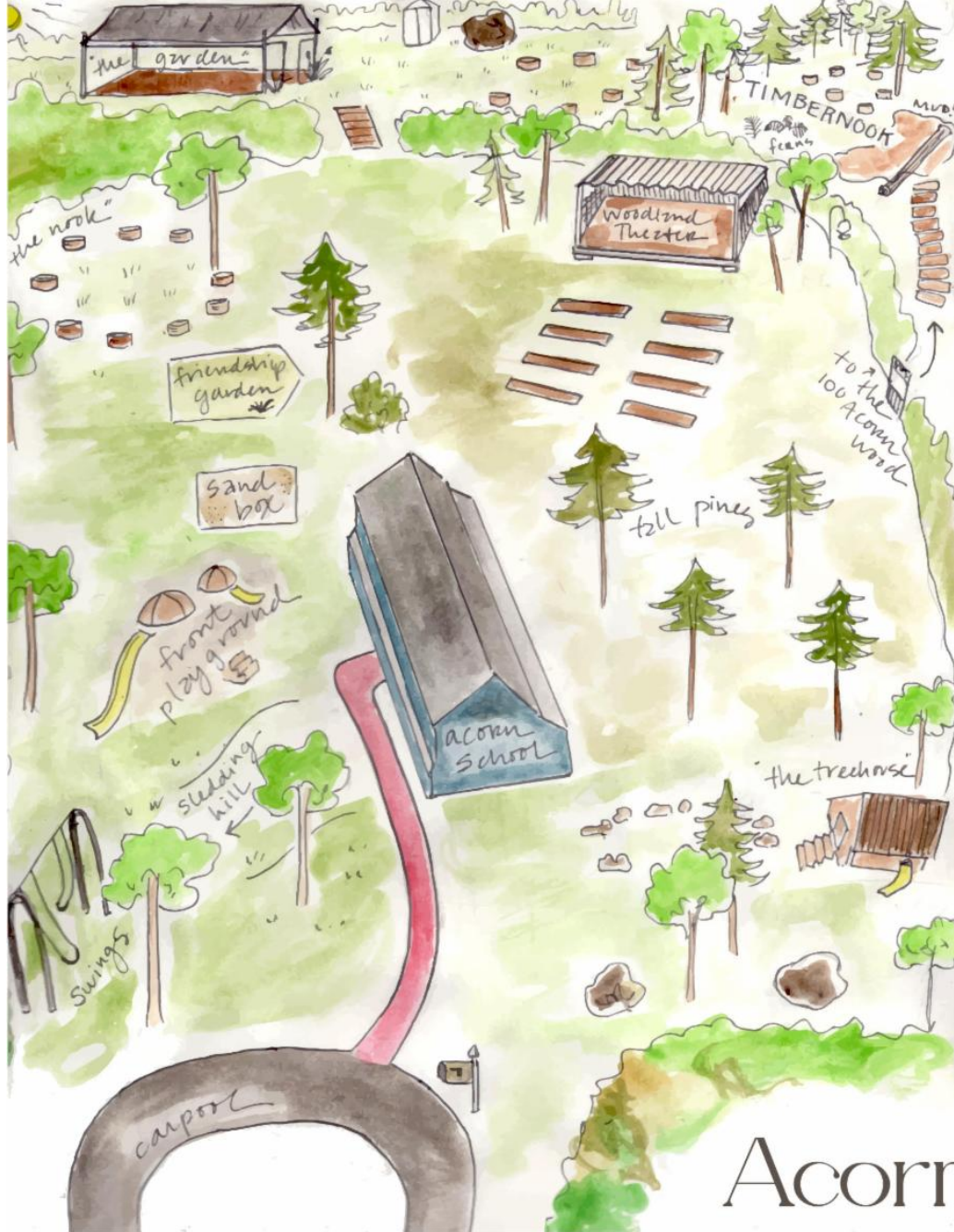
A new roof sheltering our existing stage will also feature a clear material to allow sunlight in! This classroom space is right next to the bird sanctuary and will feature a new swing!

3) The Treehouse

Candy's Magic Treehouse is already a fabulous open-air learning space.

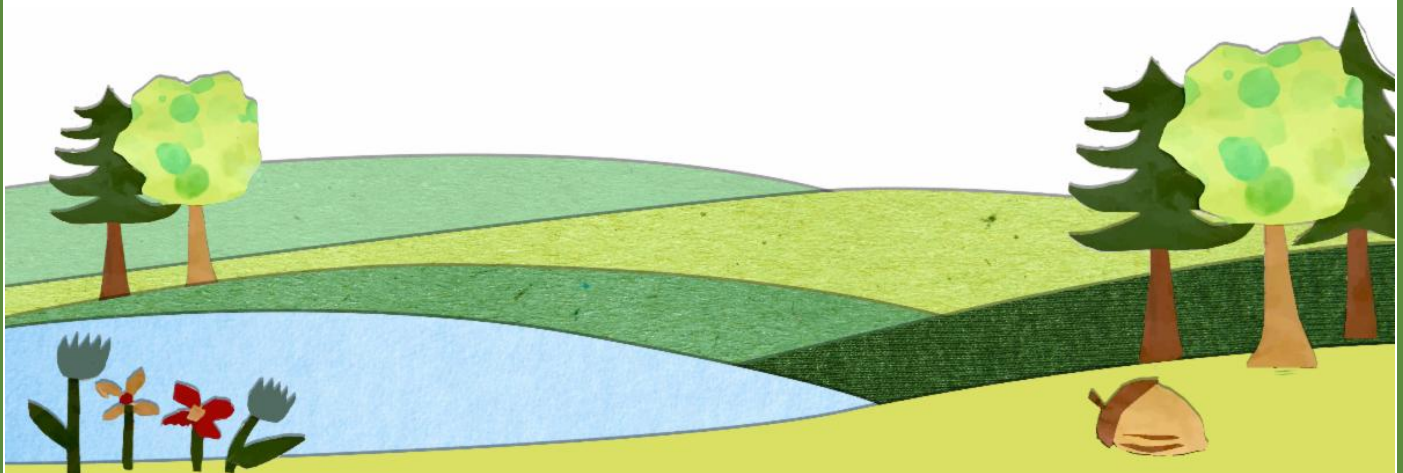
4) The "Nook"

We have carved out a sweet little spot in the front playground with its own play area and tree stump seats. The 'nook' is nestled in the forest near the new friendship garden.



Acorn 2020

Map Courtesy of Sarah Koff at **Sarah Koff Studio**



Acorn School

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Bendroth

