



Letter from Cynthia



*All existences spirit.
Just as ice is water,
all matter is also spirit.
Mineral, vegetable, animal or human
– All are a condensed form of spirit.
~ Rudolf Steiner*

Dear Friends,
What a beautiful summer newsletter theme. Thank you to our new editor, Michaelleen Hince, for gathering this inspiring content. Amy set the tone for an engaging, quality newsletter, and we are grateful that Michaelleen has stepped in seamlessly. Rahima continues to be a wonderful support.

Summer is a perfect season to honor those who support all that happens in nature – not just the beauty but also the bounty! Rudolf Steiner wrote with intensity about nature spirits, hopefully compelling us toward interest in and understanding our partnership.

Reading Mary O'Connell's article, offering a picture of how the four elements are related to nature as well as to our own physicality, we experience another layer of why we want to encourage children's deep relationship to nature. As she writes, "The elements of earth, water, air and fire were identified by the ancient Greeks as the forces that govern all of life. Direct experiences with these elements can help children become aware of and present in their bodies."

[READ MORE](#)

Summer Theme



Allowing Space

By Helga Roe Conklin

...So it was that one day I found myself sitting on the Astroturf in the outdoor play area, reciting silly rhymes and laughing with the children, when one of the little boys quietly sat down beside me.
[READ MORE](#)



Relating to Nature, Rather than Examining Nature

By Acacia Moore, Rose Rock School

I spent hours up in the trees as a child. Climbing as high as I could possibly manage, I would step out as far as I could while still holding onto something. The branch beneath my feet would rock as I stepped out to its thinner parts ...[READ MORE](#)



Fostering my Relationship with Nature

By Missy Whaley

Surrounded by forty acres of wild woodlands, birds chirping, a vine that is slipping through--growing into my kitchen--I breathe in



Earth, Water, Air and Fire

by Mary O'Connell

I remember the crisp autumn day the well-dressed early childhood professor from a

nature every day.

[READ MORE](#)

nearby university came to spend the morning with LifeWays' preschoolers. She was impressed with the way the children played outdoors, climbing trees, balancing on fallen logs, gathering acorns and telling stories with them, as comfortable and relaxed in their outdoor forest environment as most modern children are in their own living rooms.

[READ MORE](#)



After Supper

By Jerilyn Burke

One of my favorite moments of the day during the warm weather months is after supper. After my children put their dishes in the sink and sweep up the inevitable crumbs. After coming together as a family, sitting around the table, taking an inhale of love for one another, nourishing more than our bodies. [READ MORE](#)



Living in Nature's Encircling Love

By Sharifa Oppenheimer

For the young child especially, but for all children as well, it is a rich life-lesson to experience "whole process learning." We live in a fast-paced, fragmented world; how does a child have the opportunity to live-into the whole-process experiences that nature provides? [READ MORE](#)

More on our summer theme:

["Balancing Child Safety and Risk in the Parenting Dance"](#)

by **Judy Frizlen (on the elementFire)**

["The Importance of Natural Play Spaces for Children and Connecting with Nature"](#)

by **Audra Harvey**

[“The Wonder Garden, Keepers of the Magic”](#) by Amy Gerassimoff,

[“Wind or Weather: An Elemental Experience”](#) by Jaimmie Stugard

Featured Representative Program



Joyful Toddlers Play Garden

*An outdoor parent-child
playgroup for children ages
1-5 in Arvada, Colorado*

By Faith Collins



Three years ago my family moved onto a one-acre property, and last year I started transforming the back yard to be a wonderful and welcoming place for children and adults alike. I hired a wonderful landscaper who was interested in natural playscapes, and I have planted literally thousands of flowers. This past spring I finally opened my gates and started formal parent-child classes, first two mornings per week, then three mornings in the summer. [READ MORE](#)

Watch for Faith Collins' new book *Joyful Toddlers!*



Joyful Toddlers & Preschoolers: Create A Life that You and Your Child Both Love, is scheduled to be released by HohmPress in October 2017 and will be available from the [LifeWays Store](#). Watch for it in our next issue!

Faith Collins teaches in the LifeWays Training in Boulder and is the founder of [Joyful Toddlers](#), offering coaching, public speaking, and online parenting classes, as well as her Play Garden parent-child classes. She lives near Denver with her husband and three-year-old daughter, Sophie.

Happenings at LifeWays

Upcoming
Trainings and
Workshops



LIFEWAYS TRAINING

For Early Childhood Certification

Completing the LifeWays® Early Childhood Certification Program can **open new opportunities** for you—both professionally and personally—in the fields of early childhood, parent education and after-school care. Our **one-year**, part-time curriculum includes **over 200 onsite hours**, with independent study and **personal mentoring** between sessions. It can prepare you to **open or transform your own in-home program**, classroom or early childhood center.



Many parents also enroll to deepen family life.

Certification programs are currently available at locations throughout the United States, with workshops also in Toronto.

[LEARN MORE](#) about what is covered. Click on the titles/links below for each location.

***** Trainings Beginning in August *****

(A few spaces remain so there is still time to register!)

[California Coast, August 2017 – June 2018](#) San Francisco Bay Area
Contact: Marianne Alsop MarianneA@LifeWaysNorthAmerica.org

[Colorado, August 2017 - May 2018](#) Boulder, Colorado
Contact: Kerry Francis, Student Services 303-709-5174
KerryF@LifeWaysNorthAmerica.org

***** Training Beginning in October *****

(Register by August 20, 2017 and **save \$225!**)

[Wisconsin, October 2017 - August 2018](#) Milwaukee, Wisconsin
Contact: Dorothy Kulke, Student Services Director 414-334-1407
DorothyK@LifeWaysNorthAmerica.org



Beginning Sept 6th!

The Living Arts ~ Cornerstones of Care

Unique Online Course

*** 4 weeks of presentations,
interaction and inspiration * FREE
Living Arts Journal * Earn 15 CEUs ***

[LEARN MORE HERE](#)

Creating Home Away from Home:

***A Course for Home Childcare
Providers
With Mary O'Connell***

Enroll any time!

This on-demand, at-your-own-pace, online course will help you open your own early childhood program at home, providing relationship-based care steeped in LifeWays principles and practices.

Includes a copy of the book *Home Away from Home*, a monthly webinar exclusively for participants and a free one-year listing on the LifeWays Online Childcare Directory.

[READ MORE](#)



Topics covered in detail include:

Deciding to Start
Tools of the Trade
Crafting Your Program
Working with Parents
Self-Care and
Professional Development

NEW! CONTINUATION PROGRAM for LifeWays Graduates

Dates:

June 18 (eve) -23 & June 25-29, 2018

October 4-8, 2018

April 14-20, 2019

June 17-22 & June 24-28, 2019

Location: Kimberton, Pennsylvania

Co-Directors: Cynthia Aldinger and
Rena Osmer

Student Services Director: [Chinyelu
Kunz](#)

**LifeWays
Continuation Program for Early
Childhood Teaching
in Public and Private
Schools**

Rena and Cynthia are enthusiastically putting the final touches on this program and invite you to join them in deepening your work with *The Living Arts* and to build on all you learned in the first half of this program, the LifeWays Early Childhood Training. The Continuation Program will emphasize “Developing Joy as the Foundation of our Work” while studying Steiner’s indications behind Waldorf education and the practicalities of applying them in a classroom setting.



For a synopsis of the four sessions in the Continuation Program, click [here](#).
[Learn more](#) (includes an online application for LifeWays graduates).

NEW! WORKSHOP in AZ
Home Health Care: Nurturing and
Nourishing Ourselves and Children
with Trish McPhee, RN, FNP

October 12-13, 2017

At Desert Marigold School in Phoenix, AZ

[Learn More](#)



Angel Edwards, in our current CA Coast training class...and taking 2 years to complete...shares, “**Jakaiyah Jordan Edwards** was born June 17, 2017 at 11:44am!!!
We are so proud and elated to have our first and only son!”

LIST YOUR PROGRAM

Join the [LifeWays Online Directory](#)

Reach families who are looking for LifeWays programs and show your affiliation with a national organization. All programs are listed with links to your email and website, if you have one, and many people have told us that they receive inquiries regularly from people who found them on our website. We will also keep you up-to-date with LifeWays happenings by sending you our quarterly e-newsletter, in which we regularly feature a LifeWays program.

There are four categories of listings within each state or province:

LifeWays Representative Program, LifeWays Student or Graduate, and LifeWays-Affiliated Program.

[Find out more](#)



SHARE YOUR STORY

The summer newsletter enjoyed contributions from parents and caregivers around the country, and we are grateful they took valuable time to share their wisdom. Would you like to share your ideas and experiences with other readers? Are you working on a LifeWays-related project you want to share with like-minded individuals? Have an article you wrote you'd like to have considered? New recipe, project or puppet play?

[Reach out to our Editor, Michaeleen](#)

Summertime Snacks

Goodness from the Garden

Summer is in full swing and offering us the bounty of fresh fruits!

You-Pick farms and local farmer's markets



are excellent sources for "summer's candy" in addition to your own or community garden.

Our favorite way to enjoy fruit is right off the vine or branch, but when we are blessed with an over-abundance we look for ways to serve, store and preserve the bounty.

When berries are super ripe, I like to blend them with some plain yogurt (and mini chocolate chips!) and fill up popsicle molds [like these](#).

Looking for some inspiration? Here are some of our favorite ways to enjoy berries, cherries and more:

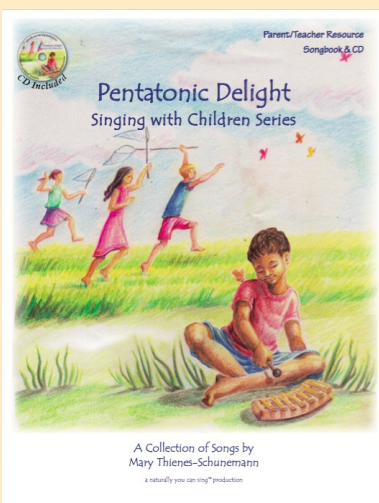
Add variety by offering fresh fruits alongside an [Easy Cream Cheese Fruit Dip](#)

For a special summer dessert try this [Mixed Berry Pie with Ginger, Orange and Almond Streusel](#)

This [2 ingredient Blueberry Syrup](#) would work with any variety of berry.

Fruit + fresh greens = [Strawberry Spinach Salad with Blueberry and Feta](#)

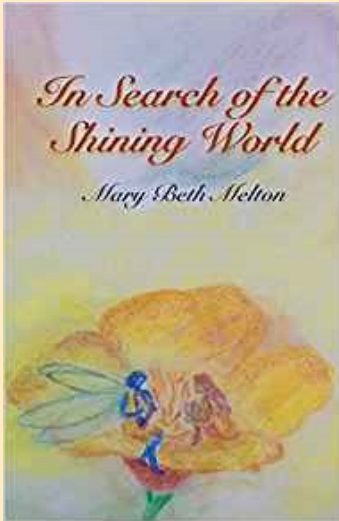
Refresh and rehydrate with this [Berry-Infused Iced Green Tea](#) ~ Michaelleen



Naturally You Can Sing announces NEW SONGBOOK with CD

[Naturally you can Sing](#) is very happy to announce a new collection of joy-filled pentatonic songs created and arranged by Mary Thienes-Schünemann, titled [Pentatonic Delight](#). This collection includes many original compositions, more well-known songs, and some collaborations written with Cynthia Aldinger. A CD recording is included to help you learn to sing them.

In her lifetime, Mary was committed to participating in and promoting singing with children, as she truly believed in the power of music to bring families together and the support it provides children in their development. She expressed this commitment in creating the Naturally you can Sing songbook series to support the Lifeways North America music curriculum. In addition to the songbooks, Mary also created a series of art song CDs promoting joy, peace, and love. Naturally you can Sing is honored to give newly graduating LifeWays North America teachers a gift of "I Still Have Joy." volumes one and two.



Reading Adventure for Ages 9-99

Former Waldorf teacher Mary Beth Melton has written a book for older children in the family (ages 9-99), In Search of the Shining World. Readers will meet lonely, 15-year-old Ellen MacLeod, who is dealing with the death of her father at the end of World War II. Looking for answers, she finds herself drawn into the magical world of fairies. There, paired with an enigmatic fairy prince, she is propelled into an adventure that will decide the fate of the rest of her life.



Thank you for the love and warmth that emanate from your heart out into the world. Thank you, also, for the support you offer to LifeWays that enables us to open our organization's heart to those in need. Our scholarship fund has been able to serve students whose life circumstances have suddenly changed. It provides just the cushion we need to soften the edges of fear and worry and to hold them close in the hearth of their beloved LifeWays groups.

Individuals around the world are finding solace and inspiration through the guidance of our new online courses. Those in professional childcare are able to receive the continuing education units they need for the year, and others are simply relieved to find support, humor and delight in sharing with other course participants. We are also expanding our on-site professional development to include courses for individuals teaching in Waldorf charter and private schools.

You can find out about all of our offerings, as well as our publications, videos and audio downloads on our website lifewaysnorthamerica.org. Perhaps there is something there that you want to offer as a gift to a loved one. You can also offer your donation [online](#) or send a check to our new address at:



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