

## OCTOBER 2017 DIRECTOR'S NEWSLETTER



Dear **TechStars** Families,

Thank you for choosing **TechStars** for your child! As the Owner/Director of **TechStars by Computer Explorers of New Castle County** since 1993, my staff and I are dedicated to providing your child with an outstanding technology experience during each and every weekly class. Our curriculum is written by educators and approved by Computer Explorers corporate headquarters. My staff attends monthly in-service training and is committed to delivering technology lessons that are both fun and educational for our students. We also pride ourselves on our regular email communications with our **TechStars** families. Just as you have been receiving weekly updates about your child's technology class from your child's teacher, you can also expect to receive a monthly newsletter from me. If you have questions or need more information about **TechStars**, do not hesitate to contact me directly by email at any time.

Coding and young children may seem like an unlikely combination, but they really do mix well. In today's world coding is a skill that is fast becoming equally as important as reading, writing and arithmetic. Introducing coding to students helps build more than just programming skills. Problem solving, logic, sequencing, following directions, creativity and more are all wrapped up in computational learning – and are used well beyond technology class in many aspects of a young child's daily life. Using coding skills to power Blue-Bot, a Bluetooth-enabled robot, is powerful and a bit like magic. This robot can be programmed directly using its onboard command buttons or remotely using a special iPad app and/or the new Blue-Bot TacTile Reader with its command tiles. Running (and sometimes de-bugging) programs students create to control Blue-Bot's movements demonstrates the power of coding in a real and tangible way – and reinforces that coding is useful as well as awesome! "Why Learning To Code Is So Important for Children" by Matthew Lynch in The Tech Advocate is a brief and relevant article, <http://www.theedadvocate.org/why-learning-to-code-is-so-important-for-children/>.

At **TechStars** we understand that "un-plugged" activities are important for healthy and happy families. The season of Fall is a great time to pick apples and pumpkins, navigate your way through a corn maze, enjoy a hayride, meet barnyard animals, marvel at the changing colors of the leaves and more. Check out one or more of these local resources with your family soon.

Farms & Orchards:

- **Fifer Orchards and Country Store, Camden-Wyoming, DE** Sat, Oct 7, 14, 21 & 28, 9am – 6pm. Fall Fest Saturdays offer lots of family fun including hayrides, tractor train, pony rides, U-Pick apples and U-Pick pumpkins. Fifer Orchard also offers Corn Maze Fun Park Weekdays. Closed on Sundays. <http://www.fiferorchards.com/>

- **Linvilla Orchards, Media, PA** Check Linvilla's event calendar for details about Pumpkinland, Jack-O-Lantern Exhibit, Hayrides to the Witch's House, Corn Maze, Straw Bale Maze, Train Rides, Fishing at Orchard Lake and more. Oct 29 (1day only!) get all the pumpkins you can carry for \$29.99. <http://www.linvilla.com/calendar/>
- **Milburn Orchards, Elkton, MD** Enjoy themed events on Saturdays & Sundays, 10am - 5 pm/October hours. Apple Harvest Weekend, Sept 30 & Oct 1. Pumpkin Harvest Weekend, Oct 7 & 8. Family Fun on the Farm Weekend, Oct 14 & 15. Autumn Colors Weekend, Oct 21 & 22. Trick or Treat Weekend, Oct 28 & 29. BarnYard Buddies (farm animal area) and the BIG BackYard with lots of children' activities are always open and provide more family fun Admission \$10/ages 3-59, \$5/ages 60+ and Free/2 and under. <http://www.milburnorchards.com/fall-festival-parties/>
- **Mr. Pepper's Pumpkin Patch, Laurel, DE** Hours through Oct 31, Sundays-Fridays/12 noon until dark & Saturdays/10 am until dark. Pumpkin picking, corn maze, hayrides! Choose gourds, mums and other Fall produce. Grab lunch at the BBQ Shack on Saturdays and Sundays or bring your own lunch to enjoy at the picnic tables. Observe bees making honey in a glass-walled beehive. Don't forget your camera to take lots of family photos. <http://www.mrpepperspumpkinpatch.com/>
- **Ramsey's Farm, Wilmington, DE** Open to the public through Oct 29. Hours vary, check website calendar for specifics. This farm is an outdoor event and closes in adverse weather; call voicemail at (302)477-1499 and choose mailbox option 4 to check on farm closings/late openings due to weather. Travel around the world an 8 acre corn maze. Learn about agriculture, farmers, and food around the world as your family travels (by foot) from continent to continent and country to country. Learn how new technology and modern farming practices help fewer farmers feed more people every day. Visit many locations along the way and learn about the agriculture in that country or state! Choose from corn maze, sorghum maze, hay maze, pumpkin painting and hayrides. Hay play area is free. All activities wrist band \$10/ages 6+ years or \$6/ages 5 and under. <http://www.ramseysfarm.com/>

#### Museums, Parks and More:

- **Delaware Nature Society's Coverdale Farm Preserve, Greenville, DE** Sat, Oct 7 & Sun, Oct 8 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. RAIN OR SHINE. Harvest Moon Festival offers family fun with children's activities, hayrides, artisans, food trucks and live music. Members free. \$7/non-members ages 5 and older. Pay or become a member at the gate. [www.delnature.org/HarvestMoon](http://www.delnature.org/HarvestMoon)
- **Delaware State Parks, various locations, dates & times.** Hayrides, hikes, special harvest projects and lots of outdoor fun and learning offer something for everyone. Download the DE State Parks 2017 Fall Guide at <https://indd.adobe.com/view/45cf21b4-a6dd-4518-bf68-7fec60dd9b5b>. Choose a state park near you to discover all the family friendly activities that are scheduled from Sept though Nov. Find general information at <http://www.destateparks.com>.

- **Hagley Museum and Library, Wilmington, DE** Sat, Oct 14, 10 am - 5pm & Sun, Oct 15, 10 am – 4 pm. Hagley Craft Fair: This artisans' marketplace brings talented artisans from the Mid-Atlantic area to display and sell fine arts, crafts, and gourmet items. This premier show will feature works in wood, pottery, jewelry, fibers, metal, and other media. The fair will include a specialty food market. Admission is \$5 and free for Hagley members and children five and under. Use Hagley's Buck Road East entrance off Route 100. Review a list of 2017 vendors at <https://www.hagley.org/calendar/hagley-craft-fair>.
- **Brandywine Zoo, Wilmington, DE** Fri, Oct 0 & Sat, Oct 21, 5-7 pm. Boo at the Zoo: Kids can trick-or-treat through the zoo as it gets dark in their Halloween costumes! Members are free. Non-members pay \$5/person for ages 3+. Advanced tickets available online. Guest passes not accepted for this event. <https://brandywinezoo.org/booatthetoo/>

Wishing all the best to you and your family for the month of October!

Sincerely,

**Roni Deely**

Owner/Director

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[www.computerexplorers.com/de](http://www.computerexplorers.com/de)