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Adirondack Daycare Center marks first anniversary **By: Fred Herbst**

PORT HENRY – A year after opening its doors, Adirondack Daycare Center-Preschool is thriving.

“We’re pleased,” said Jody Olcott, a member of the center’s board. “We’ve had some ups and downs, a few struggles, but I think we’re doing very well.”

The non-profit facility is located in the St. Patrick’s Parish Center in Port Henry. After opening last March with seven children, it now has 18 enrolled.

I’m really impressed with the quality of the preschool program,” said Marilyn Crossman, a retired teacher and center board member. “There is a writing center, a drama center; it’s a very structured program. It’s a lot more than just babysitting.”

Work on Adirondack Daycare Center-Preschool began when the Silver Bay Association closed its preschool in Moriah. Unable to find suitable child care, a group of parents formed the center.

“We had a group of 7-8 kids who were a part of the Silber Bay program,” Olcott recalled. “They were the basis for Adirondack Daycare Center-Preschool. Then we started to market the school and grow.”

The center, which is state certified, is open 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday all year. It has students from Ticonderoga, Moriah, Crown Point and Vermont. It has certified teacher and four aides.

The curriculum is designed with the help of pre-kindergarten teachers at Moriah Central School.

“We want it to be smooth transition from pre-school to public school,” Crossman said. “When the kids leave here I feel they’re really solid from pre-k or kindergarten.”

Adirondack Daycare Center-Preschool offers play time from 7-9 a.m. each day. The academic program takes up the rest of the morning. In the afternoon children often go on trips to the local post office, library or other places.

“I believe our success to this point can be credited to the diversity and strong commitment of our nine member board of directors and their ability to interact with a great staff,” said Jason Strieble, board president.

“The board is anchored by four very strong people with many years of educational experience,” he added. “The balance of the board consists of medical, dental and business backgrounds. All of our members are parents; all of our members have had their children or family members go through the program or are currently enrolled. The future of Adirondack Daycare Center-Preschool looks very strong from where we stand today.”

Board members include Olcott, Crossman, Jason Strieble, Patti Baker, Missy Larrow, Jennifer Fleury, Carrie Langey, Julie Strieble and Tracy Sprague.



Madison Olcott and Morgan Sadowski are two of the children who attend Adirondack Daycare Center-Preschool. The center marked its first anniversary March 1. Photo by Fred Herbst

Olcott said the center is active in the community.

Adirondack Daycare Center-Preschool will hold an easter egg hunt open to the public Saturday, March 26, at 11 a.m. in Witherbee Park. June 4 it'll host a golf tournament. Center volunteers have also been involved in the state ice fishing championships held in Port Henry and the annual Labor Day celebration.

"We've had enormous support from the community," Olcott said. "We want to give something back."

With room for 30 children, the Adirondack Daycare Center-Preschool is still accepting students. Interested parents can call 546-8282.

"I really feel confident and hopeful about the future of the school," Crossman said. "As a teacher I'm confident these children will be ready for the public school system."