



NATURAL TOYS AND BABY CARE

**Sidewalk Sale
June 29th-30th**

Peapods Natural Toys & Baby Care, 251 Snelling Avenue South, St. Paul, Minnesota www.peapods.com May, 2007

A note from Millie

This spring, our family had a wonderful opportunity to raise chickens from hatchlings through our 4-H club. They came in the mail and each family got to take 8 chicks home for 6 weeks. Then they were off to a new model organic farm at the University of Minnesota. It was our Little House in the Midway experience.

They were certainly cute, but I was struck by how quickly they grew from little balls of fluff into chickens. In six weeks, they were nearly full grown and ready for the farm. Just imagine if our kids grew so fast.

Also this spring was our fifth year at the Living Green Expo. Over 20,000 people attended the Expo this year, up 42% over last year. It was great to see so many people looking for ways to be kinder to the Earth. It's not hard to see why, though. As I write this, it's the middle of May and temperatures are expected to top 90. It's gotta be clear to anyone not living in a white house that we're living in a greenhouse. So I ask, "What Would Pa Ingalls Do?"

Pa used the grain he grew to fuel his transportation, but it wasn't with corn-based ethanol. He wore organic clothes, but they weren't bought at Wal-Mart. He ate organic food, but it wasn't grown in Chile. The answers to global warming will

have to be many and varied, but a large measure will need to be a pioneer's ethic of efficiency, a better understanding of our impact on the environment, and a closer connection with our local community which still provides everything from food to clothing to toys, just as it did in Pa's time.

Finally, this summer will mark 10 years since we began selling baby slings out of our living room. We never thought our business would grow to support our family. Thank you once again for making that possible.

Peace and best wishes, Millie



Announcing...

Peapods Studio Space

We are happy to announce a new arrival at Peapods --a dedicated studio space available for classes, meetings, and workshops. Our goal is to partner with instructors and support groups to create a community resource focused on attachment parenting and natural living.

Our studio space is two doors down from our store and will be available for classes, meetings, and workshops on a variety of topics, both fee-based and free.

To learn more, visit our website at www.peapods.com/studio, where we'll have links to current offerings. Then, just contact the group or instructor to sign up. Also, if your group or class is looking for a good home, visit our website for more info. We are working on building a rich selection of offerings.



Riley says: "Go play outside!"

A Little Help For Our Friends

In the past few years, we've seen several new like-minded businesses open in the Twin Cities that you might enjoy.

In Minneapolis, *Birch Clothing* at Penn & 50th offers sustainable fashion for all ages, proving every day that it's hip to be green.

Also in Minneapolis is *Re-Gifts*, a new store at Cedar and 42nd that

offers funky and cool gifts from recycled and sustainable materials.

And, just down the street at 294 Snelling Ave South is *Fast and Furless*, the Twin Cities' first vegan clothing store.

Find more unique independent businesses at www.metroiba.org. Check it out!

Growing toward a deeper shade of green

A key goal of our business has always been to create the smallest ecological footprint we could—not just with our products but in how we run our business. For example, many of our store fixtures are recycled from other stores. We also recycle our paper, fixtures, and computer equipment and reuse the boxes, bubble wrap, and styrofoam peanuts from our manufacturers.



For the past 3 years, we've also offset our store's electrical usage with sustainable energy credits from Native Energy, which helps build wind farms and methane power plants. We chose Native Energy because they put our contributions to use building new projects. It just makes us feel good to know we're helping to build windmills. *Find out more at nativeenergy.com.*

In the past year, we've also replaced all of our incandescent lights with warm light compact florescents in the main part of the store and power-sipping LED spots in our windows, which are left on all night. Not only have they reduced the cost of lighting our store, but they're a lot cooler and we have to run the A/C a lot less.

A few other nuts and bolts improvements around here...

This spring, we've been hard at work on a few updates. First, we re-created our website at www.peapods.com. It is now linked directly with our store's inventory so that when you order something online, you'll know that we actually have it in stock. We're using this new-found power to add lots of new items to our website. It's virtually like shopping our store.

We've also introduced a new Peapods logo. Working with local graphic designer Katrina Hase (incidentonthebridge.com), we wanted something that illustrated the full range of what we do without using any vegetables (i.e. peas). We were probably very picky customers, but we're extremely pleased with the final result.



Finally, we now offer bona fide gift cards instead of the charming hand-written paper ones we used to use. The new cards are very durable and reusable—when you redeem one, we'll reset it and use it again. Everything's up to date in St. Paul!

Bye Bye Oatmeal, Hello Tangerine!



Green Grass Organic Tee from Speesees. If we'd have splurged on color printing for our newsletter, this would look really cool!

Just a couple of years ago, organic baby clothes meant kinda pricey but sorta cute outfits in various shades of oatmeal. We had some oatmeal and pink or blue combos, but that was about it.

Now, our baby clothes section is alive with color! Outfits from Speesees offer green grass tees and jumpers and a pomegranate red dress with a silkscreened dandelion burst. Kate Quinn Organics has onesies and rompers and dresses in plum, chocolate, and tangerine.



Tangerine Organic Bodysuit from Kate Quinn

Sage Creek Naturals supplies us with organic pastel pinks and blues in jammies and even crib sheets. We've also expanded our collections of fair trade conventional

cotton dresses and rompers in a vibrant rainbow of colors from Global Mamas. Most of our lines will fit infants up to 2 1/2 years old.

Toymaker Spotlight: Plan Toys

When we first opened our store in 1999, one of our first suppliers was Plan Toys. We have since grown to be Minnesota's largest distributor of Plan Toys, offering everything from baby rattles to rocking horses to doll houses.

We love Plan for many reasons. First and foremost, they make great toys at affordable prices. Their original designs are truly unique and fun with what we call

great play value.

What you may not know is that Plan is on the leading edge of green manufacturing. Their chosen raw material is rubber wood from tress that can no longer be tapped to make rubber. Traditionally, those trees were burned and turned into charcoal, providing little subsequent value both economically and ecologically. Plan toys is the first and foremost company recycling this wood into toys. Plan Toys has earned ISO 14001 Certification in recognition of their environmental management practices.

Plan has also achieved SA 8000 Social Accountability certification, one of only 10 toymakers worldwide to formally certify that their products are made using fair labor practices.



In other words, Plan Toys is one of the greenest toymakers we know. We have many suppliers who follow sustainable practices, but Plan is the only one we know that has taken the steps to get certified.

Which is why we've been proud to work with Plan for so long. When you buy a Plan Toy, you know you're getting a fun, well-made toy from a company that makes a difference.



New in Store – Medela

An addition to our store last fall, we now offer Medela breast pumps, nursing bras, pump parts, and accessories. We carry the Medela Pump In Style, Pump in Style Advanced, the Harmony and the Swing, as well as the parts you need for each.



We'd been getting requests for Medela pumps for years and finally decided to

jump in. As you may know, it's pretty hard to find pumps and especially replacement parts in a retail store—most of the places selling pumps locally are in-hospital lactation centers (which are fabulous, but perhaps a little inconvenient if you need replacement valves on Saturday afternoon.) We've put together some tip sheets, but you can also email me at millie@peapods.com if you have a specific question. I'm not a lactation consultant, but after ten years of breastfeeding, I can usually put together a reasonable answer.

For general breastfeeding help and support, I also highly (!) recommend La Leche League. Their website is www.lalecheleague.org and the number for referral to a local group is 612-922-4996.

New Summer Baby Sling Options

Just in time for summer, we now offer Adjustable Cotton Pouches from Kangaroo Korner. These new pouches use stretchier cotton-blend fabrics than what was previously available. So, while their not quite as stretchy as the Kangaroo Fleece Pouches, they are still quite

comfortable and a lot cooler for summer use.

Like the fleece pouch, the Adjustable Cotton Pouch has four rows of snaps so that you can adjust its length.

A carrier with a similar concept

is the Hotslings, which is made out of a cool cotton/lycra blend stretchy fabric. The main difference with Hotslings is that



Hotslings are not adjustable,

so you have to get the size that fits you just right. But, what Hotslings lack in flexibility they make up for in fashion. We stock a large selection of everyday, designer and luxury Hotsling fabrics—good for everything from washing the car to a night on the town.

Babies Are Heavy. Ergo . . . Ergo!

After a child learns to walk, you've got 2 1/2 years where she doesn't always *want* to walk. You'll find yourself at the far end of a parking lot when suddenly...she...can't... seem...to..take....another...step.



The Ergo Baby Carrier

That's when you need an Ergo. Unlike a sling or a pouch, The Ergo centers your child's weight on your body and redistributes weight to your hips. It's a great carrier for one and two year olds who can easily ride on your back. It's much easier, more portable, and more affordable than a frame-style backpack but provides the same amount of support.

A couple of days ago, we took a long hike along the sandy banks of the Mississippi at Hidden Falls park. Our 2 year old Duncan had trouble walking in the sand, so he rode on Millie's back in the Ergo. A great time was had by all.

Build Better Big Buildings!

Wood Building sets are alive and well thanks to two classic building toys, both made in the USA. The Roy Toy building set is made in Maine, where they were first made 75 years ago. Unlike Lincoln Logs, Roy Toy set contain no plastic parts. Roy Toy is the real deal.



Another great building toy is Keva Planks, which are new this year. KEVA Planks are very similar to the Kapla blocks we used to sell, with the same dimensions and the same ability to build large, complex structures. Unlike Kapla, KEVA Planks are made from recycled hard maple, not pine. So, they stack better and show less dirt. Plus, they're made in the USA. Of all the toys we sell, KEVA Planks may have the largest age range. A 3-year old can build simple structures while a 13 year old can accomplish elaborate architectural feats like bridges and towers.

Why Are There So Many Songs About Rainbows?

Treasure Chest is a benefit CD for Pearl, the daughter of Duluth music producer Eric Swanson and his wife Patty, who has a congenital heart defect. To help out, the best of the Duluth music scene created this wonderful CD. From North Woods Bluegrass to heartfelt Folk to just plain fun, this album sizzles with delights.

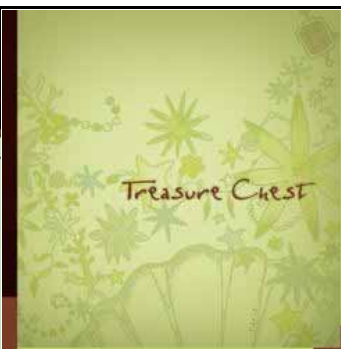
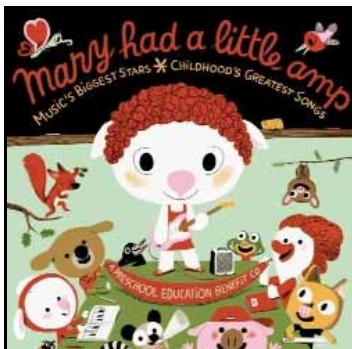
It reminds us of sitting on the shore of Lake Superior in the Amazing Grace cafe at Duluth's Canal Park on a

sunny afternoon, eating a big 'ol sandwich on fresh made bread while our 3 year old daughter dances around in front of a two piece folk band who can't help but play a little faster just to watch her dance. It's one of many similar memories that makes us love this CD. Highlights include *Mama Knows What Baby Wants* by

the Black Eyed Snakes and a dreamy rendition of *The Rainbow Connection* by the Duluth bar band The Gallows.

Which offers a perfect segue to three other distinctive benefit CDs. *For the Kids* offers Sarah MacLachlan's

sweet sounding take on *The Rainbow Connection*, while on the followup, *For the Kids Too*, Jason Mraz puts us all under its spell again.



But finally, rainbows have nothing to hide on *Mary Had A Little Amp*, when the Dixie Chicks tackle Kermit's opus with three part harmony and a banjo that's so amazing, it keeps us stargazing. This may be best version yet—we knew we'd find it some day.

Seventh Annual Sidewalk Sale!

WHOA! We need to have a SALE! We've got a whole year's worth of samples, returns, repaired toys, scratch 'n dents, odds 'n ends, leftovers, and slow sellers. Toys, clothes, diapers, shoes, you name it—we've got it. We can't hold on to this stuff much longer or we won't be able to get into our basement. So, it'll all be going on sale—all at discounts from 25-75% off.



June 29th and 30th 10am to 6pm

The fine print: Because our sidewalk sale is a busy event next to a busy street, we recommend shopping without small children. Our sale will take place rain or shine. Sidewalk sale purchases are final—no returns or exchanges. We are unable to giftwrap sidewalk sale purchases. Also, just a reminder that we are not able to accept personal checks for purchases over \$100. No fair arriving early!



We're New and Improved!

We haven't added flavor crystals, but we've been busy with all sorts of new products and ideas, including a new logo, new organic clothes, a new website, new music, new gift cards, new breast pumps, new baby slings, even new light bulbs! Look inside for details...

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