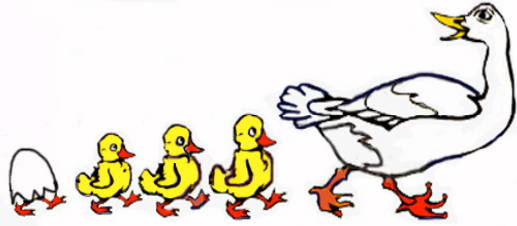
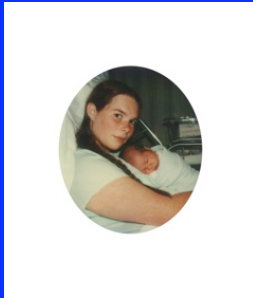


April 2009



## The Sandy Land Press

Happy Birthday to my baby. April 13 Paul turns 29. Seems like just yesterday he was a babe in arms.



### It is Spring and soon the skies will agree

April showers may bring May flowers, but lets hope for more spring days where it will be time to throw open those windows and let the fresh spring air fill our lungs. I am looking forward to watching the children on those first wonderful days of spring. They run outside, hands waving into the air, drop into the sweet fresh grass and roll... as if to

reconnect to the earth. Sometimes we as adults forget how to experience the simple joys, so when that warm spring sun finds us, find the child in you, run outside hands to the sun and roll in the spring grass. Relish the sensations around you, and Be thankful to this wonderful planet for all it has to offer.

### We play

From birth to adolescence, constructive play is vital to most aspects of children's intellectual, emotional, social, and physical development. Consequently, play prepares children for academic learning - as they begin their school years and at each step along the way. Ultimately, play prepares children for rewarding adult lives. Many experts believe that adult personality may very well have its foundation in the play of the child. Through constructive play, children expand their intelligence - their knowledge and understanding of the world around them. Play is a testing ground for language and reasoning skills - a laboratory for learning to connect to challenges children face in school, such as literacy, math, and science concepts. Constructive play stimulates the imagination - encouraging creative problem solving and providing opportunities for accomplishments that help children develop confidence, self-esteem, a sense of their own strengths and weaknesses, and a positive attitude toward learning. These are the tenets of emotional well being. Where would any of us be today without the ability to imagine - to 'paint' a picture of the future we want and the steps we need to take to get there? Where would we be without the desire to continue learning and the skills to overcome obstacles throughout our adult years? Constructive play encourages children to fully realize their potential - in school and beyond. Constructive play is also a catalyst by which children learn to develop relationships with others. Through play, children learn to take the perspective of another; they learn self-control and the ability to take turns, negotiate, compromise, and work out conflicts. In fact, studies show that children who play make-believe or games with rules are more empathetic, less physically aggressive and more cooperative with other children and adults - essential behaviors that help children succeed in school throughout life. Through play, children develop gross motor skills (physical mobility and muscle control) and fine motor skills such as eye-hand coordination - a critical precursor to reading and writing skills. Equally important, play helps make learning fun! Play fuels children's imagination and sparks creativity, making the learning journey pleasurable and joyous.