



STEVENS FOREST NURSERY SCHOOL

A COOPERATIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

410-997-0808 www.stevensforestnurseryschool.org

December 2011

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President Message: Casey Otten

Dear SFNS Families,

We're home for the Holidays! Many thanks again to everyone who helped us move back into the neighborhood center; our classrooms look great!

December promises to be another exciting month for students and families. We'll kick off the month with our Welcome Back/Winter Festival. I hope to have a chance to celebrate with all our

families. I'm also looking forward to decorating our home with this month's holiday crafts. We wrap up December with our Holiday parties for each class, always a favorite! I'd like to wish each of our families a joyous Holiday Season, warmest wishes to you all!

PS We will be holding elections for our 2012-2013 Board in the new year. Please let me know if you are interested in

being a member of the board next year or if you have questions about what each position entails. We will be sending out additional information in subsequent newsletters. Thank you!

Teacher Notes:

Ms. Katie writes:

It is wonderful to see all of our friends after our Thanksgiving break! It is even more wonderful to be back in our school building. I am truly thankful for being back "home" and having such wonderful families who are so supportive.

Last month, we started practicing writing our names, learning about

Native Americans, Pilgrims and Thanksgiving traditions. Our friends have become amazing at patterns! Ms. Ann and I are quite impressed! It is so wonderful to see them grow right before our very eyes.

The Holiday Season is upon us and what a fun December we have in store for all of our friends! This month our

3day class will discuss many holiday traditions including Kwanzaa, Hanukkah and Christmas. We will experience a special snack on Dec. 16th to celebrate Hanukkah and there is a rumor that old Saint Nick will be making an appearance at our Christmas party on Dec. 23rd. Please hand in a wrapped book for your child and any siblings attending by Dec. 16th so that our special visitor will spread

Ms. Katie cont.

Holiday joy to your special boy or girl.

Thank you for sharing your child with us each and every day. They are learning so much and add so much to our class. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions or concerns.

Thank you again for your continued support!

Ms. Monica writes:

"Home for the Holidays" is my theme song this month between being back in the neighborhood center and my daughter home from college at mid-month. It makes my favorite time of the year even more special.

I love the Holidays and I love being able to teach and discuss the wonderful Holidays in December with the children. Learning that not everyone celebrates just Christmas or celebrates more than one Holiday is a true learning experience for the children. I also enjoy our little Hanukkah and Kwanzaa celebrations to get just a taste of other cultures. Of course, more fun in the month includes making their "own" gingerbread house in the 4day class and our Holiday parties at the end of the month with our SFNS class families.

The 2day class is doing well with coming into school on their own and improving in our sharing with others. They are learning to communicate with the sharing of their "All About Me" posters. Hopefully the adjustment to a new environment will be an easy one. The 4day class is doing well in writing their own names and working on writing new letters each week. They are learning a lot about different animals each week with our letter days. They also seem to enjoy sharing information about themselves with "Our Favorites" bucket day.

Finally, I'd like to wish everyone a safe, happy and enjoyable Holiday Season.

Membership Memos: Lori Hall

Yes, we still have openings in all of our classes for this current school year. Please let anyone you know that might be interested in a spot for next year 2012-2013 that joining now guarantees a spot for the following year.

Registration 2012-2013 School Year Begins January 9, 2012

Registration forms for the 2012-2013 school year will be placed in your folders the first week back after Winter break. In-house registration for current members, siblings and alumni will begin on Jan. 9th until Jan 20th. The HC Preschool Fair is Jan. 21st and we will begin accepting registrations for any open spaces in the classes on a first come-first serve basis at that time.

Also, when observations are present in the classes; please say "Hello" and ask the families if they have any questions they would like answered by a current family member. Thank you for your help in supporting our school.



Inside the Classes:

4Day Coordinator: Holly Mays

**Happy Holidays
To All!**

2Day Coordinator:

Aparna Shanbhag

Happy Birthday to

**Casey and Colin who
will be 3 years old in
December!**

The ongoing "All About Me" weeks have been so much fun for the twos. Their faces light up pointing out people or things they know and love. We will have more "All About Me" weeks beginning in January so that all the children get a turn.

Happy Holidays to everyone!

Congratulations to Penelope who became a big sister to Daphne Barbara Kennedy On November 21!

Best wishes to the Kennedy family from all of us at SFNS!

3Day Coordinator:

Sharon Kemmlein

We enjoyed a delicious Thanksgiving Feast last month and I can't wait until our Hanukkah Celebration and Holiday Party in December. I know we're all happy to be back in our building again and our kids are adjusting their routines into the bigger space. All parents should review the co-oping responsibilities because the tasks before and after school for co-op families are more extensive than we had to do in The Other Barn. Let's hope we keep the warmer weather through the month and they get some time in the

Playground to work out all of the 3-yr -old energy before pick up time. Chloe is always begging to extend playtime after school by heading straight to the big playground so if the weather is right, we'd love to have some friends join us!

Congratulations to Andrew who became a big brother to Cate Oxyer On November 11!

Best wishes to the Oxyer family from all of us at SFNS!

Tuition due by the 5th of each month.

Late payments are subject to a \$10.00 per month late fee.

Please add to your check when you are aware that your payment is late.

Treasurer Reminders: Diane Imbach

I would like to wish all our families a wonderful Holiday Season. What a great way to start it by moving back into our school building!

Budget Survey:

A Budget Survey will be placed in your child's folder this week or it can be found on the last page of the newsletter. Please take the time to complete and return it to the basket located with the class folders by **December 9th**.

Payment Reminders:

Tuition is due on December 1st (grace period extends through the 5th). Late payments are subject to a \$10 per month fee. Please include late fee with your payment if you expect it will be received after December 5th. Checks should be mailed directly to me or dropped off in the black lock box located in the back of the students' folder file during school hours. Please be reminded that ALL cash payments must be made to me in person. Cash should NOT be mailed or left in the box.

Fundraising: Julia McDonough

Thank you to all the families who participated in the Holiday Wreath Fundraiser and Original Works! Together the fundraisers raised over \$1200.

Holiday Wreaths will be delivered the week of December 5th. When I receive the confirmation from the company, I will email to notify families when they can be picked up. As for the sent gift wreaths, they are guaranteed to be delivered by December 10th. If you have an issue; please refer to your receipt, which I placed in your mailboxes at the school.

Original Artworks should also be delivered the week of December 4th.

Next up, Pancake Breakfast! Look for details in the January newsletter and your folders.

Again, thank you all for your continued support of our school!

Restaurant Nights: Sharon Kemmlein

Thanks to all for attending restaurant nights and supporting the school. These are social events more than they are fundraising and it's been really fun seeing so many families enjoying a night out together. In Sept, Three Brothers donated \$79.69

and Mimi's Café donated \$94.38 for October. Cheeburger's total is still unknown but we had a great time seeing our friends and enjoying some milkshakes.

Coming in December LEDO's Night—more info. on date and time to come. Watch your folders.

Ways to Support Stevens Forest Nursery School

1. Amazon.com purchases can be made thru the Stevens Forest Nursery School Website go to www.stevensforestnurseryschool.org click on "Support Us" and you are redirected to Amazon.com proceed as you normal
2. Harris Teeter Together In Education Program-our school code is #1029-Stevens Forest Nursery School. You can also give the cashier this number at checkout just one time and they will get your card linked to our account.
3. Safeway Card-Our school code is \$657404-Stevens Forest Nursery School

Things To Do in December

Festival of Lights

December 2-31 10am-10pm
Washington DC Temple

Christmas on the Beach

December 3 1-3pm
North Beach Pavilion

Holiday Mart

December 3 10am-5pm
Gary J. Arthur Community Ctr

The Trains of Christmas

December 3-31 1-5pm
Hagerstown Roundhouse Museum

Children's Weekend

December 10 9am-5pm
December 11 12n-5pm
Downtown Frederick

Waterskiing Santa

December 24 1pm
National Harbor

Baltimore's New Year's Eve

December 31 9pm-12:30am
Baltimore Inner Harbor

Stevens Forest Nursery School

Welcome Back Winter Fest

**Sunday, December 4
11:00-1:00pm**

Come and enjoy the wonderful activities the Social Committee has planned. Enjoy some time socializing with your SFNS family as a kick off to the Holiday Season.

How To Cope With Preschooler Routines During Holidays

By Stephanie Olsen

Preschool Rock.com

It's holiday time, and you're likely awash with plans of upcoming day trips, large dinners, and overnight visitors (much to the delight of your preschooler). When you add shopping, decorating, and cooking to the mix, it's no surprise that regular nap times and pre-bedtime routines suffer-and when that happens, the behavior of your over-excited, over-tired preschool child can spiral out of control.

Change is Good

Actually, temporarily losing the predictability of routine isn't necessarily a bad thing, especially when it's replaced with something as inherently healthy as family visits and get-togethers. In fact, learning that nap time is do-able in a different bed or can be had on grandpa's lap is a positive lesson for your preschool child. It introduces concepts of adaptation and embracing change (instead of being afraid of it)-all necessary life skills.

Although you may never have a toddler comfortable enough to regularly sink down in the middle of the living room floor for a quick snooze, with the rest of the family going about their boisterous way, we have all seen our children's capacity for doing just that (ie. Passed out in front of the tv, a favorite video playing).

Plan Ahead, Just a Little

If you know you've got some travelling coming up, try to block it out so your high-energy child isn't cooped up on consecutive days. For a portion of the trip, consider sending your husband ahead while you take the train with your preschooler-the novelty of train travel, and just the ability to walk around freely can certainly break the tedium. (On the way back, you drive.)

One mom had a great success when she shared driving duties with her sister-in-law in a mini-van. The mix of cousins, all of different ages, blended well together. They entertained each other as only children can (sometimes just watching older children interact is contentment enough for a drowsy toddler), and the older cousins were happy to spend time with their younger relatives (reading, playing peek-a-boo and other silly games).

Expect the Best

Even though preschool children do tend to function best when in a familiar routine, parents and caregivers sometimes give the actual schedule too much importance. You'll often see this played out as families expand-with a couple's first child, nap time was written in stone (crib, pj's lights out). The second kid napped in his stroller (at the playground, grocery store, wherever). The third? Somewhere on the floor.

Parents are often pleasantly surprised when anticipated behaviors never arise; children who never nap more than 20 minutes or never sleep late the next day (no matter what time they went to bed) may wind up doing exactly that. Try encouraging your preschooler with blanket statements like 'everyone sleeps last at grandma's house' and see how much power your suggestions carry.

Budget Survey

It is time to start budget planning for the 2012-2013 school year and your feedback is essential to this process. In order to keep tuition increases to a minimum, we rely heavily on successful fundraising events. Therefore, a major focus for the upcoming year is to closely look at how to increase participation and revenue in this area. Please be reminded that the Fundraising Fee each family pays is to cover the cost of event tickets and is not factored into fundraising revenue. We are also reviewing fees, expenses and procedures to determine what works best for our SFNS families. Please complete this survey and return it by **Friday, December 9th**.

Please answer the following questions:

1. Do you plan on registering your child(ren) for the 2012-2013 school year? **Y N**
If so, please circle which class(s)

2's 3's 4's

2. What amount of monthly tuition increase would be manageable? Please circle amount.
\$5 \$10 \$15 \$20

3. To achieve the necessary level of Fundraising (FR) Revenue, participation and /or profits need to increase. Below are some proposed ideas on how to accomplish these objectives. Which option do you feel would best suit your family while helping SFNS meet these goals? If you have additional suggestions, please include below in #4.

Please circle your choice.

- Required participation (i.e. % of FR activities)
- Monetary Quota (i.e. each family required to raise a specified amount through fundraising. If quota is not met, the difference will be charged to the family.)
- Participation Incentives (i.e. gift cards or a tuition discount if a predetermined level of FR activity is achieved.)
- Donation check (Flat amount to be paid prior to the start of school.)
- Amount added to Monthly Tuition (in addition to any annual tuition increase in #2)

4. Any additional feedback would be greatly appreciated. Comments/Suggestions:
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