

news & views

Oh, the Places You'll Go!

**You have brains in your head.
You have feet in your shoes,
You can steer yourself
any direction you choose!**

-Dr. Seuss

We'll be celebrating the truth of Dr. Seuss' words for Springer students at *A Springer Celebration! 2012*. One of several events this year that borrows from the whimsical works of Dr. Seuss, the celebration will be themed, *Oh, the Places You'll Go!* The evening of Seussian delights will include hearing from several Springer alumni about the places they've gone!

The merriment will unfold at the Hilton Netherland Hall of Mirrors on May 2, 2012, from 6:00 to 9:30 p.m. Springer's premier fundraising event will feature dinner and

cocktails, as well as live and silent auctions with exciting new offerings.

Springer is pleased to welcome back Local 12 WKRC-TV Sports Director Brad Johansen, who will serve as our emcee and auctioneer for the evening.

We thank alumni parent Nancy Cooper for her service as Event Chair this year. Nancy's husband Randy is Springer's Board President. "The loving, knowledgeable, and endlessly patient support of the Springer staff and administration cannot be overstated," says Nancy. "Randy and I believe Springer School and Center is a jewel in our Queen City's crown, and I look forward to helping with *A Springer Celebration!* so that more families can benefit from the Springer experience as we did."



L to R: Event Chair Nancy Cooper, SFA President Betsy Ayres and Springer Development Specialist Kirstin Eismín make plans for A Springer Celebration! 2012.

Joining the Celebration in a year of Seussical fantasy, Springer's All School Quest will explore health and wellness with the theme based on Dr. Seuss' *Oh, the Things You Can Do That Are Good for You!* and in December, Musician in Residence John Bromels led Intermediate students through a Seuss-style musical production – green eggs and all!

Springer's Board Welcomes New Trustees

Springer's Board of Trustees is pleased to announce two new members for the 2011-2012 school year. Richard J. Blum is a former President of Springer's Board (1999-2001) and an alumni parent. Recently retired from his role as President and CEO of CECO, a world leader in clean air solutions for industry, he is turning his attention to service on several corporate and community boards. In addition to serving on Springer's Board from 1993 to 2002, Rick has been Director and Board Chair for Ursuline Academy and Advisory Board Member for The Hamilton Caster Company.

"I am serving on the Springer board as a way of 'giving back' to the school that did so much for our son," said Rick. "The faculty and staff's dedication to the success of the children makes Springer School and Center a truly special place."

New Board member Casey D. Jones is a Principal in the Capital Strategies Group at Fifth Third Bank, with a focus in advisory work for healthcare companies and financial sponsor groups. He serves on advisory boards for several organizations including The Future, a young professionals group supporting the Cincinnati Art Museum, and the Niehoff Lecture Series at the

Mercantile Library, and he is an Executive Mentor at the Williams School of Business at Xavier University.

In addition to Casey and Rick, Springer's Board of Trustees for 2011-12 consists of President Raymond Cooper, Vice President Sean McGrory, Treasurer Matthew Blickensderfer, Secretary Nicholas Spadaccini, members Thomas Bentley, Kim Borcharding, Philip Breen, John Bullock, Cheryl Derrick, Crystal Faulkner Cooney, Melanie Hynden, Nancy Koglmeier, Thomas Leugers, Martha Millett, Robert Rich, Greg Sherman, Margaret Tondow and Kim Vincent.

LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Awareness Grows, but Misperceptions Persist

Springer School and Center is committed to early intervention for children with learning disabilities. Early intervention, of course, depends on early identification and where learning disabilities are concerned identification can be slow in coming. Why should this be the case at time when our diagnostic tools are more refined, our understanding of early literacy greater, and when public awareness of learning disabilities is seemingly higher?

Some answers to these questions can be found in the report, *Measuring Progress in Public and Parental Understanding of Learning Disabilities*, that was prepared in 2010 by GfK Roper for the Tremaine Foundation. This is the fourth time since 1995 that the Tremaine Foundation has commissioned this study, which consisted of telephone interviews with a nationally representative sample of 1000 adults and with additional sub-samples of 700 parents, 350 teachers and 350 school administrators.

The interviews revealed on-going misunderstandings about learning disabilities despite the fact that more respondents than ever reported knowing about LD.

Study results point to a superficial understanding of LD among all groups. Eighty percent of the general respondents, and the sub-samples of parents and teachers thought cognitive disabilities were associated with LD, and 75 percent linked autism and LD. Even among the school administrator sub-sample, half associated LD with cognitive disabilities or autism. Within all groups, a third or more associated LD with blindness or deafness.

Equally concerning in the findings are the continued perceptions by slightly more than half those interviewed that learning disabilities are often just laziness or a result of the home environment. Further, a 'wait and see' attitude continues to persist among parents of young children. A majority of parents of 5 to 8 year-old children believe children will outgrow difficulties rhyming, or trouble with numbers, the alphabet or days of the week. Even where difficulties with reading or spelling are evidenced, only 50 percent of the parents say these could be signs of a serious problem.

These survey results reinforce the challenge of changing people's perceptions,

and the degree to which erroneous notions of LD are keeping children from receiving the help they need at the earliest possible point. Each of us who are affected personally, as a parent, grandparent, teacher or friend, can and need to play a role in furthering others' understanding of LD. When given the opportunity, it is important to convey that scientists have proven that learning disabilities are real by studying the brain; that people with learning disabilities have average to superior ability but their minds process information differently; and that if a learning disability is not addressed it can seriously interfere with a person's success in school and in life.

By seizing each opportunity to inform others, all of us can and will make a difference.



Shelly Weisbacher

Alumni Bring Their Experience to Center Program

Center Program Coordinator Mary Ann Mulcahey had prepared her agenda for the center's parent program on the transition from high school. *Navigating the Jump to Post Secondary Education* was designed to inform parents about choosing a college or other experience, accessing disability accommodations and easing the transition from high school.

When Springer alumni Matthew Selker and Devon Rich contacted Springer with a desire to give back to the school, recognizing its impact on their success in life, Mary Ann invited them to address parents at the post secondary program.

Now college graduates and employed as financial advisors, Devon and Matthew counseled parents to be patient with the process as their students find their way, sometimes by trial and error. They recommended that students get to know their professors and build structure into their lives by following a daily schedule or getting a part-time job.

"Matthew and Devon gave parents a vision of the future for their sons and daughters," said Mary Ann. "Their willingness to share their experience greatly enriched the evening."

Adventures In Summer Learning

A FUN WAY TO BUILD ACADEMIC SKILLS OVER THE SUMMER!

June 18 – July 13

For more information
or to register, visit
www.springer-ld.org
and click on

The Springer Experience >
Center > Student Programs.

Thanks to the generosity of the William M. Gale Family Foundation, Springer Upper School students will have the opportunity to tour Washington D.C. for four days this spring. The Oliver Gale Washington Academy was established in 2008 by Bill and Margy Gale in memory of Bill's father, Mr. Oliver Gale. The trip is planned for April 24 through 27.

The Gales visited with Upper School students in November to share with them the news of the trip, and their reasons for establishing the program. Bill remembered his father as a man with a love for learning, and described this trip as a perfect marriage of his father's passion for Springer, and for the city of Washington, D.C., where he resided while serving in the Eisenhower Administration.

Upper School Students to Tour Washington, D.C.



Bill and Margy Gale (center) met with Principal Jamie Williamson (left) and Upper School Team Leader Scott Poponyak (right) to discuss details for this year's trip to Washington, D.C.

New Name Reflects Family Involvement

This year Springer's parent association announced a new name, to better reflect the involvement of grandparents, aunts, uncles and other family members.

The Springer Family Association (SFA) continues to facilitate partnership, communication, parent education, and cooperation among the entire school community. Springer students have already enjoyed a fun and successful Bike Hike in October, and had the opportunity

to choose gifts for family and friends at the SFA sponsored Holiday Shop. Next month, students can look forward to meeting illustrator Jeff Ebbeler, who will be Springer's guest as SFA's Visiting Author for this year.

SFA Executive Board L to R: Julie Morrow, Shannon Plymire, Kelly Jones, Betsy Ayres, Kim Addington, Margie Nordlund, Tom Welch and Laura Limardi, and volunteer Angela Ward.



Springer's Staff Supports Annual Fund

JOIN THEM IN SUPPORTING CHILDREN WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

Primary teacher Sandi Staud knows firsthand the value of a Springer education. Her son Brian was struggling in school – a frightening prospect for a parent of a second grader. This spring he will graduate from Wilmington College with a double major. Brian attended Springer from 1999 to 2002.

Sandi's experience with Springer led her to commit her professional life to making the kind of difference in the lives of children that Brian's teachers had made in his. A staff member since 2000, Sandi

and her husband Gary give generously to Springer's Annual Fund, which supports financial aid and outreach programs.

"As long as we're able, we will make contributions to the Annual Fund," says Sandi. "Who can put a price on the success of one life, let alone the countless hundreds Springer has assisted through the years?"

Sandi is not alone among Springer staff in her commitment to the Annual Fund. So far this year, 83 percent of staff members have contributed, making possible

more success stories like Brian's. "As a new member of Springer's staff, I am very impressed by the staff's level of commitment – and it's still growing," says Development Specialist Kirstin Eismin. "Of the many staff members who gave this year, 10 percent are first time donors."

Join Springer's staff in supporting children with learning disabilities this year by giving generously to the Annual Fund at www.springer-ld.org/giving.

Center Builds Community Understanding of Executive Function

Author A.A. Milne said, "One of the advantages of being disorganized is that one is always having surprising discoveries." However, for a student with executive function difficulties, those continual surprises can become a great hindrance to productivity and success in school.

Organization is just one of the cognitive processes that fall under the umbrella term "executive function" (EF). "We acquire knowledge by taking in information, evaluating it, making sense of it and storing it," says Springer's Center Director Barbara Hunter. "We use executive function processes to apply our knowledge in meaningful ways. For instance, a child may be capable of reading and understanding, but struggle to organize his thoughts for writing." In addition to organization, EF includes processes such as planning, prioritizing, remembering, shifting attention and self-regulation and monitoring.

Students who struggle with these issues are capable learners, but they often have difficulty producing the output that demonstrates what they know. Their homework is frequently incomplete or misplaced; they make careless mistakes, miss deadlines and rarely have the right materials for the task at hand.

Not all students with learning disabilities exhibit executive dysfunction, but many do. For that reason, Springer's staff has worked to deepen its understanding of executive dysfunction, and gathered strategies that can help students address their challenges and achieve success.

In 2010 the center developed a program that shares Springer's expertise and strategic interventions with the community. Educators and other professionals from across Greater Cincinnati have attended the full-day workshop, *Executive Function and ADHD: Promoting Consistent Achievement in the Classroom*. The program discusses the diagnosis of EF and ADHD and issues surrounding motivation, and offers case studies as well as strategies for compensating.

As part of this concentration in EF, Springer teamed with Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center in 2010 to bring internationally known authority on EF and ADHD Dr. Russell Barkley to Cincinnati for two days of workshops for both professionals and parents. Dr. Barkley returns in April, bringing programs for parents that explain EF and ADHD and offer strategies for managing these issues at home. With professionals, Dr. Barkley will explore the

under-appreciated role played by emotions in the life of a child with learning challenges associated with EF and ADHD.

For parents of children with EF challenges, the center has developed an evening workshop. *Executive Function and ADHD: Promoting Consistent Behaviors at Home* guides parents in working strategically with students at home and partnering with the school for greater academic success.

Springer's center has plans to extend its offerings on executive dysfunction and ADHD by developing an advanced class for professionals that will include new understandings of the interplay of emotional dysregulation and these disorders.



DR. RUSSELL BARKLEY RETURNS TO CINCINNATI



Springer School and Center will once again join with Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center to welcome authority on executive function and ADHD Dr. Russell Barkley for several speaking engagements in April.

Professional Development Opportunity for Educators and Clinicians:

Emotional Dysregulation, Executive Function and the ADHD Child:

Current Research and Practical Application

Tuesday, April 17, 9:30 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

Evening Programs for Parents:

Executive Function, ADHD and the Struggling Child: What Does it All Mean?

Monday, April 16, 7:00–9:00 p.m.

Executive Function, ADHD and the Struggling Child:

Strategies for Managing at Home and School

Tuesday, April 17, 7:00–9:00 p.m.

For more information and to register, please visit www.springer-ld.org/barkley

New Laptop Initiative Supports Executive Function

Springer parent Eva Booher is thrilled with the new laptop initiative rolled out in Upper School classrooms this year. "I'm not involved at all with homework in the evenings now," she says. "The initiative has helped tremendously with Jack's organization and independence." Her son agrees. "My binder is a mess," says Jack, "but my laptop is organized. This is so much easier than keeping track of a lot of papers."

These are the kind of results that were hoped for when Springer first planned the laptop initiative as a way to reinforce executive function skills, an area of challenge for many Springer students. Each student in the Upper School has been assigned his own laptop, which can be taken home in the evening.

The computers are loaded with a "virtual notebook," or binder, that allows students to take notes directly onto the same pages that they can drag and drop pictures, maps and documents. The pages are organized by tabs, and the entire contents of the notebook can be searched.

Upper School teachers have worked to digitize their subject area curriculum, allowing students to complete, file and access assignments via their laptops. Students can access textbooks online, and can make use of text-to-speech software for reading digital material. Strategies that are taught in the classroom can be saved to the "virtual notebook" in document form, making them accessible for retrieval at school and at home.

In addition to the notebook software, the computers contain all the programs students may use in the course of their day, including text-to-speech software, word prediction software, visual organizer software that enables students to plan their writing and to take notes, and a growing number of programs that support



Upper School students see improvements in organization, time management and capturing their thoughts in writing as a result of Springer's new Laptop Initiative.

student independence and academic achievement.

Upper School teachers are seeing improvements in students' organization, but the value of the program goes far beyond this. "There are so many benefits to the use of laptops," says Upper School Team Leader Scott Poponyak. "Executive function challenges go beyond the organization of materials. The calendar options on the laptops help students plan and prioritize short- and long-term assignments, digital reminders can be set to support students' concept of time management, and students can write notes or record messages for themselves to support memory challenges. Another important outcome has been the dramatic improvements in writing productivity which we have seen throughout the academic curriculum."

Eva Booher has seen this kind of improvement. "Using the laptop has especially helped Jack's writing," says Eva. "He produces more with the computer than he did with paper and pencil, and his typing is growing more fluent. It seems to me that he is having an easier time getting his thoughts into written form."

For Scott, another important benefit of the laptop initiative has been the students' increased awareness and ownership of their learning disability. "Once students experience more success in the executive function processes," says Scott, "they begin to understand the elements that have led to that success. With that awareness, they can leverage their strengths, take ownership of their weakness, and learn how to compensate for challenges – important steps on the road to successful self-advocacy."

ARTIST IN RESIDENCE Tyler Hildebrand

Cincinnati artist Tyler Hildebrand spent two weeks on Springer's campus as our 2011-12 Maureen Wenker Artist in Residence. Tyler is best known for his celebrity caricatures and contemporary depictions of cityscapes from around Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky. His studio and gallery are located in Bellevue, Kentucky.

During his residency, Tyler shared with each class about his life and work as an artist, and then coached a small group of Upper School students as they painted caricatures of a person who has been

inspirational to them. Tyler worked on a painting of his own - of actor and author Henry Winkler, who has achieved success despite a learning disability.

"I was blown away with the determination and creativity the students showed while trying something scary and new," said Tyler. "I was astounded with the results of each painting. The students worked hard and they really wanted their works to be great. They were exactly that."

On the last day of Tyler's visit, he and the students revealed their paintings and

talked about the person each had chosen at a reception attended by parents and Mr. Paul Wenker, husband of the late Maureen Wenker and benefactor of the Artist in Residence program.

The artist's visit was sponsored by the Maureen Wenker Artist in Residence program, made possible through a fund created in memory of an enthusiastic Springer supporter and mother of three Springer graduates.



L to R: Upper School student Peyton Marrs displays his caricature of Anthony Munoz. Artist in Residence Tyler Hildebrand. Intermediate students fish in "McElligot's pool." Musician in Residence John Bromels.

MUSICIAN IN RESIDENCE John Bromels

Exciting! Fun! Scary!

Those are the words students used to describe their involvement in the Norita Aplin Musician in Residence program at Springer this year.

Our Musician in Residence for 2011 was actor, singer, director and teacher John Bromels. John is an accomplished playwright, whose work has been produced up and down the east coast. He has received a Kennedy Center medal for playwriting, and another for dramatic criticism, and has worked with theater companies in New York, New Mexico and Florida.

During his two-week residency at Springer, John worked with a group of

Intermediate students daily. On the final day of his stay, he directed the students in a musical production that was custom written for Springer and borrowed music from *Seussical*, *The Musical*.

"I wanted to create a production that involved every student in music, dance and acting," said John. "As a result, many characters were played by multiple students, but each student had at least one solo line, and all had opportunities to dance and sing."

Intermediate student Jake Bambauer said he'd never done anything like this before, but he found the experience to be fun and especially enjoyed working on

the production with his friends. "I learned how important it is to be respectful of the people I was working with," said Jake. "I had to listen and pay attention, or I wouldn't know what I was supposed to do."

John's two-week residency was not his first visit to Springer. He has taught an After School Program in drama and has worked with Upper School students during a unit on musical theater.

The Musician in Residence program is made possible through a fund established in honor of Dr. Norita Aplin, recognizing her 14 years of leadership at Springer.

Alumni Connections

Daniel Allen '08 is a senior at DePauw University, where he will graduate with a degree in Political Science and minors in Philosophy and Psychology.

Kelly Grannen '08 will graduate from Purcell Marian High School this spring, having earned high honors every quarter. Kelly was awarded the Dean's scholarship at the College of Mount St. Joseph, providing \$50,000 toward tuition. She will major in Special Education.

Evan Phillips '08 is currently a senior at Elder High School. After graduation, he plans to join the Army and serve in an infantry division, citing as his inspiration a grandfather who served during the Korean War. After his military service, Evan plans to attend the University of Cincinnati where he will study Architecture.

Suzanne Bonem '07 graduated from Purcell Marian High School in 2011, and is now a freshman at the College of Mount St. Joseph, studying Early Childhood

Education. Suzanne earned \$42,000 in scholarships from Mount St. Joseph, and is a student ambassador for the Project Excel program.

Griffin Fuller '06 is a junior at Mariemont High School. From his start on Springer's climbing wall, Griffin has become a competitive rock climber who is ranked among the nation's top ten in his age group. He has climbed in Red River Gorge, Kentucky, and in Colorado and Utah.

Michelle Wlotzko '06 graduated from St. Ursula Academy and is in her sophomore year at Marshall University in Huntington, West Virginia. Michelle is majoring in Elementary Education and Special Education.

David Newman '99 graduated from the University of Dayton in 2008 with a degree in Operations Management/Management Information Systems, and minors in Decision Sciences and E-Business. David is currently a sales representative

for his family's business, Newman Sanitary Gasket Company.

B.J. Hill '97 earned a Bachelor of Science degree from Thomas More College. He worked as District Executive for the Boy Scouts of America for five years, and is now pursuing a graduate degree in Special Education from Antioch University.

Devon Rich '96 earned a Bachelor's degree from the University of Cincinnati, and is currently a Financial Representative for Northwestern Mutual.

Matthew Selker '96 graduated from Xavier University with a Bachelor's degree. He is currently an Associate Investment Advisor for PNC Wealth Management.

Joe Shipley '93 has completed EMT training and is a certified auto body repair technician. He is currently owner of his family business, John Shipley and Son Farm, specialists in animal removal services.

Top, L to R: Daniel Allen, Kelly Grannen, Evan Phillips
Bottom, L to R: Griffin Fuller, Joe Shipley



MEMORIALS AND TRIBUTES

(as of 1/27/2012)

- In memory of Ken Akers
Sue and Paul Belanger
- In memory of Margaret (Momi) Bolan
Margaret and Michael Dunn
- In memory of Tina Durham
Elizabeth Wenker
- In memory of Rhea Meyer
Elizabeth Wenker
- In memory of Mary Jane Heitmeyer
Sally and Edward Kamphake
- In memory of Daniel and Anne McConnell
Lois McConnell Jones, Michelle Platz
- In memory of Brian Murray
Susan and Daniel Pfau, Elizabeth Wenker
- In memory of James G. Parry
William H. Schneebeck
- In memory of W. W. Schneebeck
William H. Schneebeck
- In memory of Nancy R. Schneebeck
William H. Schneebeck
- In memory of Martha Wall
Sheila Wall and Ron Tatham
- In memory of Thomas O. Youtsey, Jr.
Patricia Johnson, Michael Wilson, Nancy Youtsey



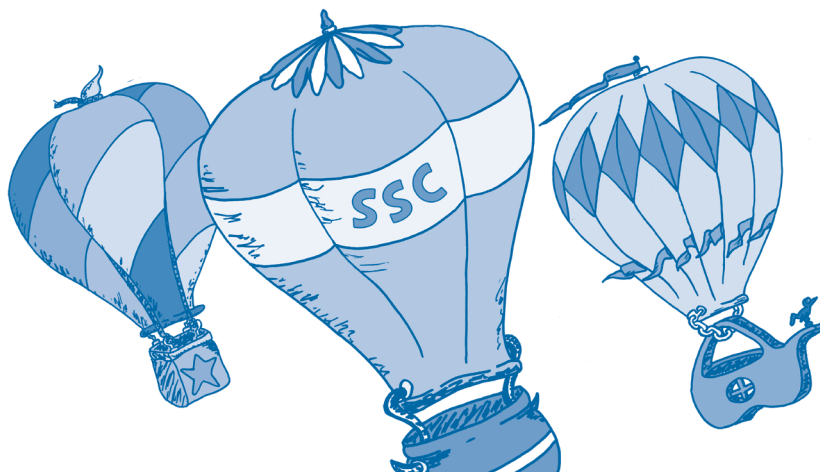
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A Springer CELEBRATION 2012 !

**Blow the Palooza-Horn! Bang the Thrumm Drumm!
Light the Ka-Sparkle-Flare! Roast the Schrum Plum!
Save the second of May for a lively to-do,
Springer's planning a party! You can bring your friends, too!**



Save the Date!

A Springer Celebration! 2012 promises to be an event of "Seussical" proportions! Themed "Oh, the Places You'll Go!" the evening of dining and cocktails will be animated by Local 12 WKRC TV Sports Director Brad Johansen, who joins us once again as emcee and auctioneer.

Springer alumni will take us on a journey through the Places They Have Gone, as they share with us stories of where their Springer education has led. Springer thanks alumni parent Nancy Cooper for chairing this year's event!

A Springer Celebration! benefits financial aid and outreach programs.

DON'T MISS THE PARTY!

May 2, 6:00 to 9:30 p.m.
The Netherland Hilton Hall of Mirrors