



# News & Views

of The Springer  
School

Fall 1992

## Springer Welcomes New Trustees



Board President Michael S. McGraw (second from left) welcomes new trustees.  
L-R, Yvonne Gray, Eileen Barrett, Louis D. George, Ernest E. Lewis and Gail P. Lips

Springer's board of trustees began its 1992-93 work with the introduction of five new members.

**Eileen W. Barrett** is an active volunteer, working on a variety of fund-raisers for different charities and arts groups. She is most interested in helping to educate the community about the school and its students. She is also a board member of The Children's Protective Service and is an active Girl Scout leader. Eileen is married to John F. Barrett and the mother of three children.

**Louis D. George** is tax partner-in-charge at Deloitte & Touche where he specializes in real estate. A graduate of West Virginia University, Lou is also a trustee of the Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Garden, a member of the Gentlemen's Committee and the U.C. Real Estate Executive Advisory Committee. His wife Anne is a former special education teacher.

**Yvonne L. Gray, C.P.A.** is vice president of Fifth Third Bank in charge of trust operations. She is active with the Aiken High School mentor program and enjoys the performing and creative arts as a participant. She also serves on the board of the Arts Consortium.

**Ernest E. Lewis** returns to the Springer board after a two year hiatus, having served the school as a trustee for 19 years. Ernie is a manager in the Professional Affairs Division of Procter and Gamble. His special interest at Springer is working to assure adequate financial aid for families in need.

**Gail P. Lips** is the mother of Springer grad Suzanne. She chaired the Alumni Parent Campaign of the Annual Fund Drive for two years and served as a non-trustee member of the school's Personnel Committee. A very active community volunteer, Gail is a Docent at the Cincinnati Art Museum, a member of the Junior League of Cincinnati, is chairperson of the nursery school board of Knox Presbyterian Church and a tour guide for the Contemporary Arts Center.

## "Changing Children's Lives" 1992 Annual Fund Drive Theme

Springer's Annual Fund Drive provides vital financial support for the school. It must first raise funds needed for financial aid for those families who would not be able to consider enrolling their child at the school. Requests for assistance have increased over 73% in the past two years. More than \$170,000 has been awarded so far this year.

In addition, the Annual Fund Drive benefits every family because there is a \$900 difference between tuition and actual cost per child.

This year's drive is divided into nine campaigns that reach out to a broad cross-section of the community. General Chairman is trustee **Tony Hobson** who has co-chairs **Jerry Randolph** and **Sharry Addison**, also trustees. Joining them are **Carole & Joe Albers**, **Janice & Jack Cook**, **Phyllis Breen**, **Donald Neyer**, and **Georgia & Alan Kightlinger**.



Annual Fund Drive chairman Tony Hobson (center) discusses plans  
with co-chairs Sharry Addison and Jerry Randolph.

## Springer Benefits from Art Show

Springer benefited from a special exhibition and sale of the works of artist **P. Buckley Moss** hosted by the Werline Art Studio in Amelia, Ohio on November 6 & 7. Proceeds from the raffle of "Skating Harmony" a framed, signed and numbered print by Ms. Moss were donated to the school.

**Pat Buckley Moss** is dyslexic and knows first-hand what the students at Springer are going through in their efforts to learn. As a result she has made a life-long commitment to support special education programs. As someone who has achieved success, Moss encourages the children to identify and prosper from their own talents and gifts.

Through donations and raffles such as this one, Ms. Moss has helped raise more than \$1 million in the past two years.



## Executive Director's Message

Norita Aplin, Ed.D.

"Success begets success!" "Ask a successful person if you want it done well!" "To the victor belongs the spoils!" You could add a few of your own favorite sayings to this list. What is success, or more specifically success for a person with a learning disability? This is worth a few moments of thought because the answer sometimes given is basic to the initial reaction of parents when they are told that their child has a learning disability. If there is resistance in accepting the diagnosis, it stems first from sadness that there is a problem for their beloved child. But quickly a concern about lowered expectation is added. Does this diagnosis mean that the child will be unable to accomplish what we often take for granted? A host of concerns line up to be addressed. And does it mean that not as much will be expected of the child by family, teachers, coaches, parents, the child?

The myth of lowered expectations for children with learning disabilities is one of our greatest and never-ending challenges. While we know we can not cure the problem, we seek strategies and alternatives for each child which will lead to progress and success. This progress requires trust, risk taking, a three way partnership of parents, student and educators and a strong work ethic in the child.

Assuming we have those components in place, what can we expect? What will the success look like? It will look much like the success we would have expected had there not been a learning disability. The pathway, the time and the effort are probably different, but not the goal.

There were 29 Springer graduates eligible for high school graduation in June, 1992, and 26 of them graduated on time (90%). Nationally, about 80% of all eligible high school students graduate on time while only 50% of all eligible high school students with a learning disability graduate. Using that predictor, we would have projected 15 instead of our 26.

What are this year's graduates' plans? One has enrolled in the Army, one is working as an electrician, two are in sales and one at the farm/nursery business. In addition to these five plans, 21 are enrolling in post-secondary education. The schools include: Cincinnati Technical College, Cleveland Art Institute, Dennison University, Loyola Maryland, Northern Kentucky University, Paul Smith College, Sinclair College, Springhill College in Alabama, Thomas More, University of Cincinnati and West Virginian Wesleyan. In other words, they seek the plan which is a match for their interests and talents.

This to me is success. It is a joy to have been part of the partnership bringing about these successes. Success is not lowered expectations. Success is the realization of your own potential. It is the goal we share for each Springer student.

## 1992 New Faces

Please join us in welcoming the following new staff members to the Springer family:

**Kathy Besecker** is filling a new position as Program Facilitator in which she arranges all school-wide and after school activities. She has a Masters degree in counseling from Miami University and has worked as a counselor at Indian Hill High School and at New Miami Elementary and Jr. High School.

**Linda Clements** returns to Springer after taking time off to start her family. She is one of Springer's five oral communications teachers and holds a Masters degree in Speech & Language Pathology from Marshall University.

**Susan Longfritz** is new to Cincinnati, having moved from Connecticut. She has 11 years special education experience and holds a Masters degree in Educational Psychology from the University of Connecticut. She teaches in Springer's Primary Department.

**Gretchen Carroll** comes to Cincinnati from the Chicago area where she received her B.S. and M.A. degrees in Learning Disabilities from Northwestern University. She previously taught LD children in a resource room setting in Lake Forest, Illinois. She is also a Primary Department teacher at Springer.

**Sally Casey**, classroom assistant, intermediate level. Actively involved with her 4 children's schools, coached soccer for 11 years.

**Ellie Linz**, classroom assistant, intermediate department. Ellie taught and worked as a social worker before "retiring" to have her children.

**Becky Born**, classroom assistant, upper school. Becky's daughter, Jill Botkins, is a 1992 Springer grad. Becky's previous work experience includes compensation and benefits administration at Christ Hospital.

**Sharon Schinasi**, classroom assistant, intermediate level. Sharon is a former assistant director of admissions at Xavier University. She also taught childbirth preparation classes for 6 years.



Seated: Kathy Besecker and Susan Longfritz  
Standing: Sally Casey, Becky Born, Gretchen Carroll and Linda Clements

## Springer Faculty Presents . . .

Several members of the Springer faculty have presented at state and national conferences this autumn. The Ohio Association of Independent Schools (OAIS) held their annual meeting on October 30, 1992 in Columbus, Ohio. The Orton Dyslexia Society held their 43rd annual conference "Language and Literacy in the 1990's" on November 18-21, 1992 at the Clarion Hotel in Cincinnati.

During the OAIS meeting, Melody Goodwin, principal, and Terry Moorhead, upper school teacher, presented "Mainstreaming LD Students" in a session at the Middle School Program. They presented a program designed to help students with learning disabilities improve study and organizational skills in order to function in a mainstream classroom. Specific strategies and a video of mainstreamed students with learning disabilities were included.

Also at the OAIS conference, Anne Vuotto, intermediate teacher, and Jill Johnson, intermediate oral communication teacher, presented "Language Processing Difficulties in the Classroom" in sessions aimed at the Middle School and Lower School levels. They discussed characteristics of language processing difficulties which affect a student's classroom performance. Strategies to facilitate the student's ability to understand and express ideas and information were the focus of their session.

Shelly Weisbacher (curriculum director), Jill Johnson (oral communication teacher), Mark Helmick (clinical psychologist), Karen Nagel (classroom teacher), and Marcia Goldsmith (motor coordination teacher) presented "A Collaborative Intervention Model for Children with Dyslexia and Other Learning Disabilities" at an Orton workshop session. They presented case studies to demonstrate the benefits of structured collaboration among teacher, language and motor coordination therapists, psychologists, administrators and parents to the child's academic and social success.

# Memories

*(Editor's note: The following thoughts were shared at this year's New Parent Orientation. The presenter was Kathy LeFevre, president of the Springer Parents Association.)*

## I remember...

...the OB-GYN staff working diligently with Brian as I gazed across the room at his slightly bluish coloration. (His twin sister Robin, who was born two minutes after him, had already pinked-up and was wearing the latest in stocking caps.) After what seemed like an eternity, our determined team pulled it off. We were lucky... Brian was a fighter.

## I remember...

...the doctor coming in to reassure me that Brian was fine, showed no sign of oxygen deprivation. What seemed like an hour before he took his first breath was within normal limits and "not to worry." I wasn't convinced. (Later I found out that his APGAR Reaction time on a scale of 0-10 was registered at 0 and indeed, he had experienced severe distress during the birthing process.)

## I remember...

...a temperamental baby with a sensitive tummy and disposition. Brian would scream at every diaper change, clothing change, and he didn't sleep for any great length of time. (It could have been my new parenting techniques, and then again, other factors may have played a part in these behaviors.)

## I remember...

...a smiling, happy-go-lucky toddler who knew no strangers, was interested in everything, outgoing, enthusiastic, full of dreams. I found him in the yard one day, digging a hole to bury his treasure, which happened to be my few pieces of good jewelry!

## I remember...

...that I was beginning to wonder if Brian would ever learn to dress himself and tie his shoes without a cheering section from the sidelines. His preschool teacher's end of the year evaluation: "He is curious, happy, can be moody, likes to work on his own and makes very good use of his time in the classroom."

## I remember...

...Kindergarten brought more challenges in a traditional school system. Children were divided into reading groups and dittos were introduced to keep the other children busy when they were not in reading group with the teacher. (Out of curiosity, I counted 383 dittos that Brian was expected to complete in his year of half-day kindergarten, and I had to chuckle when I read a notation on one of the dittos: "I was very disappointed that this is all you completed.") Brian's learning style was rapidly pulling away from the norm and was described as immature and squirmy.

## I remember...

...when I asked Brian what impressed him most about his first day in first grade, his comment was, "My teacher had the biggest toes I have ever seen!" A few months later, this child took me aside and told me that all the other kids were reading. He was memorizing the passages in the books and pretending to read. I could feel his alarm and tension and self doubt.

## I remember...

...as Divine Providence would have it, Brian's second grade teacher wasted no time in contacting me with Brian's reply to her question of what he thought of school. "I don't like school very much," was his reply. She reduced spelling lists, introduced a carrel to cut down on distraction and supported us when we decided

to have him tested. Brian was placed in an LD resource room and mainstreamed. A new set of problems arose as he was now having to shift gears and adjust to different spaces, teachers at various times of the day. This took organizational skills that Brian did not possess. At the end of second grade, I found myself in a conference with LD teacher, principal and home room teacher urging me to retain Brian. "Immature." "He just needs time." "Boys will be boys." "He'll catch up if we retain." were their explanations. We weren't convinced. Les and I knew that Brian was as sharp, if not sharper, than his sister.

We wasted no time in having Brian tested outside the school system for a non-biased opinion and after the results were in, a more comprehensive language disability was disclosed. We contacted Springer and Brian was placed on a year's waiting list. Retention would only benefit Brian if the teaching approach was altered to fit his needs. It would not be altered and quite frankly, I did not have the heart to put Brian through a repeat of those second grade dittos!

## I remember...

...third grade was a challenge for Brian. I was the school marm, drill sergeant and anything but the living mother figure. Home became an extension of the classroom and not a very safe and happy place to be. By the end of the year, Brian's LD teacher took me aside to tell me that we had made the right decision about not retaining. The homeroom teacher verbalized her concern about a bright child like Brian going to Springer. "Won't he be bored?" she asked. I can answer her now. Brian has been many things at Springer, but he has never been bored. He has come to know himself, his strengths, and his challenges. He is working towards taking charge of this life by learning to move through these challenges and engaging in creative and logical thinking skills and problem solving. Brian feels good about himself and his dreams are intact once again.

## I remember...

...the first year was a definite transition period for Brian and parents. You see, it was hard for us to lay down our boxing gloves. We were so conditioned to the defense strategy of school vs. child (them against us or win/lose) that it took a while for us to see the truth. We just didn't realize that Springer is set up for all to win.

It wasn't long before the Springer staff noted a possible attention deficit and medication was suggested. I wasn't ready. I wanted to see what Brian could do in this unique setting of 12 students per class. No problem, no pressure. Strategies were put in place to work with Brian. Because the Springer staff worked with us and supported our decisions, Brian chose on his own to try medication in his second year. The difference of night and day was noted: handwriting was neat, work was started and finished on time and Brian began to feel his own power and delighted in it.

Brian and parents no longer dwell on "Why me?" but rather on "How can we?" and "What aids do we need?"

Progress is made when pressure is off. Teachers and administrators not bound by traditional school system criteria and agendas have freedom to care and Brian, with your sons and daughters, reaps the benefits.

## Ways to Give

Springer is grateful to our many present and past benefactors who have so generously supported the school. Contributions can be made in many different ways:

- **Outright gifts** - cash, securities, real estate, other tangible property.
  - **Corporate Matching Gifts** - many companies will match your gift.  
Check it out.
  - **Gifts of Life Insurance**
  - **Gifts Through Your Will** - can either be a specified amount or a percentage of the estate.
  - **Income Producing Trusts** - can provide the donor tax benefits and income.
- Call or write the Development Office for more information about any of these ways to support The Springer School.



## News of Our Grads

One of the highlights of Springer's annual Alumni Parent Phonathon is the wealth of information gathered by the callers. Once again we are able to point to the success of our graduates as our most important product and best marketing tool.

**Brendan Altman**, class of 1991 - in Walnut Hills High School honors program.

**Joe Berlage**, class of 1976 - graduated from Purcell Marian, works as a groundskeeper at a local country club.

**Anthony Bryant**, class of 1984 - studying business at Cincinnati Technical College.

**Rob Connors**, class of 1985 - sophomore at Miami University.

**Bobby Endorf**, class of 1986 - sophomore at St X.

**Doug Fassler**, class of 1983 - graduated from Hanover College and working in Cincinnati area.

**Richard Grosse**, class of 1976 - graduated from College of Mt. St. Joseph, does marketing for a decorating company.

**Ted Fry**, class of 1983 - graduate of Ball State University, is in a management training program with Domino's; lives in Steamboat Springs, Colorado.

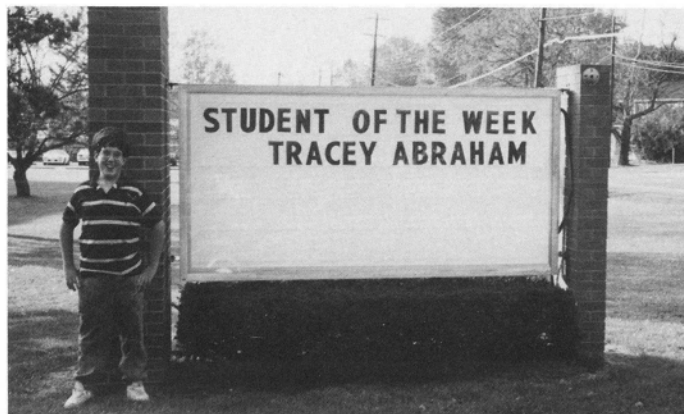
**Shawn Fucito**, class of 1985 - attends Wright State University and co-ops at Procter and Gamble.

**Tori Hurlburt**, class of 1988 - attends St. Thomas More College, lives in dorm.

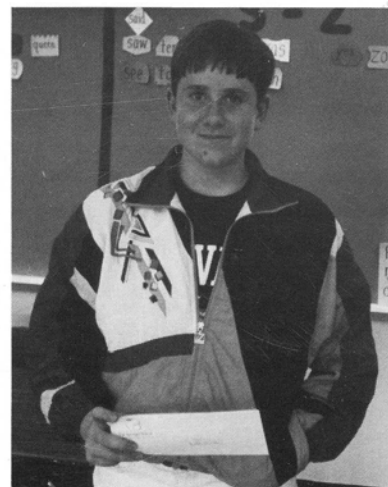
**Rick Krummer**, class of 1976 - attends CTC; studies Laseroptics.

**Laura Lohman**, class of 1988 - attends CTC; studying business.

**Marc Schworer**, class of 1980 - member of Villa Hills, Kentucky police force.



Tracey Abraham, a 1991 Springer grad was recently named Student of the Week at Sycamore Jr. High School. The announcement was made by Dave Senior and Mary Simon who described Tracey with these words: "An eighth grader who is always prepared for class, always interested in what is going on in class, always makes a positive contribution to class discussion, always has his homework done, always has a greeting and smile for teachers and classmates, and is genuinely a very nice person." Congratulations, Tracey!



Upper school student Keith Gormley proudly displays \$100 check he won as a participant at the school's annual Bike Hike. The students collected almost \$3,500 from sponsors. The Northwestern Group Marketing Service donated the Participation Award.

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