



The

S.N.S Chronicle

April 2009

Message from Ms. Elinore

To My Dear Friends,

This has not been the proudest month, quarter, or even week since we last talked. As most of you know I am fighting an uphill battle with an infection called Micro Bacterial Keloni.

Since our last letter I have been in the hospital about half of the month of March. These visits were designed to get aggressive with the infection. However, when we get aggressive it sometimes takes a toll on my body. This at times, will cause me to have some very bad reactions. With all of that said let me tell you what's good about my health. While God is working on me others get to take a break. My family is closer than ever before and my family at SNS stays in touch and involved with my care. The students at SNS ask every day "How is Ms. Elinore" or "Where's Ms. Elinore." The staff helps the students make get well cards and I plaster them all over my hospital room.

Many doctors, therapists and nurses ask me the same question, "How are you holding up?", "How do you make it day in and day out?". My answer is this...

I look at the wall with all the cards from my kids and I say if they can do it so can I. My students were told at a very young age what they couldn't or shouldn't be able to do. Thank God they did not listen. The parents at SNS wake up every morning and are reminded of the fight that must continue everyday.

My motto is NEVER SAY NEVER!!!! Don't listen to the Nay Sayers but only to those who believe in you and your children. You will always be the strongest advocate for your child, and your child counts on you. You know the best and you choose the best for your child by being positive. The positive attitude

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This summer be on the look out for important updates! The next newsletter will arrive in August!

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comes from all of the new techniques, new medicines, and cures that are available. Anything great is worth waiting for. My students and I continue to be brave and love each day as the "Present" that was given to us.

With Love,
Ms. Elinore



Board Notes

From the Board

Congrats to you all on a successful Golf Tournament. We wish you all could have been there to see the participation and support. We are hoping to continue this support through the year and create a legacy for the school through the tournament. This was no small undertaking, and we especially want to thank George Pearson for all of his hard work. He did a wonderful job and gave freely of his time to see this through to the end. It is already time to get started on next year's tournament and continue this momentum.

I hope you will give a big thanks to those parents who are on the board and those parents who give their time back to the school, like George. Please keep in mind that each of these parents do not receive any payment for their participation. The tournament, for example, raised about \$12K for the school, which will help with some expenses. Unfortunately, the funds raised pale in comparison to what we need to build a new school building, pay our teachers what they are worth, and provide the tools that will help your child succeed.

We were fortunate enough to have been part of an article in the AJC this past month that addressed the financial issues in private special needs schools and the state voucher system. The cutbacks have affected us, and we are doing our best to fill these gaps. But this is a challenging business, and we understand it is a financial challenge for many of you.

There will be a tuition increase this year, and we hope you understand that we considered a number of issues when making this decision. We would love to not have to raise tuition at all, but that is not possible. What we would continue to request is that you see how you can give your time to the school and continue to get the word out to our community. We all want to see SNS succeed, and we need your help. As President of the board, I am asking from the core of my being that each of you find a way to get more involved with the school, see what you can do to help us raise funds, and provide positive public relations to the community. We all know how difficult it is to keep up with everything in life these days, and stresses

are mounting for many of us. These are the times to pull together and support each other. To be successful WE HAVE TO HAVE YOUR SUPPORT AND INVOLVEMENT. Please let us know what you can do and how you can help.

We wish you the best,
Dr. E... on behalf of the Board of Directors



Class Letters

Preschool:

In preschool we are exploring spring and things that begin to grow in this season. We are ending our work on the Alphabet; it has been a great year. Alyssa is doing well with writing and reading the little literacy books. Parker is doing well with matching and sorting. He is really blooming with counting. These two work so hard!!!

- Ms. Amanda & Ms. Kim

Non-Verbal:

Spring has sprung here in non-verbal. We have been studying all of the new life that emerges when the weather turns warm, such as flowers, bees, butterflies, bunnies, and baby chicks.

Of course there is that hard pouring RAIN! We have learned that rain is necessary for all the other spring life to thrive. When Mother Nature gives us a break from the rain we have been gearing up for field day. Everyone is sure to be a professional relay racer by May. We have been spending our afternoons on the farm with "Junie B.", and we are excited to find out how exactly she got that "peep" into her pocket.

On that note, I think I hear the tractor coming so I have to run, but I leave you with the parting wisdom of a true Georgia kid...March showers bring April flowers and May...well that is just scorching hot!!

- Ms. Erica, Ms. Kathleen, & Ms. Ashley

1st / 2nd / 3rd Grade:

Dear Friends,

Spring is upon us and we have certainly seen the April showers and we are hoping for a lot of May flowers. Our class has been learning all about the new life that spring brings and we have seen that new life in all of our school work. We have been reading with new excitement. Our math work has shown huge improvements. We are excited to be learning!

We can't believe that school is almost over and we will make sure to make this final nine weeks the best yet.

- Ms. Jodee

4th / 5th Grade:

Spring is here and that is the sign that summer is close at hand, and unfortunately, school is close to the end. Another year has come and gone. We will be ending a wonderful adventure in academics. We have gone from addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division with remainders. In Language Arts we have visited a lot of new avenues of stories from dinosaurs to earthworms, and how we sleep and dream.

We got to visit the King Tut exhibit at the Atlanta Civic Center and talk about Egypt and how it is located in Africa. Some of us did not know that Africa was a continent and not a country. Boy, how excited we all were. Then we have talked about weather and birds and how we find them in our everyday world. We got to go to the Young Chef Academy to make our own pizza, HOW MUCH FUN!!! We listened to our teacher, Ms. Tia, and learned how to make pizza from scratch.

We have had an exciting year and have come such a long way in one school year.

- Ms. Barbara & Ms. Heather

Middle School:

Dear Parents,

Many new and exciting things have happened in the past nine weeks. In math, each student received their own math book. We are working through them at whatever pace is best for each student. I don't want anyone feeling rushed or held back in math. Overall everyone is progressing very well.

In science we concluded our "7 Greatest Places" unit with our field trip to Fernbank's IMAX and lunch at the Varsity. We then began our astronomy unit which we are continuing in the final nine weeks of school. The students are all enjoying learning about the solar system we live in.

Quite a few of our students are moving up in reading. They are learning more difficult vocabulary words and reading more complex stories. It has been a wonderful nine weeks. I hope that we can conclude the final nine weeks as strong as the rest of the year as been.

- Ms. Elinore, Ms. Alyssa, & Ms. Sam

High School:

We have been busy expanding our studies of plants and Native Americans. We recently planted nasturtiums and lettuce as well as a sweet potato and pond plant, all of which are making spectacular progress! For Easter we dyed eggs using plant materials to make both dyes and patterns—BEAUTIFUL.

The group is tremendously excited about our next venture. Skylar's mom, Robin, is making us some large wooded raised beds so that the entire school can participate in the experience of gardening! This will be a great addition to summer camp as well. We are starting a spring garden in flats; planting the seeds of peas, radishes and lettuce.

The Native American unit has explored the Iroquois (Eastern Woodlands), the Cherokee (also Eastern Woodlands), and the Pueblo/Anasazi (Southwestern) tribes. We will soon be taking a field trip to the Emory Carlos Museum to supplement our study of the Mayas, Incas, and Aztecs of Central and South Americas. We enjoyed making pots, masks, blankets, dream catchers, and pictographs.

High School (continued):

We participated in the Great Backyard Bird Count, and are now studying birds and setting up feeders with suet, sunflower seeds, and thistle seeds (thistle attracts finches). Everyone is quick to point out the birds that land at the feeder that's outside of their classroom window.

Naturally, our spelling, math, and reading work is receiving equal attention, and the outcome is equally successful. We have been so busy and engaged that I hate to stop. I'm short on space but long on enthusiasm! This is a great bunch of students!

- Ms. Evelyn & Ms. Carrie

YALLS:

The young adults group finished reading and discussing the Island of the Blue Dolphin and has started reading the Ghost in the White House and Me. They have continued with job related skills and putting personal information on an application. They have also worked on improving cognitive skills continuing with the Yahtzee game, learning concepts of: "of a kind, straight, sequence, and full house". We just started with playing cards, which are used with adults to increase word retrieval, sustained attention, and memory skills.

We all enjoyed a fun night at the Gwinnett Gladiators hockey game, inviting Yall's from past classes to join us. We ate dinner in the season ticket holder's dining balcony overlooking the ice. Then we yelled and cheered and danced the Gladiators to victory in our fantastic seats. Three of our young adults won prizes of hockey jerseys and a backpack.



- Ms. Dyanne





Art:
What a great time of year to do art... Easter, we made chicks, bunnies, baskets to hang, and baskets to hunt eggs with. We use recycled materials to make some of them. Thank you Easter Bunny for the hundreds of eggs to hunt and put in our baskets. We had a blast!

- Ms. Janice

Speech/Language Groups:

All classes have been working on learning the activities we will need to participate in and enjoy the upcoming field day! We have emphasized the actions: "aim, squirt, jump run, throw, pass" and the concepts: "in, out, over, around". In the next few weeks each class will learn about the islands, choose one to make their flag, hear about Hawaiian traditions during shared reading, and continue practicing the field day actions and concepts.

Ms. Erikka's Nonverbal Class has continued working on attending to and locating the hidden ducks. We've added matching the ducks to a picture and have started searching for ducks in a book.

Ms Jodee's K-2 class has worked with Ms. Bev on categorizing vocabulary by different features, for example clothing categorized by weather, by who wears it, by color, by where it is worn, etc. This helps the students learn different ways to think and sort.

Ms. Barbara's 3-5 class has continued their work on phonological awareness, emphasizing segmenting words into syllables and sounds. We also read the Hurricane Katrina book Two Bobbies, using active listening to attend to and learn the meaning of pre-announced vocabulary words.

Ms. Alyssa's middle school and Ms. Evelyn's high school classes have worked on learning to use a voice output augmentative communication device to aid expressive communication. Using the theme of occupations, we answered and asked questions with the device, allowing the nonverbal and limited verbal students to respond aloud.

- Ms. Dyanne

Upcoming Events & Important Dates

April

- 13 – Picture Day
- 17 – Middle School – Special Olympic Regional Track & Field 10-2 @ GACA
- 21 – Field Trip to Heritage Museum & Nature Walk (4th-12 Grade)
- 21 – SNS Board meeting 7pm @ CTL
- 23 – High School trip to Carlos Museum
- 27 – K-5th Grade Special Olympic Track & Field
- 30 – Middle School Special Olympic Track & Field

May

- 1 – High School Special Olympics Track & Field
- 4 – Field Day – All Classes
- 8 – Brunch for the Bunch (all Parents)
- 12 – SNS Board Meeting 7pm @ CTL
- 18 – End of Year Program 7pm @ CTL
- 21 – LAST DAY OF SCHOOL and
End of Year Picnic & Awards Ceremony
Noon to 2pm (No After School Care)

The school office will be closed May 22 – June 5.

June

- 1 – Child Care Week #1
- 8 – SEP & Great Beg. Camp Week #1
- 15 – SEP & Great Beg. Camp Week #2
- 22 – SEP & Great Beg. Camp Week #3
- 29 – Child Care Week #2 (office closed)

July

- 6 – SEP & Great Beg. Camp Week #4
- 13 SEP & Great Beg. Camp Week #5
- 20 – Child Care Week #2 (office closed)
- 27 – Child Care Week #3 (office closed)

SNS Open House will be August 9 from 1-4pm.

The first day of school for the 2009 - 2010 school year is August 11!



First Annual SNS "Show & Shine" Car Show
Saturday April 25th 10 am-2 pm
@ Special Needs Schools
660 Davis Road, Lawrenceville

Live DJ, food, children's games, prizes, raffle drawings and much more!

Come out and help us celebrate 'true' American history while raising money for our school!

Volunteers will be needed for the day of the show. Please contact Ms. Erica or the SNS office at 678-442-6262 if you are interested in helping out!

ALOHA! AND WELCOME TO POLYNESIA!

This is the theme for our 5th annual SNS Field Day. On May 4 all classes will enjoy a day of fun exercise and south sea games, including: "Tropic Toss", "Ocean Spray", "Island Beat Hoops", and many others. This is not just a one day event. We have already started learning the exercises we will need in order to participate in the games, as well as experiencing Hawaiian stories, foods and music. There are many ways to volunteer if you want to help. We need about three more tailgate tents to provide shade for our islanders and also need volunteers to fill water balloon fillers on the morning of field day. More information to follow.

Summer Programs

2009 SNS Summer Programs

Great Beginnings (18mos-4yr) Weeks 1-5
Summer Enrichment Program (5yr-18yr) Weeks 1-5
YALLS (Post High School) Weeks 1-5

WEEK #1: June 8th -12th
WEEK #2: June 15th – 19th
WEEK #3: June 22nd – 26th
WEEK #4: July 6th -10th
WEEK #5: July 13th – 17th

Hours: 9:30 AM – 3:00 PM (SEP & YALLS) Monday thru Friday
9:30 AM – 1:00 PM (Great Beginnings- M,W,F)

Registration & Supply Fee: \$50 (due with registration form)

SEP - \$150 per week – Non SNS Students
\$75 per week – Returning SNS Students
Great Beginnings - \$110 per week – Non SNS Students
\$55 per week - Returning SNS Students

Summer Child Care Weeks (5yrs-18yrs)

June 1st – 5th
June 29th - July 3rd
July 20th – July 24th
July 27th – July 31st

Time: 7:30 AM – 6:00 PM (M-F)
Cost - \$150 per week



We are now accepting summer camp & 2009-10 school year registrations on a first come basis from SNS students & the public. Spaces are few and filling fast. Go to our website:

www.specialneedsschools.org

for information and forms or call the school office at 678-442-6262. A registration fee is due with your applications in order to reserve your child's spot.

Announcements

Yearbooks

Our fantastic SNS Yearbooks are here already! There are extra Yearbook copies available for purchase @ \$30 (on a first come basis) in the school office. We will be having a "Yearbook Signing Party" so Ms. Elinore is holding off distributing them until after they are "signed". If you would like to come by the office and browse through a copy – please do so! The Yearbook Committee (Lisa Bryan, Christina Coalson and others) did a super job and worked very hard on this inaugural edition!

Next year every one will automatically get a yearbook (we have included the cost in the Book Fees you pay up front in August at Open House)!

We will let you know which day in mid to late April that the signing party will be (during school hours).

Spirit Wear

SNS Spirit Wear is still available.

T-shirts \$15

Car Magnets \$8

See Carol to purchase your SNS Spirit Wear!



Annual Golf Classic

Golfers braved the rainy weather to participate in the Special Needs Schools of Gwinnett (SNS) Annual Golf Classic. Held at TPC Sugarloaf, the classic raised around \$13,000 for the construction of a new school building.

“We are extremely blessed to be a part of such a giving community,” says Elinore Trotter, Director of SNS. “Without the sponsors, participants and volunteers, this event could never have taken place. The children, staff, family and friends of SNS greatly appreciate all the support.”

Participants in the SNS Annual Golf Classic enjoyed a gourmet banquet reception after golfing had concluded. Then they participated in a silent auction and raffle that included giving away an 8day/7night trip vacation.

“I’m so glad this year’s golf classic was such a success,” says George Pearson, organizer of the SNS Golf Classic and parent of a SNS student.





Send us your pictures! If you have any photos from SNS Events email them to: snsnewsletter@live.com

Thank You's



The Easter Bunny visited SNS again this year on Friday, April 3rd and boy did the kids have a blast!. Each class participated in an Easter Egg Hunt (thanks parents for the candy and a great BIG thanks to the YALLS Group for helping stuff and hide almost 900 eggs!). Then, each student had their picture taken with the Bunny and as always was given a very special treat. We are SO glad that the Bunny loves us so much. It's not just an opportunity for a fun time – a lot of learning takes place during all the activities. It runs the gamut from reinforcing PT, OT, Speech, Social and Math Skills. THANK YOU EASTER BUNNY!!

Thank You SNS Families! We collected and then delivered 145 items for the Lawrenceville Co-op where they will be put to very good use at this holiday season. There was a need and you answered it – and we couldn't be prouder!