



The Owl's Hoot

Sol Feinstone
Elementary School
PTO Newsletter

May 2009

PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE

It is hard to believe that it's May already. We have had tons of rain, but at least it is getting warmer. It is lovely not to have to argue with my sons who have desperately wanted to wear shorts since February.

We had some wonderful events in April! We all enjoyed our annual Book Fair ~ special thanks to Debbie Van Aken, Leslie Stiffler, and Alexis Hartman for running another fun and successful fair. Many grades enjoyed a variety of experiences through our Artists in Residence program. Through this program, our 3rd and 4th graders produced tiles for an exciting mural of America ~ make sure you stop to see our newest mural in the hallway by the

gym. Special thanks to all the parents who helped assemble and grout the mural ~ it looks fabulous. We also enjoyed visiting the annual Art Show at Council Rock South. Thanks to Mrs. Crooks for all her hard work.

May will prove to be another busy month. Staff Appreciation week is May 4th - May 8th. Our young musicians will be showcased in concerts for band, orchestra, and chorus. We will have an exciting assembly on May 12th when Freddy Fusion comes to visit. On May 18th - 22nd the Diversity committee will be presenting our annual Multicultural week. Please check the website for further information.

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Reminders

5/7	PTO Meeting
5/12	Early dismissal
5/18-22	Multicultural week
5/19	School closed; Portfolio day
5/25	School closed
5/29	Field day

**May's
Words to
Learn by:
Think and
Be Fair**

FROM OUR PRINCIPAL: JOHN HARLAN

Can you believe we are now in the month of May? Even though the year is winding down, I am extremely excited to introduce a new approach to foster a sense of community among students. This approach is called restorative practices. Restorative practices enable students to restore and build community in an increasingly disconnected world.

Educators around the country are using restorative practices to proactively prevent problems like bullying and violence. Research shows that restorative approaches can transform student behavior and build healthy school communities.

A few teachers at SFE have already implemented this

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FROM OUR PRESIDENTS (continued)

May 2009

Our visiting author, David Lubar, will come to our school on May 21st. Finally, we will end the month with our annual Field Day on May 29th.

The PTO still needs to fill a few slots for our board next year. Please check the PTO website. If taking on a position seems like too much for you, consider asking a friend to share the position. This not only cuts the workload, but also can be more fun!

I look forward to seeing you at the next PTO meeting on May 7th. Among other things, we will be voting on the PTO budget for next year. We will also be having an evening PTO meeting on May 13th at 7pm for those who are unable to attend the daytime meeting.

Sincerely,
Kim Gibbons and Deb Emery
PTO Co-Presidents

FROM OUR PRINCIPAL (continued)

practice into their daily/weekly routines. From what I have observed, students are taking more responsibility and ownership for their actions, have increased opportunities for relationship-building with peers, and are using problem-solving skills to find solutions that will ultimately create a safer, supportive learning environment at our school.

Restorative practices nicely complement the Responsive Classroom Approach to learning that all our teachers are using on a daily basis. Recently, Miss Potoka's and Miss Firth's 6th graders modeled a "fishbowl activity" or "circles" for staff at our April faculty meeting and PTO mem-

bers at their May meeting to show how beneficial restorative practices can be for our students and school. Because of this, our teachers want to make this a building goal for next school year. I will also be offering a workshop for parents on this topic during Council Rock Education Week in January 2010 to better acquaint parents with this new approach in building an even healthier school community at Sol Feinstone. I can't wait!!!

Have a magnificent month of May!!!

Regards,

Mr. Harlan

The Hospitality Committee

Thank you to all who volunteered for Staff Appreciation Week.

We will be looking for volunteers for our last event—the End of Year Luncheon!

This is a great opportunity for 6th graders and parents to say thank you and good-bye.

Please contact Danielle M. Portnoy (DANIPET2@aol.com) if you are able to help.

Test Anxiety

For Students

Today is the day of a big test at school, and you feel awful. Your stomach hurts and you have a headache. Maybe your muscles feel tense and you feel a little shaky or sweaty. You know you haven't been bitten by the flu bug - but you may have a case of the jitters, also known as test anxiety. Anyone can get test anxiety, but someone who really wants to get every answer right might be more prone to feeling this way. Kids who worry a lot also might feel anxious at test time. Not being prepared for a test can cause test anxiety as well as not getting enough sleep or not having a good breakfast or lunch.

What Can You Do?

- ◆ **Ask for help.** Talk to your mom or dad, your teacher, or your school counselor. Just talking to someone about test anxiety can make you feel better. Describe what happens to you when you're taking a test and these people can help you figure out some solutions. For instance, learning study skills can boost your test-day confidence.
- ◆ **Be prepared.** Pay attention in class. Do your homework. Study for the test. On test day, you're more likely to feel like you know the material.
- ◆ **Expect the best.** Once you have prepared, think positively. Say to yourself, "I studied and I'm ready to do my best."
- ◆ **Block bad thoughts.** Watch out for any negative messages you might be sending yourself about the test ("I'm no good at taking tests" or "I'm going to freak out if I get a bad grade"). These thoughts can make anxiety worse and make it harder for you to do well on the test.
- ◆ **Accept mistakes.** Everyone makes mistakes. Be forgiving of your own mistakes, especially if you prepared for the test and are set to do your best.
- ◆ **Take care of yourself.** You'll feel your best if you get enough playtime, sleep, and nutritious food. This is important all the time, but be extra-sure you get all three the day before a test.
- ◆ **Breathe better.** OK, so you already know how to breathe. But did you know that breathing exercises can help calm you down? (Just try not to take in too much air because it might make you feel dizzy.) Here's how to do it: **Inhale** (breathe in) slowly and deeply through your nose and then **exhale** (breathe out) slowly through your mouth. Do this two to four times if you begin to get worried or anxious during a test and you just might breathe easier, feel more calm, and be in a better frame of mind to do your best on the test!

FROM THE HEALTH OFFICE

May 2009

Physical and Dental Forms Due NOW!!

Dear Parents,

Please note that school physical and dental forms are due NOW for this school year. Several reminder letters have been sent, but still no response from many parents. If your child has had a physical or dental within the last year, you may submit a form dated from that appointment.

Parents are asked to remember, as in previous years, field trip privileges, and possibly final report cards, may be withheld if the required forms are not received in the Health Office. The Pennsylvania state requirements are the following:

- ◆ Physical Exam forms are required for ALL of the following:
 - ◆ K or 1st grade (the year of school entry)
 - ◆ 6th grade
 - ◆ out of state transfers this year
- ◆ Dental Exam forms are required for ALL of the following:
 - ◆ K or 1st grade (the year of school entry)
 - ◆ 3rd grade
 - ◆ out of state transfers this year

Once again, your prompt response to this reminder would be much appreciated. For your convenience, forms may be accessed and printed from the 'nurse' webpage on the SF school website, and may be faxed to school to #215 944 2497.

Thank you,

Mrs. Daniels



Lights! Camera! Book Fair — A Success!

Thanks to the amazing numbers of volunteers and to the support of Sol Feinstone staff and families, the bookfair was a great success! The PTO realizes a 25% profit on each book sold at the fair and this year we achieved a profit of \$4543! Additionally, \$440 worth of books were earned to further stock SFE libraries in the next school year. Also, as a result of our "loose change" collection, Scholastic will be donating 21 books to charitable organizations.

If you visited or worked at the fair last week, you likely witnessed the excitement in the room. The students LOVE the bookfair and the opportunity to shop for books for summertime reading. There were many adults who got to pick out some of their own summer reads as well. Thanks again to the teachers for supporting the disruption in their teaching and tolerating the exuberance of the students.

Enjoy a summer of reading!

Your Book Fair Co-Chairs,
Alexis Hartman, Leslie Stiffler, and Debbie VanAken

Cash Back Program

We came close to reaching our March Madness Box Top Contest goal raising \$691! With the \$442 we raised with ACME receipts, our monthly total was **\$1133**. Principal Harlan will have **blue** hair for a day, but the date is top secret! Thank you so much for participating in the contest. **There will be another contest this fall, so please remember to save Box Tops over the summer.**

Please continue to send Box Tops, ACME & McCaffrey receipts, Labels for Education, Tyson red ABC123 labels, and Market Day UPC codes. To earn \$ for our school while you shop, register your Genaurdis club card, as well as your Visa, Mastercard, Diners Club & American Express cards at www.escrip.com. Also, you can register your Target credit card at www.Target.com.

Confused? Please contact Beth Mullen (brmullen@yahoo.com) or Marie Kiefer (kieferfamily9@comcast.net) with any questions. Thanks for your support!

Artists in Residence

Alison Elder

The Artists In Residence program at Sol Feinstone has brought interesting and diverse art experiences for our students in all grade levels.

- ◆ Kindergarten students learned about Eric Carle and made colorful paste and paper collages based on Eric Carle's illustrations.
- ◆ Both first and fifth graders learned yoga and meditation techniques through the Yoga in Motion program.
- ◆ The second grade reinforced their learning about butterflies through "Metamorphosis," a program that uses dance to retell the story of butterfly metamorphosis.
- ◆ Our sixth grade students constructed pinhole cameras and used them to take photos that they developed using traditional darkroom techniques.
- ◆ If you have a chance, stop by the hallway near the gymnasium to see the incredible mosaic mural of the United States of America made by our third and fourth grade classes.

Artists In Residence is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing curriculum-based arts programs that enrich and enliven the students' educational experiences. Many thanks to our PTO for making this program possible and to our parent volunteers who spent their time assisting the artists and students during the residencies.

**Birthday Books**

Cassandra Lockett 215-369-0191

Karen Mealey 215-493-8658



The following students have recently celebrated their birthdays by donating books to the library:

Evan Bogle

Devon Ceslak

Patrick Curry

Christopher DiMedio

Richie Goulazian

Angelina Hachoose

Esther Kardos

Johnny Kelly

Ari Kulka

Melissa LaPierre

Grace McDermott

Jonathan Pugh

Annemarie Reardon

Samantha Schnell

Cole Spiro

We thank these children and their families for their lasting gift to Sol Feinstone's library.