



STEVENS FOREST NURSERY SCHOOL

A COOPERATIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

410-997-0808 www.stevensforestnurseryschool.org

January 2012

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President Message: Casey Otten

Dear SFNS Families,

Happy New Year! I hope everyone had a wonderful New Years with their families. As we look forward to the second half of our school years there are so many exciting events on the horizon. We are currently preparing for the Howard County Pre-School Fair at the end of January. I am working on a presentation featuring photos & videos of our school. If you have anything you would like to contribute; please email me caseyotten@yahoo.com.

If you have any friends or family who plan to attend the fair; please tell them to stop by our table and say "Hello". Also, please invite anyone you think might be interested to our SFNS Open House on Friday, January 27 from 1-3pm.

In January, we will also begin looking for families interested in serving on the Board for the upcoming school year. If you are interested in a specific position; please feel free to contact the current board member for a more extensive description of the position. We will be sending out an email with comprehensive descrip-

tions of each position soon. I would like to invite interested families to join us on Wednesday, January 18th at 7pm for our monthly board meeting. We meet at the school and would love to see some new faces!

Thank you,
Casey



2012-2013 Tuition –No Increase

The SFNS Board voted to keep tuition, for the 2012-2013 school year, at the current rate. After reviewing the surveys that were completed and returned, the Board felt in order to stay competitive with other co-op schools located in the county, keeping our current rates was the best option.

However, to help reduce our bottom line deficit, the Board took into consideration those fundraising options presented and answered in the survey and decided that in addition to the SFNS current Event Fee (formerly Fundraising Fee) of \$90 that a Fundraising Fee of \$150 will be collected over the summer for all families enrolled for the school year. The surveys showed families interested in a fundraising donation option to opt out of fundraising and the school offering incentives for participation in the fundraisers. It was determined that \$150 is the amount needed by each family to contribute to spread our fundraising profits evenly to all enrolled in the school. This amount was based on the average amount earned in fundraising for the past two years. This Fundraising Fee will be placed in a non-interest bearing account and held throughout the school year for families that wish to receive it back by the end of June 2013 by participating in the school's fundraisers. In June, you will receive a check for the amount of fundraising profit your family raised throughout the year up to \$150. This Fundraising Fee does not apply to Yard Sale donations (they are a tax write-off), the 4 tickets to the Pancake Breakfast or any food donations, and the 4 tickets to the Basket Bingo or any Bingo donations. The Event Fee covers your tickets to the Pancake Breakfast and Basket Bingo. The Fundraising Fee applies to Mum Flower Sales, Holiday Wreath Sale, Spirit Wear, Log Cabin Chocolates, Spring Flower Sale and any other product orientated sale. This decision was also made based on a survey of other preschools co-op and non-coop in Howard County and their mandatory family fundraising commitments.

Teacher Notes:

Ms. Monica Writes:

Happy New Year!!!

I hope everyone enjoyed their Winter Break and had some great family time to create wonderful memories. I did and now I need to print pictures and find time (my New Year's resolution) to put them in scrapbooks. It's amazing that we are half way thru our school year. I hope you have been enjoying the children in the classes as much as I have. At the end of the month, you should be receiving your child's first

progress report. We will hold parent teacher conferences in February for anyone who would like to discuss their child's progress so far. These conferences are optional and a sign up will be available at the end of the month.

In the 4day class, we will be stressing getting ready for Kindergarten and acceptable behavior there as well as continuing our work with letters and writing.

In the 2day class, we will begin a daily letter activity for beginning letter recognition.

I hope everyone can stick to their New Year's Resolutions, if you've made them. Happy 2012!!!!

Ms. Katie Writes:

Hello and Happy New Year!

I hope you had a wonderful holiday season and were able to enjoy your winter break. The children did a terrific job at their holiday party. Ms. Ann and I love to watch them evolve into such enthusiastic entertainers! It was so nice to spend time with my family this break, but I am really looking forward to spending time with your children and hearing about the many fun things they were able to do this past



week.

We will ring in 2012 with many winter themes. We will discuss cold weather, how we dress for the winter, Martin Luther King Jr., Chinese New Year and even go on a field trip to Lively Arts at The Other Barn. Don't forget to have your child arrive at school in their pajamas on hibernation day, January 6th. It should be a fun day!

This month, we will work on writing letters and letter sounds. We will also

continue to practice writing their names. Please try to encourage them to practice writing their names at home. Their progress will amaze you!

Thank you for all of your continued support!

Finance: Diane Imbach

January tuition payment is due Monday, January 2nd (grace period extends through the 6th). 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 January 6th. Checks should be dropped off in the black lock box located in the back of the students' folder file during school hours or mailed directly to my home. Please be reminded that ALL cash payments must be made to me in person. Cash should NOT be mailed or left in the black lock box.

Membership Memos: Lori Hall



**Registration for 2012-2013
Has Begun!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**

Please check your folders for 2012-2013 Registration Forms and our new school brochure. All current families, sibling and alumni registrations will be accepted until Friday, January 20th. If you will not be returning, please return your registration form with your child's name and "not returning" written on it and the school brochure (to save us on printing). We will miss you and wish you good luck next year.

If you know anyone looking for a preschool, please give our name and number or direct them to come see us at the Howard County Preschool Fair on Sat. January 21st from 9am-1pm at the Ten Oaks Ballroom.

VP Committees-Darrin and Denise Gustafson

The Winter Fest was a fun event for the school children and their families.

Special thanks to Kelly Durgin and the members of the Social Committee for planning and organizing the Winter Fest Fun Day on Sunday, December 4th. Thanks also to the families who donated food items or other help for the event.

Activities included cookie decorating (and eating), snow globe making and personalized Christmas decorations. There was a nice variety of food items, a freeze

dance game a se who wanted to go outside nd great weather for tho to enjoy the playground.

After several months in a temporary location, it was nice to be back in the preschool building and have a break for families to socialize prior to the busy holidays.

Also, at the end of this newsletter you will find a couple of an email sent out in early December for those families who may not have received it regarding your

committee responsibilities.

Thank you to everyone for your continued support and commitment to your committee responsibilities. They really help the school run smoothly and efficiently.



Inside the Classes

2Day Class-Aparna Shanbhag

A very Happy New Year to all our SFNS families! As we return to class, the big change beginning January 10th in the 2day class is that they will stay in school for a half hour longer, making their pick up time 11:30am.

3Day Class-Sharon Kemmlin

January is another fun filled month for the 3's class! Our kids will get to come to school in their pajamas, and they'll have their first trip to Lively Arts. Thankfully not on the same day, right? Keep your fingers crossed for a warm January and more opportunities for playground time after class and no snow cancellations.



4Day Class-Holly Mays

Happy New Year! I hope our families were recharged over the Holidays. Our class has really enjoyed being back in the our home building. The children heave a blast on the playground before pick-up time and the parents are getting into the groove of things in the classroom during their co-op. Also, regarding our small class, families are working so nicely together to fulfill all the co-oping responsibilities. The co-oping parent and end-of-day helper set up seems to be working like a well-oiled machine. This will especially be helpful in these months with so few holidays, which lead to more school days to fill with co-ops.

All About Me and Show N Tell have returned in 2012. January is possibly the best Show N Tell because the children are so excited to show off all the gifts they received for the holidays. I know those scheduled for All About Me are very proud to share their buckets with the class as well. It's always so great to see their enthusiasm in these two activities.

With a very fun and successful WinterFest behind us, we can begin to think of the new and upcoming events. Some of our most anticipated fundraisers are coming soon, also warmer weather, which brings Spring activities and social events. First, we must get through the cold. But cold isn't necessarily bad. There are always restaurant nights!

Social Nights: Sharon Kemmlein

Thanks to all who made it out to Cheeburger Cheeburger and Eggspectations in November and December. Cheeburger Cheeburger donated approximately \$70 to SFNS!



January's Restaurant Social/Fundraiser Night will be at CHIC-FIL-A on Dobbin Road on Monday, January 30th. Don't think that going out for dinner is going to bust your financial or healthy lifestyle New Year's Resolutions! Take a look at Chic-Fil-A's [Healthful Lifestyle](#) page to see how to stay healthy at fast food prices. The kids get to burn off some energy in the play area with all of their school friends. See you there!

Health and Safety: Ms. Monica

Hopefully all the sicknesses in the classes is behind us and we are ready for a New Year of completely well children.

Just a couple reminders:

Make sure your child has a complete (socks, underwear, top, bottoms) change of clothes in their backpack that is weather appropriate.

Check to make sure your child's Emergency Preparedness pack still contains a small snack (prepackaged and nut-free), a small bottle of water and a small toy.

We will be checking backpacks to make sure all is there that should be there.

Call the school if your child is going to be absent, that helps us not worry about where you are

School # 410-997-0808

Review the Health and Safety Guidelines for when to keep sick children home.



Accreditation Update: Ms. Monica

Just to let you know what we've been working on with regards to our accreditation program improvement plan.

We have completed our new colorful registration brochure; which you will receive the first week of January with your 2012-2013 registration form.

We received back from a credible outside source her feedback on our staff handbook, which I will be reviewing and submitting to the board for vote approval at January's board meeting.

We've been notified by the state that our application for obtaining a free complete copy of The Creative Curriculum has been denied do to all funds being distributed for this school year already. We were among hundreds who did not receive grant monies for this purchase. The board will be discussing our options at the next board meeting as to our acquiring the complete curriculum.

A lot of other areas are being worked on as well with regards to community involvement which is a part of accreditation as well.



Fundraising Fun: Julia McDonough



Upcoming Events

February 11 –Pancake Breakfast

Late Feb/Early March-Log Cabin Chocolates

April 28th-BASKET BINGO

Date TBD- Spring Flower Sale & Spring Yard Sale

Please check your email and folders for information regarding these fundraising events.



Dear Parents,

As our school routine returns to normal with the re-opening of the preschool building and the pace of the holiday season picks up, many of us find our schedules filling up with various commitments. As such, we would like to take this opportunity to remind all families to make time in their schedules to participate in required school responsibilities.

As you are aware, parent involvement at SFNS is an important part of the school's operation. Participation in assigned committees, attendance at committee meetings and support of school events is important to the operation of the school. In addition, parent requirements are summarized in the parent contract and Stevens Forest Nursery School Handbook. As fellow parents, we understand not everyone can attend every meeting or event. However, it is important that we make time in our schedules for school-related commitments and responsibilities. The following is a summary of school committees and work groups:

The social committee is responsible for school social events. It is important for social committee members to participate in planning and staffing of social committee functions. Due to the repair activity at the school over the previous months, most social activities were on hold. Members of this committee should coordinate with the social committee chair, Kelly Durgin.

The fundraising committee supports the school's operating budget through various special sale campaigns and fundraising events. It is important for all fundraising committee members to participate in the planning of special sale initiatives and staffing of fundraising events. Members of this committee should coordinate with the committee chair, Julia McDonough.

The curricular décor committee is responsible for the seasonal and educational decorations that will be used in the school during the year. It is important that curricular décor committee members are available for specific curricular décor sessions that are scheduled throughout the year. Members of this committee should coordinate with Monica Lovend and Katie Baus.

The arts and crafts committee is responsible for preparing craft projects and other children's craft activities throughout the school year. It is important that members of the committee complete assigned craft projects in a timely fashion so they can be returned to the school for use in the daily school curriculum. Members of this committee should coordinate with Monica Lovend and Katie Baus.

A cleaning workshop is a monthly cleaning of the school in which all families participate in once per school year. We appreciate the additional support from our cleaning workshop families with packing and unpacking the school while at the Other Barn location. Normal cleaning workshops will resume in December. The Cleaning Workshop Coordinator, Sandy Updegraff, will be sending out reminders to families for their scheduled cleaning workshop sessions.

With everyone's participation on their assigned committees, we look forward to a successful school year. To be sure that all parents are kept informed of committee schedules and event dates, the board and committee leaders will take steps to improve notices for meeting schedules and events.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,

Darrin & Denise Gustafson
Co-VP's of Committees

Need help with a child in your care? Get help from

The CARE Center

a project of the
Howard County Office of Children's Services



410-313-CARE

There's no magic wand for good behavior, but the CARE Center can help you reduce challenging behaviors for children, including :



- ☆ **Anxiety**
- ☆ **Problems sharing**
- ☆ **Trouble following directions**
- ☆ **Biting**
- ☆ **Hard to soothe**
- ☆ **Difficulty forming relationships**

The CARE Center Behavioral Team will

- ☆ provide on-site observation and consultation at family child care or group programs for challenging behaviors
- ☆ help you learn to incorporate social stories and activities into your program
- ☆ give you tips for creating a supportive environment
- ☆ teach you and your staff to help children build resiliency, take initiative, maintain self-control, and develop positive attachments



Partners and supporters of the CARE Center include:
The Governor's Office for Children
Howard County Mental Health Authority
The Horizon Foundation

Maryland State Department of Education
The Howard County Local Children's Board
The Howard County Child Care Resource Center
The Howard County Department of Citizen Services

Things to Do in January

Disney on Ice
100 Years of Magic
Feb 8-12th
1st Mariner Arena

Toby's Dinner Theatre
The King and I
Jan. 12-March 25

Pump It Up-Elkridge
BOGO tickets in January Baltimore Child Mag.
410-579-1122

Check out the new Millersville
Branch of the Howard County

Port Discovery
Clifford the Big Red Dog
Exhibit open January 14th

Free Family Sundays
Baltimore Museum of Art
2pm workshops during January

Enjoy some Snow!!!!
If we get any!

