

A Springer Celebration! 2011

Celebrating 40 Years of Success!

Great American Ball Park will resound with the music of the '70s as Springer friends and family gather to celebrate this 40th year of the Springer Experience. Themed *Back to 1971*, the program for *A Springer Celebration!* will take us back to the early days when Springer pioneered education specifically for children with learning disabilities in Greater Cincinnati.

Remembering Our Beginnings

Although *A Springer Celebration!* will be the crowning event of this milestone year, the anniversary will be commemorated in various ways throughout 2011. A 40th anniversary logo, designed specifically for the occasion, reminds us of our beginnings by its appearance in e-newsletters and magazine ads and on the school website.



The Springer website has launched a new page, entirely devoted to the anniversary. The page currently features success stories of Springer graduates, a look at the fascinating history of Springer and a lively interview with the four women who have served as Executive Director since the school's establishment in 1971. Watch for additional items to be added.

The anniversary will also be recognized in various classroom activities throughout the year. Recently, students compiled a list of "40 ways Springer helps students with learning disabilities."

"There are many reasons to celebrate Springer, and the 40th anniversary party will be a great opportunity for Springer alumni, parents and friends to get together," says current Springer Board President Randy Cooper. "For many years, Springer has been the premier resource for families of children with learning disabilities. I've seen the difference it can make, in my own family and in others. Giving children the skills they need to learn in their unique way leads to success in school and in life."

These stories of success will be front-and-center at this year's Celebration, slated for April 27th from 6:00 to 9:30 p.m. The evening of dining, cocktails and music will be punctuated with stories of Springer alumni from across four decades. Local 12, WKRC-TV Sports Director, Brad Johansen will bring his energy to a live auction, and items will be available for raffle. Springer thanks Event Chair and school trustee Kim Vincent for coordinating the celebration.

You can support *A Springer Celebration!* through sponsorship, hosted tables, individual reservations, cash donations and volunteering. Please contact the Springer Development Office at (513) 871-6080 x213 or email to dnichols@springer-ld.org for information about how you can help!

Did you know...

- ... that 33% of Springer students receive financial aid?
- ... that Springer provides critical outreach programs for students, parents and educators in our community?
- ... that there is no other learning resource like Springer in the Greater Cincinnati area?
- ... that Springer has been the regional expert on learning disabilities for 40 years?
- ... Did you know that the proceeds from *A Springer Celebration!* benefit Springer's financial aid and outreach programs?



LETTER FROM OUR Executive Director



Shelly Weisbacher

This year marks the 40th anniversary of Springer School and Center as an independent school for children with learning disabilities. Forty years may not seem like a long time. However, it wasn't until the early 1960s that the term learning disability came into use among researchers, diagnosticians and educators. And, learning disabilities were only first recognized at the federal level in 1969 with the passage of the Children with Specific Learning Disabilities Act that mandated support services for students with learning disabilities.

While changes were occurring at the national level, they were also occurring locally. Springer, an archdiocesan school at the time, had been teaching children with a broad range of special needs. At the request of the school's leadership, the University of Cincinnati conducted a

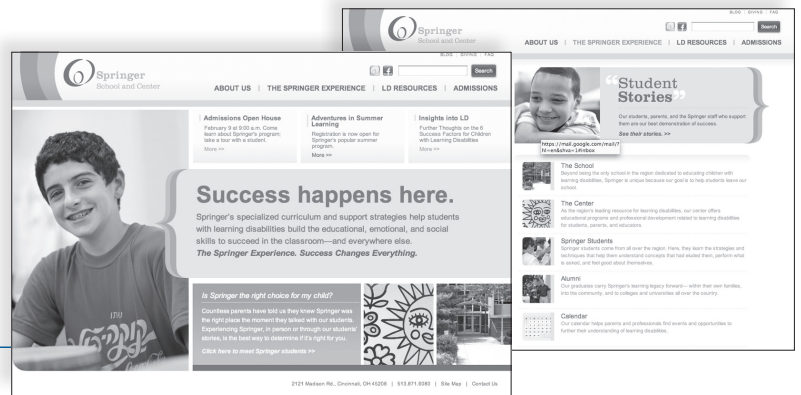
community needs assessment in the late 1960s to determine the school's direction going forward. The recommendation to focus on learning disabilities was accepted and within a short time, it was further determined that Springer would become a private, independent school. As a result, Cincinnati became one of the first communities in the nation to have a school for children with learning disabilities.

Much has changed since 1971 – enrollment has increased more than six-fold and there have been moves from Mt. Adams to Roselawn and then to our current location where we have been since 1981. Our name has changed as well, from Springer Educational Foundation to The Springer School to Springer School and Center. In addition, as one would expect, the field of learning disabilities has evolved and grown, thereby increasing

our understanding of the neurological underpinnings of learning disabilities and the best means to address them.

Today our reach is significantly broader than it was in 1971. Center outreach efforts impact thousands more children through summer programs, and through the professional development seminars we offer for their teachers and the classes for their parents. Our center staff fields hundreds of calls for information and referrals while our website is a resource to even more families and educators. Yet, for all the changes, much is the same. Our day school, for 200 students, remains at the heart of what we do, as does our commitment to helping children with learning disabilities develop the skills, strategies and self-understanding that will lead to success in school and beyond.

Springer's Website A One-Stop Resource



The bright and buoyant look of our newly redesigned website provides a cheerful introduction to the Springer Experience. Smiling faces of Springer students are paired with the message that "Success Happens Here." But that is only part of the story of our recent website renovation.

"It was a happy coincidence that just as we were developing a compelling new way to communicate the statement of our mission, our website was showing signs of its age and therefore was

ready to be redesigned," says Executive Director Shelly Weisbacher. "We developed our new site to better convey Springer's story while providing richer resources and easier navigation."

Constructed anew from the ground up, the site features links throughout that lead to related information. Parents are now able to more easily access the forms and team updates they need, and the community is able to download

brochures and registration materials for center programs and events.

A separate page dedicated to Springer's 40th anniversary celebration will be expanded with new features as the year progresses. "Our goal was to create a one-stop resource for parents and educators of children with learning disabilities," Shelly observes, "and I think we've accomplished that."

Four Directors - Four Decades

A unique gathering occurred at Springer on January 24, 2011. In observance of our 40th anniversary, all of the women who have served as Executive Director since the school's establishment as an independent nonprofit in 1971 met for the first time to reminisce and reflect on Springer's history as a resource to the community. News & Views had an opportunity to talk with (from left) Sr. Mary Jean Fields* (1971 – 1978), Sr. Marianne Van Vurst (1978 – 1985), Dr. Norita Aplin (1985 – 1997) and current Executive Director Shelly Weisbacher.

**Sr. Mary Jean Fields will be remembered as Sr. Elizabeth Mary Fields by those who knew her during her tenure at Springer.*



N&V: What would you say are some of the most significant events in Springer's history?

MJF: I became principal of the Springer Institute in 1965, when children with all kinds of handicaps were served. At the recommendation of University of Cincinnati consultants, we limited our specialization to those with learning disabilities. The establishment of the Springer Educational Foundation as an independent school in 1971 marks the birth of the Springer we know today.

MVV: A moment that stands out for me was our 1981 move from the Summit Road building to our current location in Hyde Park. We had only three weeks to prepare for the new school year. I hired trucks and called staff and parents who helped pack, move furniture, paint classrooms and prepare them for school to begin. Everyone just pitched in and worked, on their own time, until everything was ready for the students to arrive.

NA: A pivotal event for me was our becoming accredited by ISACS (Independent Schools Association of the Central States). That allowed us to visit other schools and it challenged us to think critically about ourselves. I also remember as significant my hiring Shelly as our first curriculum director. She refined and applied the best available research to our program. Systematizing the curriculum brought consistency from classroom to classroom and from year to year for our students.

SW: The opening of the center was another milestone in Springer's history. This gave us a greater presence in the community and allowed us to impact thousands more students.

N&V: How you have seen our understanding of learning disabilities change over the years?

MJF: When I started here, I went to my superior, concerned that I didn't know anything about how to help the students. She said, "Go back and love them." I knew that was not enough, so I went back to get a second degree in the field. At the beginning, we were rookies in the business, inventing something new! I can remember the day that Cincinnati Bell donated a wonderful trampoline to the school. Well, I was in habit, but I bought a pair of culottes so I could jump with the children.

SW: It was only in the early '60s that people began to use the term "learning disability," and in those days it was often linked with behavioral problems.

NA: Until we developed better diagnostic tools, it was difficult to separate the two. That's why Springer opened its diagnostic center in 1969. One thing I remember making my heart beat fast was when I saw a child becoming an advocate for himself – taking ownership of his disability.

MVV: I loved the moments when a child would run into my office and say, "I can read this! I can read this!"

NA: Over the years I've seen a greater comfort develop between public and independent schools than I ever thought we'd see. There is a higher level of awareness in the community of what we do here. When children returned to their home districts, people began to see the power of this program. That was a dramatic change.

MVV: I remember back to 1975 and the passing of Public Law 94-142 (mandating special education). When I spoke with public schools about our program, they would argue that they were able to accommodate students with learning disabilities, and that their environment would be the "least restrictive" environment, as required by the law. But often, after a meeting a person would come to me and say, "Sister, if I had a child, I'd want my child at Springer."

NA: And I think those educators really believed that the children needed a comprehensive program and they were better off in their school than in one that specifically addressed the child's needs.

MVV: We needed to help them understand what "least restrictive" meant. That the environment could be structured, and the child could learn how to adapt to his/her disability.

(continued)

SW: It's such a gift for the children not to have to hide what they can't do. Once they understand their difficulties, they can be very clear in expressing their needs. I went with some children who testified before the Ohio Legislature in Columbus, and the legislators couldn't believe how articulate the children were about their learning disabilities.

NA: Well, Springer demystifies learning disabilities. A child comes here and says, "Wow! These are neat kids! It must be okay to have a learning disability!"

MVV: Early on, we didn't have that luxury. Having a disability was still a stigma.

SW: I think another big shift I've seen has been the parents' greater acceptance of the fact that

their child has a learning disability and needs a different kind of school. When I started in the late '80s, there were some parents who said that they wouldn't tell anyone where their child went to school.

NA: When new things come along there seems to be a period of disbelief. I've seen it with ADHD. "Oh come on, there can't be that many kids with ADHD! You're just using it as an excuse!" That's what we were dealing with in the earlier days. That's what parents were up against.

MJF: The parents are key. If they can recognize and accept their child's learning disability, great things can happen!

The Peter M. Bolan Scholarship Award

Established in 1988 in memory of Peter M. Bolan, a Springer alumni parent, the Peter M. Bolan Scholarship Award annually recognizes a graduating student who understands his or her learning disability and applies the strategies learned at Springer. The student chosen for this prestigious recognition also has a positive attitude and demonstrates leadership and concern for others. The award includes a scholarship to offset future educational costs.

Tributes

(as of 1/27/2011)

In Honor of Dr. Mark Helmick

Ms. Joan M. Bryan

Memorials

(as of 1/27/2011)

In Memory of Mary Ellen Gusweiler

Dr. Norita Aplin

In Memory of Rev. Morris Chalfant and Irene Satin

Ms. Elizabeth F. Wenker

In Memory of James (Jack) Collins

Mrs. Shirley Allen

In Memory of Ivan Misrach

Dr. and Mrs. Harold Schneider

To the Peter M. Bolan Scholarship Award Fund In Memory of Margaret (Momi) A. Bolan

Dr. Norita Aplin and Mr. Stanley Ragle
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Arnold
Mr. and Mrs. Ray Banks
Mr. and Mrs. Drew Barton
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Brennan
Mr. and Mrs. William Bristow
Mr. and Mrs. Scott Bryant
Mr. and Mrs. William Burleigh
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Cahill
Mr. and Mrs. Patrick J. Casey

Mr. and Mrs. Robert H. Castellini
Mr. and Mrs. Michael Clauder
Mr. and Mrs. Christopher Cooper
Mr. and Mrs. Kevin Dunn
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Eagen
Mr. Jeff Ferris
Mr. and Mrs. Michael Ferris
Mrs. Agnes D. Fogarty
Mr. and Mrs. Stanley J. Frank, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Roger Fry
Mrs. Mary Dean Grote & Family
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas D. Grote
Mr. and Mrs. William D. Grote, III
Mr. and Mrs. Albert E. Heekin, III
Mr. and Mrs. Albert E. Heekin, IV
Mr. and Mrs. Christopher Heekin
Mr. and Mrs. James K. Heekin
Ms. M. Maureen Heekin & Family
Mr. and Mrs. Earl Heim
Mr. and Mrs. James E. Heisel
Dr. and Mrs. Mark Helmick
Mr. and Mrs. Gus Hillenbrand
Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Jackson
Ms. Mary Alice Jorling
Ms. Anna D. Kallaher
Mr. and Mrs. James R. Kassermann & Family
Ms. Margaret K. Keefe
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Kennard
Mr. and Mrs. Timothy F. Kilfoil
Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Koesters
Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence H. Kyte, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Harry L. Lafkas, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. William Leugers, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Jackson Leung
Mr. Paul Lindsay, Jr.

Mr. and Mrs. David Lowe & Family

The Lunch Group

Ann Barton

Susie Castellini

Sug Clauder

Margaret Frank

Terry Grote

Sheila Keys

Maridot Long

Allie Maggini

Cookie Markham

Betsy Newman

Meg Rudd

Pat Stahl

Mary Stevenson

Sue Wilkening

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Mancini

Ms. Mary H. McConnell & Family

Mr. and Mrs. Douglas G. McPeck

Mr. and Mrs. Jim Momper

Ms. Alice O'Connor

Mrs. Margaret McCulloch Peck

Mr. and Mrs. P. Pierce Rudd

Mr. and Mrs. John Smith

Mr. and Mrs. James Stahl, Jr.

Mr. and Mrs. James Sticklen & Family

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas D. Sundermann

Mr. and Mrs. Robert T. Szewc

Ms. Geri Walsh

Ms. Mary Walsh

Mr. and Mrs. Ken Weisbacher

Ms. Claire Thornton Wilger

Mr. and Mrs. Jerome Willging

Mr. and Mrs. W. Joseph Williams, Jr.

Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Wittekind

ARTIST IN RESIDENCE

The Return of Molly Z!

Back for her second visit as Artist in Residence, Chicago illustrator Molly Zakrajsek brought her unique blend of energy and imagery to the halls of Springer – literally! Molly worked with a group of Upper School students to create a 50-foot wall mural that expanded last year's project, a similar mural that has become a signature image for the school.

During her January 24 through February 4 stay, Molly led the students in extending the mural with a coordinating, yet different, design. "The images in last year's mural had a unifying theme – life, vitality, growth," explained Molly. "This year the nature motif is continued, but the symbolism broadens. Images of swans signify transformation,

owls symbolize wisdom and insight, and ants express the value of teamwork and effort."

Molly attributed the success of last year's mural to an approach that gives students freedom to experiment and express themselves, coupled with her careful planning of the mural's design. "I draft the outlines of the images that appear in the final product," she noted, "but the students create the artwork by filling the spaces in their own individual styles."

Meeting with each art class during her two-week stay, Molly explored with the students the effect public art can have. Why is a design



pleasing? How does it change a person's experience? "A public mural is a work of art that carries a lot of responsibility," Molly observed. "To be successful, it must be long-lasting and have broad popularity."

Molly's visit to Springer was made possible by the Maureen Wenker Artist in Residence program, established in 1993 in memory of a Springer parent, volunteer and supporter.



Local Author to Visit Springer

Award-winning children's author Mary Kay Carson will bring her passion for science and love for writing to Springer on February 17. Her visit will be sponsored by the Springer Parent Association.

A local author of children's non-fiction books, Mary Kay has written fourteen books on topics ranging from the deep ocean to outer space. "I love meeting with students in person like this," says Mary Kay. "They are my audience, and I like to see what excites them. I'm especially looking forward to my visit to Springer. Some of my friends are parents of Springer graduates, and they've said such great things about the school!"

Mary Kay will share with Primary and Intermediate students some of the stories behind the books she has written. Upper School students will meet heroes such as Harriet Tubman as Mary Kay leads them in an imaginary trip on the Underground Railroad.

MUSICIAN IN RESIDENCE

Springer Resounds with African Drumming

Dr. Chris Tanner from Miami University spent a week with Springer students in December as the 2010 Musician in Residence. Through the art of African drumming, Dr. Tanner helped students broaden their experience beyond the Western music we are so familiar with. "As the students explore African drumming," explained Dr. Tanner, "they learn about the structure of music, about awareness and attention, and about learning by imitation."

Dr. Tanner's visit was made possible by the Norita Aplin Musician in Residence program, which was established in 1997 as a way to honor the former Springer Executive Director for her 14 years of leadership to the school. Dr. Tanner spoke with all students during his stay, and worked closely with small groups of selected students who gave a performance at the end of the week.

"Reading musical notation is a challenge for some of our students," said Springer music teacher Judy McMahon. "As African drumming is taught in a 'call and response' manner, it is a perfect way for those students to learn. Dr. Tanner brings so much energy to his teaching!" Dr. Tanner was Springer's first Musician in Residence, and has visited several times since the inception of the program.



Alumni CONNECTIONS

Matt Tatham '99 graduated from Xavier University in 2010 with a B.A. in Asian History. During his years at Xavier, he took every Japanese language course offered. He is currently attending a 1.5 year program in a Japanese immersion school in Orgori-shi, Japan, to improve his fluency. After getting certified in Japanese, his plans include the possibility of graduate school, working for the State Department or learning Japanese-style acupuncture.



Elisa Tatham and Matt Tatham

Elisa Tatham '98 is a junior at Boston University majoring in International Relations with a minor in French, and planning to graduate in December 2011. In college, she has participated in Children's Theatre, as well as City of Boston environmental programs. She is currently in Geneva, Switzerland, in a study abroad program. Her interests include public affairs and policy, human rights organizations and diplomacy. She doesn't know what her next step will be after graduation, but she knows it will involve helping the world's less fortunate.

Paul Kuhn '01 received a BA degree in finance and an MBA in accounting from Indiana University. He recently passed the exam to become a CPA on his first attempt. Paul is currently seeking a position in investments or the stock market.



Paul Kuhn

Madeline White '04 graduated from Ursuline Academy, where she served as president of her junior and senior classes. Madeline attended Ohio Northern University to study engineering and play soccer, and transferred to Miami University to pursue a degree in business.



Madeline White

Gregory Brugger '10 is currently a freshman at Loveland High School where he qualified for the High Honor Roll for the first grading period. To achieve High Honors, a student must have an A- to A+ average.

CJ Elfers '10 is currently a freshman at Purcell Marian High School where he received 2nd honors, plays basketball and baseball, and is involved in a ministry group. He is finding strategies he learned at Springer to be very useful.

Alicia Riley '10 "I'm in my first year at Mount Notre Dame High School and don't even think about my learning disabilities. After Springer, I feel better about myself and know that I will have success in school. I feel like a fresh, new person. My advice to other students with learning disabilities – keep your head strong, don't get frustrated, always know that you can do it, and most importantly, have confidence in yourself."



Alicia Riley and Marika Huelskamp

Marika Huelskamp '06 "I attended Springer from 7th through 8th grade. After Springer, I ended up going to a high school that I didn't think would be possible for me. I applied to St. Ursula Academy and was shocked to get in. I had an amazing four years there and without Springer, I wouldn't have had that opportunity. I'm still using Springer strategies in my classes at Mount St. Joseph."

Miriam (Lipson) Hodesh '91 graduated from Tulane University and received an MBA from the Heller School of Social Policy and Management from Brandeis University. She lives in Savannah, Georgia, with her husband where she co-founded the tech conference Geekend.



Miriam (Lipson) Hodesh



Students Make Hospital Visit Brighter

Young patients at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center had a surprise on Valentine's Day this year. Springer Student Council officers and representatives took time from their January meeting to create Valentine cards that were used to brighten the halls at the hospital. Part of Cincinnati Children's Spread the Love initiative, Springer's cards brought smiles to the faces of hospitalized children.

2010-2011 Springer Parent Association

The educational experience at any school is enhanced and enriched when parents lend their creativity and passion. Springer School and Center is fortunate to have an active group of parents who invest their time and energy to make Springer a great place to learn and work.

The Springer Parent Association (SPA) sponsors several annual events. A fall favorite is the Bike Hike and Family Picnic at Sharon Woods, an event that never fails to generate both funds and fun! Summer-like weather made this year's Bike Hike an especially great time for grilling out, playing games, making crafts and biking around the lake. Thanks to Camilla Hinsch and the 2010 SPA Board for coordinating this year's event.

Each winter, SPA makes holiday shopping for family easy and fun for Springer students.

Cindy Stephens and Caryn Franke organized the shop for the second year, gathering great gifts for every member of the family. Parent volunteers were on hand to help students make their selections and wrap the gifts they purchased.

This year SPA will sponsor a February visit from Mary Kay Carson, a local author of non-fiction books for children, who will share her passion for science and history with Springer students. SPA also hosts four staff appreciation luncheons throughout the school year, and coordinates a weekly Order Out Day, giving the students a fun alternative to packing lunch from home.

Springer appreciates SPA and the entire community of parents that support our students in their learning and growth!

SPA Executive Board 2010-11

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BIKE HIKE



HOLIDAY SHOP



Adventures in Summer Learning 2011

June 20-July 15

Available to students from across the Greater Cincinnati area

Visit the center's Student Programs page at www.springer-ld.org for more information and registration materials.

Since 1992, Adventures in Summer Learning has helped children entering grades 1-8 become more confident learners and improve their basic skills. In a nurturing environment, your child works with instructors trained to help children with learning difficulties. Instruction begins at your child's level and builds on what your child can do! The four-week morning program provides small group strategic instruction in language arts, math, writing and group problem solving. Afternoon programs range from social skills to creative expression.

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**SAVE
the DATE!**

Back to 1971

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Come help us celebrate!

To Benefit Financial Aid and Outreach Programs

April 27th, 6:00 to 9:30 p.m. at the Great American Ball Park

