Perseid Meteor Shower Musings
Submitted by Shawna Stevens

Long ago, I spent my summers working in the southern Sierra Nevada mountains. It was an extraordinary place to work and I have many happy memories from those years. One of my favorite memories is hiking up the canyon wall on a warm, pitch black August night with my coworkers to find a forest clearing to view the Perseid meteor showers. Every summer we would spread out blankets, collapse onto our backs and enjoy the amazing spectacle of comet dust burning up in our atmosphere. The sky would be lit up with the blazing trails of "stars" falling to earth while other distant, stationary lights just merrily twinkled. I always found this experience very grounding, both literally since your back is pressed down firmly into the ground, but also figuratively since the heavens above appear to be falling down to earth and you can do nothing but watch with your friends at your side. And we watched for hours until we either fell asleep or tried to race home and beat the sunrise. My summers are not nearly as carefree anymore, but this time of year reminds me of the spectacular things that still go on despite my inability to schedule them into my life. This year I am going to make a point of watching the meteor showers in August and you are welcome to join me (see the program list). We will be inside the bright city limits, we will be at a low elevation, and we will have to peer past the pollution and smoke and the waxing moon, but those meteors are still going to be there, so let's watch.

Incidentally, the Perseid meteor shower is so named since the meteors appear to fall out of the constellation Perseus. In July and August of every year, the earth's orbit passes through the tail of a comet named Swift-Tuttle. All this comet debris is what gives us the meteor showers. As the bits of rock collide with our atmosphere, they quickly burn up, giving us a bright streak of light or what we call a shooting star. The Perseid meteor shower's greatest activity will be between August 8 and 14 this year, with August 12 considered the peak. While telescopes are great for looking at distant objects like planets, the best way to view meteors is with your naked eyes as long as you're in a dark spot without nearby lights ruining your night vision.
Getting America’s children to exercise has never been more difficult as the new boob-tube generation slouches in front of TVs, or sits for hours, mesmerized behind shoot-out video and computer games.

However, it is possible to foster a regular exercise pattern for children from an early age, with simple activities that are more “fun” than “exercise.”

**America’s Pastimes**

Back in the day, kids played hopscotch and tag and didn’t know that it qualified as exercise! Reviving America’s pastimes could be an easy way to promote physical fitness. Hopscotch improves balance and coordination, while the constant stop-go running in a healthy game of tag elevates the heart rate to more efficiently burn calories. Jumping rope is another American favorite that has fallen by the wayside. The regular interval in jumping rope pumps the heart steadily, and is an efficient form of aerobic exercise.

**Biking**

Biking is another excellent way to get a child to exercise. From first learning on a tricycle to the celebrated arrival of the two-wheeler, biking is something that can be viewed as an achievement, as well as an easy way to increase a child’s physical activity. Biking helps children develop coordination, balance, work the back muscle groups that aid good posture, and build up leg muscles. Moreover, biking gives children an easy way to travel to their friends’ houses and assert independence--an added incentive that will get those legs, and lungs, pumping! As nine-year old Michelle Yuen says, “I love riding my bike. It’s so much fun. I ask my mom, and then I can bike down to my friend’s house.”

**Yoga for Kids**

Yoga has taken America by storm in recent years. From celebrity yogis like Madonna to stay-at-home moms, yoga has proven to be a way to tone and “center” the mind and body. Yoga is beginning to creep into the school gym programs, too. Just as many high schools throughout the nation have begun offering yoga as a gym option, many “yoga for kids” programs have sprung up as well. Yoga aims to tone the muscle groups, aid coordination, and improve flexibility through stretching. In addition, it has been said that a key principle in yoga, correct breathing, seems to alleviate stress in children.

*Exercise that isn’t Exercise*

Taking the non-traditionalist approach to exercising is just as easy. Children can help mom carry the groceries or walk with her to the drugstore. Whatever the case, mixing up a regular exercise pattern for kids helps them create a healthy lifestyle.

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**Smilebox**

Submitted by Bonnie Weeks

Every once in a while you run into something that’s a really good idea. I had one of those moments a couple weeks ago, It’s called Smilebox. It’s been around a little while, but I hadn’t heard of it. If you haven’t tried it yet, you’re in for a treat.

This is a simplified way to plug in pictures, thoughts, and experiences into ready-made scrapbooks, or slideshows, photo albums, greeting and postcards, and recipe cards. Then you can blog them, send them to family and friends through email, or print them. If you want the look of Scrapbooking without the effort and cost, this is a great alternative. If you’re an avid Scrapbooker, try the recipe cards. I think there’s something for everyone. It’s fun and free to download. Once you download it, you can try putting in your own pictures and print before buying it, allowing you to see what you really want. I love that!

Another plus of the program is the price; it’s really

*Continued on Page 3*
affordable. You could buy one individual design template for $1.99 to $3.99 and use that one constantly without repaying every time you used it or you could pay $4.99/yr. or $39.99/yr. for unlimited access to any design you ever wanted. If it sounds like I’m converted, I am. Try it, you just might like it.

Baby wearing
Submitted by Aisha Goodman

Just a few minutes ago my baby Leon was crying and tired. I swaddled him loosely in a blanket, wrapped a sling around us both, went for a little walk (while my 3 year-old daughter Nalina was home with her dad) and before I could walk to the nearest playground, he was sleeping. Happy baby, happy mama.

In this column, I want to share my love of keeping my babies snuggled up to me using a cloth or baby carrier. Babywearing involves tying a baby to oneself using either a specialized item shaped roughly like a backpack with room for baby, a sling, or a simple piece of cloth (SPOC), literally a piece of cloth of variable width anywhere from 2 and a half to 5 yards. If you want to know how to wear your baby, ask a babywearing mama, or check out mamatoto.org, a comprehensive resource of methods and types (or come to a program on August 5 at Solano Park). Mothering magazine also has an excellent special babywearing issue.

To me the benefits are clear. First, baby is comfortable, feels secure, and I can use my hands. (Note: I am typing at the moment, with Leon in sling. I curl an arm about him when I pause, check to make sure he is securely fastened.) A tired baby often falls asleep fast. Moreover, I enjoy the fact that baby has some kind of intermediate between being a part of me and not part of me. I’ve noticed that when baby is cuddled up tight to mama in a comfy second skin, strangers are less likely to touch my baby without asking. And best of all, baby can nurse while I’m mobile.

I’ve tried several methods of babywearing. When Nalina was a baby, I was given two slings by a friend who didn’t want to use them again. We used the slings several times when Nalina was an infant, but they didn’t fit well, I didn’t know how to use them well, and I didn’t like the lopsided feeling they gave me, or the way her legs dug into my stomach when I folded her legs in front of her to snuggle toward me. I eventually traded one sling for one that fit me better, and gave the other away. After several months and until Nalina was almost 2, I happily used a front pack that my mom used with my baby sister. Almost a year later, I saw a mom friend scoop up a tired toddler, and wrap her to her with a sling, essentially using it to brace her toddler in the comfortable position of the moment. I revised my previous negative feelings about the sling. I still sometimes use a ring sling, especially when Leon is particularly tired and grumpy, since I don’t have to put him down. My point, is that it can take some trial and error to get used to babywearing, but that I find it a valuable parenting tool. When Leon starts crying from tiredness, or when I head out the door to walk somewhere, I hold him close to me and pull on a sling, or start tying on my SPOC (simple piece of cloth).

Neither cost nor lack of sewing skill need deter you. Although many commercial baby carriers start at about $35, I bought the cloth (on sale) for my 5 yard SPOC for about $12. Cheaper still could be a self-made mei-tai or sling from a free online pattern. You could make a no-sew sling by cutting an old T-shirt, cut jersey material to make a no-sew wrap, or you could tie a nice piece of cloth in several different ways, all with the simple, joyous purpose of making your baby happy, thus making yourself (and your family) happier too.
As the summer is busy with neighborhood barbecues, pool parties, and vacations, there couldn’t be a worse time to lose control of your diet with a slew of dubious dietary intruders. To combat the nutritional chaos and the extra poundage that comes with the temptation, try to be in your diet track with these eight best foods by adding them every day. Beyond being packed full of disease-fighting and life-extending nutrients, these foods will also help keep your belly full, because they’re loaded with fiber and protein.

1. **Spinach:** It may be green and leafy, but spinach is no nutritional wallflower. This noted muscle-builder is a rich source of plant-based omega-3s and folate, which help reduce the risk of heart disease, stroke, and osteoporosis. Bonus: Folate also increases blood flow to the nether regions, helping to protect you against age-related sexual issues. Aim for 1 cup fresh spinach or a half cup cooked per day. (SUBSTITUTES: Kale, bok choy, romaine lettuce). FIT IT IN: Make your salads with baby spinach; add spinach to scrambled eggs; drape it over pizza; mix it with marinara sauce and then microwave for an instant dip.

2. **Yogurt:** The 2,000-year-old food’s health benefits are great. Which helps boost your immune system, provides protection against cancer, and even does duty as a cavity-fighter. Not all yogurts are created equal, though, so make sure the label says "live and active cultures." And watch out for high-fructose corn syrup; stealth sugars are worth avoiding in yogurt and everywhere else. (SUBSTITUTES: Kefir, cottage cheese). FIT IT IN: Yogurt topped with blueberries, walnuts, flaxseed, and honey is the ultimate breakfast — or dessert. Plain low-fat yogurt is also a perfect base for creamy salad dressings and dips.

3. **Tomatoes:** There are two things you need to know about tomatoes: Red are the best, because they’re packed with more of the antioxidant lycopene, and processed tomatoes are just as potent as fresh ones, because it’s easier for the body to absorb the lycopene. Studies show that a diet rich in lycopene can decrease your risk of bladder, lung, prostate, breast, skin, and stomach cancers, as well as reduce the risk of coronary artery disease. Try to add eight red cherry tomatoes or a glass of tomato juice every day. (SUBSTITUTES: Red watermelon, pink grapefruit, Japanese persimmon, papaya, guava). FIT IT IN: Dress sliced heirloom tomatoes with torn basil and olive oil; roast cherry tomatoes and serve over grilled fish or chicken.

4. **Carrots:** Most red, yellow, or orange vegetables and fruits are spiked with carotenoids — fat-soluble compounds that are associated with a reduction in a wide range of cancers, as well as a reduced risk and severity of inflammatory conditions such as asthma and rheumatoid arthritis — but none of them is as easy to prepare, or have as low a caloric density, as carrots do. Aim for a half cup a day. (SUBSTITUTES: Sweet potato, pumpkin, butternut squash, yellow bell pepper, mango). FIT IT IN: Snack on baby carrots; grate raw carrots into salad; toss a carrot into a breakfast smoothie with frozen mango; roast carrot chunks with olive oil, salt and cumin.

5. **Blueberries:** Host to more antioxidants than any other North American fruit, blueberries help prevent cancer, diabetes, and age-related memory changes (hence the nickname "brain berry").

*Continued on Page 5*
Eight Super Foods to Enjoy a Guilt Free Summer
Continued from Page 4

Studies show that blueberries, which are rich in fiber and vitamins A and C, also boost cardiovascular health. Aim for 1 cup fresh blueberries a day, or a half cup frozen or dried. (SUBSTITUTE: Acai, an Amazonian berry, has even more antioxidants than the blueberry. Mix 2 Tbsp. of acai powder into OJ or add 2 Tbsp of acai pulp to cereal, yogurt, or a smoothie). FIT IT IN: Mix fresh blueberries into plain yogurt; blend with ice, yogurt, banana, and OJ for a 60-second smoothie; toss with baby spinach, red onions, goat cheese, and raspberry vinaigrette for a summer salad.

6. Black Beans: All beans are good for your heart, but none can boost your brain power like black beans. That's because they're full of anthocyanins, antioxidant compounds that have been shown to improve brain function. A daily half-cup serving provides 8 grams of protein and 7.5 grams of fiber, and is low in calories and free of saturated fat. (SUBSTITUTES: Peas, lentils, and pinto, kidney, fava, and lima beans). FIT IT IN: Wrap black beans in a breakfast burrito; use both black beans and kidney beans in your chili; puree 1 cup black beans with 2 Tbsp olive oil and roasted garlic for a healthy dip; add favas, limas, or peas to pasta dishes.

7. Walnuts: Richer in heart-healthy omega-3s than salmon, loaded with more anti-inflammatory polyphenols than red wine, and packing half as much muscle-building protein as chicken, the walnut just needs a cape and we could call it a superhero. Other nuts combine only one or two of these features, not all three. A serving of walnuts — about 1 ounce, or seven nuts — is good anytime, but especially as a post-workout recovery snack. Keep a can of Planters Nutrition Heart Healthy Mix in your desk drawer or glove compartment, and use them to lead you away from temptation. (SUBSTITUTES: Almonds, peanuts, pistachios, macadamia nuts, hazelnuts) FIT IT IN: Sprinkle on top of salads; chop and add to pancake batter; mix 1 cup walnuts with a half cup dried blueberries and a quarter cup of dark chocolate chunks.

8. Oats: They are packed with soluble fiber, which lowers the risk of heart disease. Yes, oats are loaded with carbs, but the release of those sugars is slowed by the fiber, and because oats also have 10 grams of protein per half-cup serving, they deliver steady muscle-friendly energy. (SUBSTITUTES: Quinoa, flaxseed, amaranth, pearly barley). FIT IT IN: Eat granolas and cereals that have a fiber content of at least 5 grams per serving; sprinkle 2 Tbsp ground flaxseed on cereals, salads, and yogurt; sub quinoa in for brown rice.

Have other healthy suggestions? Please share them with all of us here. (E-mail me at shakee_k@yahoo.com)
**Community Programs**

**Table Tennis**

Join us for an evening of fun! We are going to play table tennis and everybody is welcome to play in rounds. We have paddles and balls to play with, but you can bring your own if you have them. Contact Yalina Soto if you have any questions: 756-3670.

When: Friday, August 1 at 7pm
Where: Orchard Park Community Center

**Babywearing 101**

Wearing your baby is a great tool for soothing new babies and freeing your hands. If you want to learn how, or if you want to share techniques, please come. You don’t have to be a parent or expecting to learn this skill. For questions, call Aisha at 681-6897.

When: Tuesday, August 5 at 10:30am
Where: Melvin Fassler Community Center

**Friendship Day cards**

Show your friends’ that you cherish their friendship. Give them a card to say “Thank you, for being a great friend.” All ages are welcome. Children 5 and younger will need a parent helper. For questions please call Shakeela @ 297-7451.

When: Friday, August 1 at 4pm
Where: Melvin Fassler Community Center

**Silk Scarf Painting**

Learn how to paint on silk using the Serti technique. Adult help is needed, but the results are phenomenal, and the process is fun. Call Aisha at 681-6897, if you have questions or want to see what mine looks like from the last workshop.

When: Saturday, August 9 at 1pm
Where: Melvin Fassler Community Center

**Fun with modeling clay**

Want to have a great time with your kids. Join in the fun, with modeling clay (Ideal for toddlers too.) For questions please call Shakeela @ 297-7451.

When: Tuesday, August 5 at 4pm
Where: Melvin Fassler Community Center

**Waterslide**

The last month of summer for the kids is here and it’s still hot! Come to the waterslide to cool off. *Children will need a waiver signed by a parent or guardian to participate. We will also have a small pool for younger children to play in. Contact Bonnie Weeks with any questions at 204-8539.*

When: Wednesday, August 6 at 4pm
Where: Grassy Area by the Orchard Park Community Center

**Volleyball**

Here’s a sporty get-together for the Parks. Bring your game and friends and have some fun in a friendly game of volleyball. Contact Bonnie Weeks with any questions at 204-8539.

When: Wednesday, August 20 at 11am
Where: Grassy Area by the Orchard Park Community Center
**Community Programs**

**Water Slide**

Lets stay cool this summer with the water slide! Please bring towels and sunscreen and get ready to get wet! If you have any questions, please contact Shawna Stevens at 757-7899. **Waivers must be signed by a guardian to participate in this event and guardians must be present during event.**

**Perseid Meteor Shower**

August is the month for viewing the Perseid meteors which can often be seen quite well with the naked eye. If the viewing is good, we should see lots of meteors streaking across the sky. Bring blankets and cushions and we'll meet at the big playground at 11:30pm (although the activity really peaks in the early morning hours before sunrise). **Please call before 8pm on 8/12 and let me know if you'll be attending this program.** If you have any questions, please contact Shawna Stevens at 757-7899.

**Water Slide**

Calling all Kids! The sun is shining bright and it is hot here in the Parks. Join in the fun and take a slide down the Water Slide. Parents don’t forget the towels and sunscreen. **All Children must come with an adult.**

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**Felt Finger Puppets**
Community Programs

If you have any questions, please contact Yalina Soto at 756-3670.

*Waivers must be signed by a guardian to participate in this event.*

When: Saturday, August 16 from 11am to 12pm. and Saturday, August 30 from 1pm to 2pm
Where: By the Orchard Park Community Center

**Summer Story Time**

Let’s spend a hot afternoon inside where its cool reading stories and coloring. This program’s reading material will targeted for children 0-5 years old, but all residents are welcome. If you have any questions, please contact Shawna Stevens at 757-7899.

When: Monday, August 18 at 4pm
Where: Melvin Fassler Community Center

**Fabric Painting**

It’s time to let your creativity shine. Share some of the fabulous & easy techniques in fabric painting. Bring your favorite clothing, shirts, bandanas, skirts or pillow cases. (Make sure it is clean & dry) We’ll provide the paint. For questions please call Shakeela @ 297-7451

When: Tuesday, August 19 at 4pm
Where: Melvin Fassler Community Center

**Popsicles**

In the summer heat, I’d like a popsicle. Join me at the RED (north) playground and you can have one too. For questions, call Aisha, 681-6897.

When: Wednesday, August 20 at 4pm
Where: Solano Park Red Playground

**Family Water Balloon Toss Competition PLUS MORE!!**

Do you want to get wet? Then come compete for a prize at the same time. We will divide up in teams and the top three teams to toss the water balloon the furthest will win a prize. Then we’ll be playing several other water games (with prizes) that you should plan to get wet in. Parents will need to compete with their children, so everyone needs to wear clothes to get wet in. This is going to be a blast! We’ll also be having some snacks to keep our energy level up. Contact Bonnie Weeks with any questions at 204-8539.

When: Saturday, August 23 from 11am-12:30pm
Where: Grass Area by the Orchard Park Community Center
Learn How to Make Jam!

Come and learn how quick and easy it is to make your own jam! It’s a great way to save a taste of summer fruit for winter and also a great way to save money. And once you know the basics, you can create your own fruit combinations that the stores don’t carry. Mary Greaves and Anne Meckstroth will be our guest instructors for this fun class. Please RSVP by August 21 so we can secure enough supplies. If you have any questions, please contact Shawna Stevens at 757-7899.

When: Sunday, August 24 at 3pm
Where: Melvin Fassler Community Center

Ice Cream Social

Let’s have Ice Cream together! Come down to the Orchard Park Community Center for a free cone and spend a nice evening with your neighbors. Please call Yalina Soto at 756-3670 if you have any question or suggestions.

When: Monday, August 25 at 7pm
Where: Orchard Park Community Center

Hand Print Towels

This is a perfect Grandparent’s day gift. Grandparent’s day is on September 7th this year, so to plan ahead, we’re going to make a towel with your child’s hand on it to give them a personalized gift. We’ll be providing ONE towel per child, so if you want to do more, bring your own. Parents must accompany their children. Contact Bonnie Weeks with any questions at 204-8539.

When: Thursday, August 28 at 7pm
Where: Orchard Park Community Center

Slide

Cool off with a ride on the slide! Don’t forget towels and sunscreen. Parents, we need waivers for participation. If you have questions, call Aisha, 681-6897.

When: Saturday, August 30 at 4pm
Where: Between 4100 and 4300
**Monthly Maintenance Tips**  
By Orchard and Solano Park Maintenance

Drain, drains, drains

- To help avoid nasty drain back-ups, please make sure that your kitchen sink strainer is in place when rinsing vegetables and cooking so that vegetable matter does not slip down the drain. Also, never put grease or oils of any kind down the drain. Doing so could result in significant problems and unfortunately, charges.

- In the bathroom, please make sure that the hair strainer is in the bottom of the tub; occasionally remove the hair from it. Also, please remember not to flush feminine hygiene products or paper towels down the toilet.

- By following these simple suggestions, we can all help to hold down maintenance costs and personal inconvenience in the Parks. Thank you for your cooperation. Have a wonderful summer.

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**Holidays and Anniversaries**

**August 1—Lammas—1960**
This day honors the turning of the wheel once again and represents the midpoint between summer and fall. Lammas in the Wiccan tradition is cross-quarter holiday, acknowledging Mother Earth for the fruits of the harvest.

**August 5—Voting Rights Act—1965**
Allows Black voters to register with federal examiners if they are turned down by state officials.

**August 10—Lauro Cavazos is nominated US Secretary of Education—1988**
He is the first Hispanic to be nominated for a cabinet position.

**August 10—Fast of Tisha B’Av**
The Ninth month of Av is, as its name suggests, observed on the ninth day of the Hebrew month Av. Originally, the festival served to commemorate the destruction of the First and Second Temples, both occurring on or around the ninth of Av, such as the expulsion of 100,000 Jews from Spain in 1492. Consequently, Tisha B’Av new commemorates all those sad events in Jewish history which occurred on this date. Jews are required to fast on this holiday. During the synagogue service, the Book of Lamentations and Kinnnot are read; to express their sorrow congregants typically sit on the floor during service.

**August 15—Assumption**
The feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary has double origin: the happy departure of Mary from this life and the assumption of her body into heaven; it is the principle feast of the Blessed Virgin.

**August 23—Rose of Lima Day**
Born in 1586 as Isabel to Spanish immigrants to the New World. A beautiful girl and devoted daughter, she was so devoted to her vow of chastity, she used pepper and lye to ruin her complexion so she would not be attractive. Lived and meditated in a garden, raising vegetables and making embroidered items to sell to support her family and help the other poor. Received invisible stigmata—Assorted physical and mental sufferings. Dies on August 24, 1617 and canonized on April 2, 1671 by Pope Clement X. First saint born in America. Founder of social work in Peru.

**August 23—Edith Sampson is the first Black to be appointed US delegate to the United Nations—1950**
# Calendar of Events

**August 2008**

**All residents are welcome to attend all programs, regardless of location. All events held in the Community Center unless otherwise noted.**

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<td><strong>Felt Finger Puppets</strong>&lt;br&gt;MFCC 2pm</td>
<td><strong>Perseid Meteor Shower</strong>&lt;br&gt;Outside MFCC 11:30pm</td>
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<td><strong>Kid’s Birthday</strong>&lt;br&gt;OPCC 7pm</td>
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The Park Messenger is published by Student Housing, at the University of California, Davis. Our goal is to communicate with Park residents, campus departments and the community of Davis. We encourage reader suggestions, criticisms and articles. Let us hear from you.

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The Park Messenger online:
http://www.housing.ucdavis.edu/current/park_messenger.htm

Did you know?

- **Registration Reminder** ~
  Student Housing requires all students to meet our eligibility requirements to continue living in The Parks Apartments. **Students must have full-time registered status during fall, winter and spring quarters/semesters.** Full-time status is defined at 12 units for quarter students and 10 units for semester students. Students who do not meet the requirement are required to register for additional classes or submit notice to move out. Please be aware of these requirements when you register for winter and spring quarters in the coming months. Please contact Student Housing at 752-2033 or your Park Office if you have any questions.

- If you plan to travel during the holiday period, please leave a travel form with your Park Office.

- Planning to vacate after finals? Remember a 42-day notice is required.

- Whether you are moving in or moving out, please do not park your vehicle in the perimeter (interior) of The parks. It places children at risk. Vehicles in the interior of the complex will be cited and/or towed by University Police.

- We want our complexes to remain safe places to live. Any suspicious activity should be reported to Campus Police.