



PAW PRINTS

A Letter from the Principal's Desk

By Melissa Mister



Dear Parents,

The 2010/2011 school year is off to a great start! Teachers completed all of their beginning of year assessments, and moved right into addressing their individual student's needs to ensure all of our students' academic growth. You can support your child by making sure that he/she is in school everyday on time so that he/she doesn't miss out on instruction.

Our school staff is having a great time recognizing the many students who follow the South Shore Way. Students and classes who remember to **Be safe, Be respectful, and Be responsible** earn special privileges and rewards. Please remind your child daily to follow the South Shore Way.

The new additions to our Extended Day Program are a big hit. Our students are learning lots, and enjoying Joffrey Ballet, Chicago Children's Choir, and Merit Violin instruction. In addition, they continue to enjoy visual arts, music, creative movement, ethnic percussion, sports, and computer classes. Extended Day ends at 5 PM. Be on time for pick-up to avoid suspension from the program.

A huge thanks goes to all of the parents who've attended a F.I.G. (Family Involvement Group) meeting so far. A special thanks to F.I.G. Chair, Mrs. Alexis Brown for her continued leadership and Ms. Yvonne Sherman for heading the successful taffy apple sale. Mrs. Andrea Thirston, Ms. Georgette Reynolds, Ms. Yolanda Whisenton & Ms. Karla Johnson for leading the newsletter committee. F.I.G. efforts directly benefit our students and school community. If you haven't done so already, join today!

Thanks for a fantastic start to the school year. I'm confident that our combined efforts will ensure our students' ongoing success.

Sincerely,

Melissa Mister
Principal

SSFAA FIG Newsletter

Volume 2, Issue 1

November 2010

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SSFAA Important Dates



November 11-Veterans Day (no school)

November 12-Professional Development Day (no school)

November 15, 9 am-SSFAA School Tour for Prospective Parents

November 15-19, 2010-Scholastic Book Fair (contact Yvonne Sherman to volunteer at 773-530-9334)

November 17-Report Card Pick Up (no classes)

November 17-Preparing for ISAT Meeting (3rd grade parents)

November 22, 5 pm-FIG Mtg; 5:45 pm-PAC Mtg

November 23, 4 pm-F.A.M.I.L.Y. Literacy Workshop

November 24-25, Thanksgiving Break (no school)

December 13, 9 am-SSFAA School Tour for Prospective Parents

December 16-Winter Dance (Sponsored by Girls in Motion, admission is a new toy)

December 17-Last Day of School before Winter Break (no Extended Day programs)

Kid Friendly Cuisine

*Easy Spaghetti Bolognese** Submitted By Georgette Reynolds *(from www.Disney.com)

Not only does helping in the kitchen teach children valuable math skills such as measuring, counting, and recognizing shapes and patterns, but it also allows children to spend quality time with their parents. Here's a quick one-pot recipe that you can enjoy cooking with your child!

Easy Spaghetti Bolognese



Ingredients:

- 1/2 lb of ground beef (or ground turkey or soy crumbles)
- 1, 26-oz jar pasta sauce
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt (or 1/2 tsp table salt)
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 cups water
- 1/2 lb angel hair pasta (broken into thirds)
- 2 cups greens (baby spinach or chopped kale)
- Freshly grated parmesan cheese

Directions:

1. In a large, heavy pot over medium heat, sauté the beef until it is browning & no longer pink (3-4 minutes)
2. Add the sauce & cook, stirring for 1-2 minutes, then stir in salt, sugar, olive oil, water, pasta & greens
3. Stir constantly until the mixture comes to a boil, then turn heat to low, cover the pot & simmer gently making sure the pot doesn't scorch (10 minutes or until pasta is tender)
4. Serve with grated parmesan cheese

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FIG News!!



Become a friend of the FIG at SSFAA on Facebook at www.facebook.com/ssfaafig

The **FIG Membership Drive** is now through November 30th. Forms available at the sign in/sign out desk. Become a FIG Member for \$10 and receive the \$10 discount off a \$35 family membership to the DuSable Museum. Offer ends November 17th (report card pickup). For more info: Yvonne Sherman, 773-530-9334 or evietravel@yahoo.com

FIG Officers

Alexis Brown, Chair
Yvonne Sherman,
Treasurer

FIG Meeting Schedule

Monday, November 22*
Tuesday, December 7
Meetings begin at 5 pm

*FIG Members will vote on the FIG Budget

We'd LOVE to see you there!

Please put the **Box Tops & Labels for Education** in a sandwich bag with parent's & child's name and room #. Place in the pink box in the Main Office by November 17th (report card pick up).

The **Butter Braid Fundraiser** will continue until November 3rd with a pick up on November 22nd.

For more info: Alexis Brown, 773-721-5776 or alexis-brown25@gmail.com

Kid Friendly Jokes!

By Yolanda Whisenton

Knock, knock.
Who's there?
Mae.
Mae who?
Maybe I'll tell you,
maybe I won't.



Knock, knock.
Who's there?
Cargo.
Cargo who?
Cargo, beep, beep!

Spotlight on...New Teachers!

Ms. Sinora Barron, 2nd grade teacher, is a Chicago native who was born and raised right here in the South Shore community! She has been in the field of education since 2002, first as a teaching assistant, and then started teaching in 2005.

Ms. Barron has worked in both the private and public sector of education. She attended Chicago State University where she obtained a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology (2002) and a Master of Arts in Teaching in Elementary Education (2005). In 2007, with a desire to continue her education, Ms. Barron enrolled in Benedictine University's one-year intensive reading program. In 2008, she earned an additional Master of Education in Reading from Benedictine University. We are so excited about the wealth of knowledge Ms. Barron brings to the SSFAA staff!



Ms. Polek, 1st grade (above)
Ms. Barron, 2nd grade (not pictured)

Ms. Kara Polek is a new 1st grade teacher at SSFAA. Becoming a teacher was an easy decision for Ms. Polek since she comes from a family of educators. Her mother has been a CPS teacher for 34 years, her uncle is a principal in CPS, her stepmother is a retired elementary school teacher, and her sister is a Kindergarten teacher here at SSFAA.

Ms. Polek received her master's degree in June 2009 from National Louis University through the Academy for Urban School Leadership (AUSL) and completed a year-long residency at Dodge Renaissance Academy in West Garfield Park in a 1st grade classroom. Last year, she taught 1st grade at Plato Learning Academy in the Austin Community.

Ms. Polek feels lucky that her sister recommended her to Mrs. Mister as a potential candidate last spring. Ms. Polek said, "South Shore Fine Arts Academy has so many programs that make it such a rich and positive learning environment for all of our students."

Ms. Polek tries to integrate a variety of activities to engage students' in learning-including the arts! "First grade is arguably one of the most important grades in the primary level due to the fact that growth is so huge! They come in after just completing kindergarten and end ready to enter 2nd grade- a jump in maturity as well as in their skill levels," Ms. Polek explained. She says that one of the best features of SSFAA is the strong parental involvement which truly defines the school. When Ms. Polek is not teaching, she enjoys going to concerts, attending sporting events, and spending time with friends.

Spotlight on New Teachers! (cont'd from page 4)



Ms. Deborah Brown, is a new Library Teacher at South Shore Fine Arts Academy but very "seasoned" with experience. She retired from teaching a variety of elementary grades and doing professional development in the area of Literacy. Ms. Bown feels good to be back in the world of teaching, and with her love of books, the library is just the place for her! She enjoys exposing students to a wide variety of books, authors, and illustrators. She is thrilled to open up new worlds to them through engaging read-alouds and book discussions.

Ms. Brown says that SSFAA is a great place to teach. She finds that the children are excited about learning and the adults are excited about teaching. She and her students are learning to do things "the South Shore way." They're Safe, Responsible and Respectful! Away from work, Ms. Brown enjoys nature photography. As part of her home based business, *Spirit Sent*, she uses photos to create inspirational note cards. She is also totally excited about expecting her first grandchild in a few months!

Websites to Watch

By Andrea Brown-Thirston

Science Fair Ideas (Ideas for children's science fair projects)

http://www.sciencefairsanity.com/home/sci/smartlist_12/free_project_ideas.html

Dolch Sight Word List (List of 220 most common words found in children's reading books)

<http://www.tlsbooks.com/dolchsightwordsflashcards.pdf>



National Geographic Kids (Features different games and activities each month)

<http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/kids/>

Math Games for Kids (An action packed site for elementary and middle school students)

www.mathplayground.com

Teacher in the Library Program

Chicago Public Library

Through the Teacher in the Library Program, certified teachers provide a structured, after-school learning environment in the library where they assist both students and parents.

Teachers help students to: focus, use appropriate learning strategies, and find the best resources for completing their homework assignments.

Teachers help parents to: learn how to help their children at home with school assignments and answer questions they have regarding their children's homework.

Locations Near SSFAA

Avalon

8148 South Stony Island

(312) 747-5234

Monday-Thursday, 3-6 pm

South Shore

2505 East 73rd Street

(312) 747-5281

Monday-Thursday, 3-6 pm



For other participating libraries and locations, go to:

http://www.chipublib.org/eventsprog/programs/teach_inlibschedule.php

Science Fair Tip #1: Choose an Exciting Topic!

By Andrea Brown-Thirston (Adapted from www.sciencebuddies.org)

This school year, 3rd graders at SSFAA will participate in the schools' 1st Science Fair! Although they will not be eligible to compete in the Chicago Public Schools Citywide Competition until 6th grade, SSFAA wants to make sure they are well-prepared so we're starting early!

Each newsletter this year will give a helpful tip for parents and students as they plan for the big event scheduled for the 4th quarter (mid-April 2011).

Choose an Exciting Topic

1. Help your child to choose a topic that will excite and interest him/her. If they're bored or confused by the topic, it will show.
2. Encourage your child not to be afraid to try something new. Some of the best scientific discoveries happened by accident.
3. Remember that complicated-looking projects do not guarantee a win. The simpler it is to demonstrate and explain, the better.



Parents, take photos of your child doing cool science experiments & share them with us...we'll be sure to include the pictures in the upcoming issues!

Email us at:

1st Grade...It's Not Like Kindergarten!

Tips to Help Your New 1st Grader Have Social/Emotional Success

By Karla J. Johnson, M.S. Ed, M.S.W.

Gone are the days of kindergarten where coloring, play areas, circle time and coddling dominated the day. Welcome to "big kid school" where life becomes more structured and, sometimes, more stressful for children. This stage of development is considered crucial for young children's social and academic development. Erik Erikson (1957) calls this period of life "Industry versus Inferiority (Competence)". During this time children are learning how to perfect the more formal skills of living: relating to their peers in accordance to rules, progressing from free play to more structured group play that requires team work, mastering the three R's (reading, writing and arithmetic) and learning to increase their self-control through practice and structure. Here are some tips to help your first grader have a healthy social-emotional experience during this stage.

Most six-year old's:

Are all ego and want to be the center of attention.

Remind your first grader on a daily basis of those behaviors you expect them to display in class and to follow the school rules; sometimes their impulses come before they think out their actions.

Have difficulty being flexible.

Inflexibility in the classroom can lead to teacher-student conflicts. Explain to your child that it is important to listen and follow the directions of the teacher. There are many peer influences that can often lead to "red notes" home.

Need structure, structure, structure.

As homework responsibilities increase-so will the need for structure and discipline. Make sure you designate a "homework space" for your child that is free from the distractions of TV, siblings and noise.

Will make mistakes.

Before you scream about what they did wrong-ask **WHY** they did it. Often time mistakes are misunderstandings and can be problem-solved without yelling. Allowing a child to look at their mistake and think of alternative solutions increases their problem solving skills.

Desire consistent communication.

Check-in with your first grader at the end of the school day. Ask questions such as: How was your day? What did you do? How did you like that? Did anything interesting happen today? What color were you on? If you talk to them now, they will talk to you later as teenagers.

You can help by encouraging your child as they:

Develop a positive, realistic self-concept.

Learn to respect themselves.

Begin to understand their uniqueness.

Gain an awareness of their feelings and learn how to express them.

Learn how to participate in groups.

Begin to learn from their mistakes.



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 Fax: 773-752-5232
 phill@farmersagent.com

Imagine YOUR ad here!
 Contact Alexis Brown
 773-721-5776 or alexisbrown25@gmail.com

What's Happening Around Town

By The FIG Newsletter Editors

<p>November 6, 2010, 2 pm LEGO Atlantis Kids Party Border's in Beverly 2210 West 95th Street Best for ages 8-12 www.borders.com</p>	<p>November 20, 2010, 6 pm Magnificent Mile Lights Festival North Michigan Avenue (from Wacker to Oak Street) FREE!</p>	<p>DuSable Museum Discount Don't forget, as part of the FIG membership, you can get a DuSable Museum Family Membership for \$25 (retail value \$35)! www.dusablemuseum.org</p>
<p>November 20-21 Chicago Toy & Game Fair Navy Pier (600 E. Grand) Adults, \$10; Children 3-13, \$5; under 3, FREE! For more info: http://www.chitag.com</p>	<p>Every Saturday, 11 am-3 pm FREE Crafts for Kids Lakeshore Learning Store 2255 West 95th Street For more info: 773-233-9210</p>	<p>For more info: Alexis Brown, 773-721-5776 or alexisbrown25@gmail.com</p>

