

WINTER 2021

News & VIEWS

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Success in Managing Covid Brings New Students

"Working remotely from home, Nick was losing what little confidence he had as a learner. If I could design a school specifically for Nick, it would be Springer." These are the words of new Springer parent Lauren Glenn, whose fifth-grader Nick transferred from a public school in October.

"The staff at the public school did their best," Lauren noted, "but they just don't have the flexibility to meet Nick's needs in a virtual or hybrid environment. Springer is like having a private tutor in each subject specifically for my child's needs, but in a school, where he has in-person art, music and P.E. classes and recess, and he has contact with teachers and peers every day."

Springer's success in managing Covid-19 in our building while maintaining in-person schooling has brought a record number of new families to the school since the beginning of the school year. Small class sizes and stringent protective protocols have kept Springer's positivity rate for Covid-19 at less than three percent, with no transmissions among staff and students to date.

Since the start of school, Springer has welcomed nearly 20 new families, compared with an average of six during the same period for the three preceding school years.

"Typically, parents are uncomfortable changing their child's school in the middle of a school year," said Director of Learning Programs

Continued on page 3.

► Letter from our Executive Director

It is likely no surprise to you that despite our country being engulfed in a global pandemic, Springer students have continued to exceed our expectations. The precautionary measures our school administrators put in place have kept the members of our community safe, and the work ethic that our students have demonstrated in response has been humbling to us all.

A Springer education is comprehensive and thorough. Teachers support students through developing self-awareness and embracing the challenges ahead; students respond by rolling up their sleeves and getting to work. If you take nothing else from this issue of News & Views, I want you to know that as much as we think we are leading our students through this pandemic, the opposite is equally as true. Our students are our inspiration. They provide the fuel for their own success, and we walk them through that process each step of the way.

In the pages of this publication, you will see the unphased continuation of a powerful Springer community: heartfelt stories of student success, consistent delivery of programs that serve our entire community, and an outpouring of philanthropic support that allows us to continue to provide top-tier academic programs for our students. And with all that, it is still certainly worth stating the obvious: it is the people who make Springer such an amazing place. From our teachers who invest countless hours into diagnostic instructional design to our parents, supporters and Board members who sing our praises in our carline and in the community, it is

the students in our region who reap these benefits. And for absolute clarity, that is what drives us. We are inspired by our students every day and know there are many more in our community who need our support. Be our partner, tell your friends, and state from any rooftop you can – Springer is an amazing place, and we need more champions to help us serve our mission. On behalf of our students and the members of the community, thank you for being a partner in this journey.

All my best,

Brett T. Marcoux
Executive Director



► Springer's First Virtual Event Raises \$140,000

Springer's first virtual fundraising event, *A Springer Celebration! Seeds of Success*, streamed on Facebook Live, Youtube Live, Instagram Live and in an alumni group on Facebook on October 30. The event, which received 1,400 views on Facebook alone, raised \$140,000 through sponsorships, hosting, donations and sales of auction items and raffle tickets.

The half-hour event, featuring prerecorded interviews with Springer trustees, veteran staff members and Student Council officers and representatives, highlighted the impact Springer has had on students with learning disabilities and their families for nearly 50 years.

"I used to hate reading," said eighth grader Anna Krieg, "I would avoid it at all costs, but now one of my favorite things to do is to read." "Springer has given me the self-confidence to be able to advocate for myself," added Student Council Vice President Campbell Glinski. Student Council President Max Matarazzo summed up Springer's impact by saying, "Springer gives people a chance to learn, a chance to grow and an opportunity to show their true colors."

Dr. Tony Barone, Springer psychologist for more than 25 years, reflected on Springer's importance to children with learning disabilities. "To me," he said, "Springer means hope for children who have been very close at times to losing hope. Here they've been able to find a doorway to find their own individual potential." Thirty-year veteran Terri Moorhead added, "What makes Springer unique is our focus on teaching students how to learn. Not just learning information, but how they learn. For our students, that can be very empowering."

Co-chaired by Trustees Cecily Fassler and Peter Frey, the program wrapped up with a live drawing for three raffle prizes, officiated by Executive Director Brett Marcoux and Auction Chair and Springer parent Jenni Ward.

"We are grateful for the support of the Springer community and are overwhelmed by their support for Springer during this difficult year, Trustee Cecily Fassler commented. "Springer is a real asset to Cincinnati and while this was not our normal celebration, our community came out in full force."



► Center Programming Thrives in a Virtual World

Under the new leadership of Center Director Lisa Bruns, Springer's Center has gone above and beyond to create programming accessible in our new virtual world.

Online programs for parents and professionals this fall and winter have been well attended. More than 50 parents joined a presentation on Zoom with Center Program Coordinator Mary Ann Mulcahey and alumni parent and author of *How ADHD Affects Home Organization* Lisa Woodruff in December. Springer offered two breakout sessions on ADHD and Executive Function for a virtual conference for Mercer County, Ohio, school districts which were attended by more than 250 educators.

Springer hosted author Jonathan Mooney in October for our Distinguished Speaker Series with a program for parents entitled Making Difference Count, for which more than 150 people registered. Jonathan spoke passionately about his own struggle with dyslexia in school and his mother's advocacy for him. From a challenging beginning, not learning to read until age 12,

Jonathan went on to graduate with an honors degree in English Literature from Brown University, to be a Rhodes Scholarship Finalist, and to write three books, *Learning Outside the Lines*, *The Short Bus*, and *Normal Sucks*.

In February, Springer hosts another Distinguished Speaker, David Anderson, PhD, who presents an evening program for parents and a full-day workshop for educators and clinicians. Vice President of School and Community Programs at the Child Mind Institute, Dr. Anderson special-

izes in children and teens with ADHD and has experience as a clinician, public speaker, consultant and workshop facilitator.

Springer is pleased to have secured a speaking engagement with actor, writer and YouTube personality Jessica McCabe, scheduled for September 30, 2021 to kick off LD Awareness Month and ADHD Awareness Month. With more than 532,000 subscribers, Jessica's YouTube channel, *How to ADHD*, is geared toward young people and offers tips > *Distinguished Speaker Dr. David Anderson* for managing ADHD, product reviews and videos that cover a wide variety of ADHD-related topics.

Summer Program Director Shanice Carter-Harris is looking forward to welcoming students to the building for Adventures in Summer Learning in June. Leveraging Covid-safety protocols developed last summer and fall (see page 1), Shanice plans to host 50 students on campus for the skills- and confidence-building program that was sidelined for the pandemic in 2020. The Springer Activity Club, a series of boxes filled with engaging academic activities that were shipped directly to students' residences last summer, acted as a substitute for the Adventures in Summer Learning program. The Activity Club will be offered once again this summer alongside the Adventures program, allowing for the reach of academic activities planned by Springer teachers to be experienced by students near and far.



> *Distinguished Speaker Jonathan Mooney*

Success Managing Covid *Continued from page 1.*

Carmen Mendoza. "But with uncertainty around remote and hybrid learning in many local schools, parents of children with learning disabilities are more frequently opting for the stability we offer here. Remote learning has also made some parents more aware of the degree of their child's struggle to achieve in school, causing them to search out alternatives."

"Nick cried every day before school," said Lauren, "and again in the evening when he had to do homework after spending all day trying to focus in front of a computer. Now that he is at Springer, he hasn't ever asked not to go to school, and he comes home in a good mood every day." Lauren knew from Nick's early years that he would have challenges with learning, and she knew about Springer from a neighbor whose daughter attended here, but she was trying to manage with interventions and accommodations in the public school with the thought that Nick might need to transfer to Springer for middle school. "Being forced to look for other options has been the silver lining in the Covid pandemic," said Lauren. "I can see now that Nick needed to be at Springer years ago. I'm so grateful that now he has the academic help he needs, but he's also learning how his own brain works and how to advocate for what he needs."

"These are challenging times for students in any school," Carmen remarked, "but a learning disability doesn't wait for pandemic circumstances to change. The child still needs to learn to read."



► Be Your Best Self in the World of COVID

Each October, Springer celebrates Be Your Best Self Week, a week of activities, challenges and experiences centered around mental, physical and emotional health. The week took on a new significance this year, in light of the separation and isolation that comes with a global pandemic. The challenge this year became connecting students and staff who are not able to gather together in the same space.

"This year we had to be very creative in how we inspired the Springer community to be the best version of themselves," remarked Student Life Coordinator Erin Fiorito. "However, in true Springer fashion, students and staff pulled together, showed strength and flexibility, and fully embraced the week. We started each morning with a classroom video that included an exercise routine from our Physical Education teacher, Mr. Phelps and a few brief video messages from Springer alumni, parents, and visitors. It was fun to watch students view these videos and get the opportunity to hear positive and important messages from so many community members. It seemed to help bring us all together in a meaningful way."

Each day of the week addressed a single element of the theme Springer CARES - Connecting, Activate Your Body, Rest, Eat Healthy Food, and Smile! Throughout the week, students participated in a Kindness Chal-



lenge, keeping track of their acts of kindness both at home and at school. Students were given a list of suggested acts of kindness, and they accumulated nearly 5,000 during the week.

Guest speakers in the videos included FC Cincinnati player Omar Cummings, Springer Social Media and Alumni Relations Coordinator Marika Huelskamp, and Springer Trustee and alumnus Mike Wright, who each spoke about Activating Your Body. Springer Nurse Emily Waits and Yoga Instructor Emily Hunt discussed the importance of Rest. Eating Healthy Food was the topic for Springer parent and professional chef Derek dos Anjos, while Springer alumnus and owner of Karrikin Spirits Jeff Reichard focused on the social side of food. Friday's video on Smiles featured Springer parent and periodontist Dr. Stacey Blume-Soper, previous Springer Artist in Residence Molly Z. and previous Springer Musician in Residence Jim McCutcheon.

Throughout the week, special activities like a Zumba session led by Marika Huelskamp, a yoga class from Emily Hunt and Recess with Meredith, a staffer from Skool Aid, engaged students' minds and bodies. A student and staff favorite was Play Day, when staff members join students during their recess times for sports, games and just enjoying being outside together.

The week wrapped up with an outdoor assembly where students reviewed the week's activities and classes reported their acts of kindness and tallied the total for the school.

Images: Top: Play Day is a favorite part of Be Your Best Self Week Middle: Students tally their Acts of Kindness in outdoor assembly. Bottom: Previous Musician in Residence Jim McCutcheon wrote and recorded a song for Springer's Be Your Best Self video assembly.



RUNNING CLUB DONATES TO PET SHELTER

The Middle School Running Club trained for six weeks this fall, with the goal of running a 5K race. With the pandemic still raging, the group decided a "virtual" race would be best, and they signed up for The Pup Strut, a race organized by Sara Reihs, owner of Total Blaze Fitness.

The Pup Strut supports Joseph's Legacy, an animal rescue shelter in Middletown, Ohio. Students solicited donations from friends and family, and organized their 5K race for Saturday, November 8. The Running Club was able to make a \$600 donation to Joseph's Legacy.

"Running the 5K showed resilience and dedication from our students, as each one of them finished with a smile," said Curriculum Director Dr. Diane Houghton, who oversaw the club along with Director of Learning Programs Carmen Mendoza.



► Students Share Appreciation with Local Community

Year's end is the traditional time for Springer students to engage in an activity that makes a contribution to the local community. In past years, students have collected winter outerwear, food for pantries, supplies for pet shelters and hats, socks, gloves and games for children experiencing homelessness."

This year's pandemic was forefront in students' minds as they considered 2020's contributory activity. Student Council members decided that what was needed most was appreciation for frontline workers - the doctors, nurses, firefighters and police who have worked hard to protect us under challenging circumstances this year.



Students created cards that expressed their thanks to local community servants. The cards were delivered to local pediatricians and to staff members at hospitals, emergency rooms and health centers. Cincinnati Fire and Police Departments sent representatives to Springer's campus to receive their cards, and cards were delivered to Springer teachers as well.

"The other advisors and I are so proud of Student Council Officers for creating such a meaningful experience for our student body," remarked Student Council Advisor Hannah Wagner. "The letters that were written by the students reflected their heartfelt appreciation for our frontline workers who are sacrificing so much at this time. Being able to see the smiles on the faces of both the students and the recipients was an experience that was unforgettable."

Photos and videos of the cards being delivered across the city were included in a "video assembly" that all classes viewed on the last day of school before winter break.

Images: Top: Students present cards to Cincinnati Fire Department personnel. Left: Students pose with recipient of cards for Cincinnati Police Department.

► Josie Wong Wins Scholastic Silver Key Award

Middle School student Josie Wong's narrative essay written as a routine classroom assignment earned the Springer eighth grader a Silver Key from the prestigious Scholastic Art and Writing Awards. The essay, *To Lose a Stranger*, was written when students were prompted to write about a time they won or lost something.

"As I was grading Josie's paper, I realized she was scoring "superior" in all categories in the grading rubric," recalled Emily Kimble, Josie's Literature teacher. "I thought this was a piece of writing worthy of submitting to

the Scholastic Awards program." Emily coached Josie in smoothing out the essay and submitted the paper in early December.

"I was really happy when I found out I had won a Silver Key," said Josie. "Writing is one of my best subjects, but I did not expect to win anything." Prompted by recent attendance at a funeral for a person Josie didn't know, *To Lose a Stranger* explores a universal sense of collective grief. "I didn't know the person," Josie recalled, "and wondered why I had such a strong reaction at the funeral. I realized this is something we all experience - we all lose strangers,

and their loss affects us as much as the loss of those we know."

"I am just really proud of Josie and excited that she is able to be recognized for her talents and efforts as a writer," said Emily. "It's a great reminder of just how high our Eagles can soar when given the tools they need to succeed."

Administered by the Alliance for Young Artists and Writers, the program awards Gold Keys, Silver Keys and Honorable Mentions in regional competitions. Essays receiving a Gold Key go on to compete at the national level for scholarships of up to \$10,000. Since 1923 the Scholastic Awards have



Silver Key Winner Josie Wong

recognized outstanding work in 29 categories by students in grades 7-12. Previous winners include such notables as Andy Warhol, Sylvia Plath, Stephen King, John Updike and Truman Capote.



"What a day it was!"

JOHN PARRA

► **Illustrator John Parra Makes Virtual Visit to Springer**

Springer School and Center was pleased to host an award-winning children's book illustrator by livestreaming in November.

John Parra, best known for his Latino themed children's books, connected with Springer students in their classrooms where he shared about his becoming an artist and some of the books he has illustrated. He led classes in a drawing activity and answered questions from the students.

Parra met separately with Middle School, Lower School Blue and Gray, and Lower School Green teams throughout the day, sharing about his Hispanic roots and about growing up in Santa Barbara, California. He explained his creative process and engaged students in an activity in which they each drew a portrait under his guidance.

"With over ten years of in-person presentations, I finally had my first, full, VIRTUAL, Artist Visit Day, at Springer School and Center," said Parra. "What a day it was! We spoke, we drew, we asked questions. The students were amazing and insightful. They created beautiful art and discussed perceptive observations. There was inspiration in each student I saw. What an honor to be a part of such a great community of learners and educators. Thank you all."

"I am so grateful we were able to have our virtual illustrator visit with John Parra this year!" commented Library Media Specialist Amanda Forbes. "Even though it was over Zoom, the students absolutely loved it. They especially loved when he did a drawing activity with them and taught them how to draw faces. Several students shared their own artwork with Mr. Parra. It was wonderful to see the students interact, learn and have fun!"



John Parra is the recipient of many awards and accolades including The American Library Association's Pura Belpré Honors, The Christopher's Award, and The Golden Kite Award from The Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators. His original artwork has also been displayed in many museums across the United States and abroad. Parra has illustrated 12 children's picture books, most recently *Little Libraries*, *Big Heroes*, *One is a Piñata: A Book of Numbers*, and *The Power of Her Pen: The Story of Groundbreaking Journalist Ethel Payne*.



Images: Top: Green Team students have a virtual conversation with illustrator John Parra. Middle: Damariyeh McBee asks a question. Bottom: Marshall Carrier participates in a drawing activity.

& Memorials TRIBUTES

(AS OF 1/25/21)

In Honor of Samantha Evans

The Anness Family Charitable Fund

In Honor of Kenneth Michalski

Joyce Michalski

In Honor of Springer School and Center Teachers and Staff

Susan and Lawrence Kraus

In Honor of Shelly Weisbacher

Jana and Todd Finch

In Memory of Pete and Momi Bolan

Brian Bolan

In Memory of Robbie Dimling

Robert Dimling

In Memory of Wes Loyd

Sally and Edward Kamphake

In Memory of Nancy Sproul

Donna and Joseph Broderick
Philomena and Joseph Dillhoff
Marcy Goldsmith
April Humphreys
Michael Schmerge
Sandi Timler

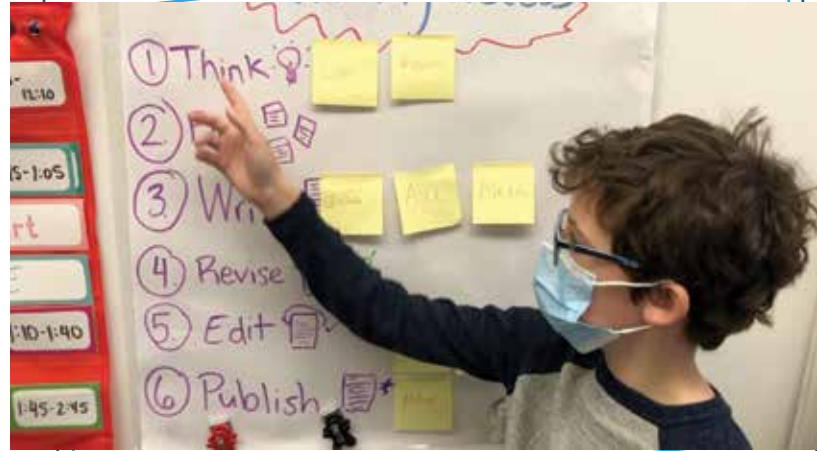
► A New Approach to Be Our Guest Day

To help reduce risk during the pandemic, Springer reimaged our annual Be Our Guest Day, a day when grandparents or other special guests have traditionally visited Springer classrooms.

Lower School students brought Springer to their guests by creating class videos that gave grandparents and other special friends a sense of what happens in a typical day at Springer. Students shared the technology tools and the strategies they use every day, showed guests what their classroom looks like and demonstrated games they enjoy during Morning Meeting.

Middle School students took a different approach, each creating an individual video in which they presented to their class one special person in their life and what makes that person special. The videos were emailed to families who then forwarded them to their special guests.

"This was a great idea and a big hit!" said parent Susan Motch. "All Kenzie's grandparents loved it!"



NATHAN ANZEL '16 graduated from Moeller High School in 2020. Nathan is currently a student in the University of Cincinnati Clermont Aviation Program, with the goal of becoming a pilot. He completed his first solo flight on January 19. Nathan is employed at Jersey Mike's.



CONNOR WARD '15 graduated from Summit Academy and recently began attending Asbury University in Wilmore, Kentucky, with a major in Media Communications. One of his professors, Sean Gaffney, is the screenwriter for VeggieTales and many other shows and films. Connor hopes to one day become a successful screenwriter for television and film.



KATHLEEN FINN '13 graduated from McNicholas High School in 2017 and is currently a fourth-year student at the University of Arizona. Kathleen is majoring in Literacy, Learning and Leadership in the College of Education with a minor in Sports, Parks and Recreation. She hopes to attain a position in Early Education, preferably in Cincinnati.



TIM COYNE '13 is a 2020 graduate of Moeller High School and is currently a freshman at UC - Blue Ash where he is studying biology. He is a full-time student and is also working full-time at Costco.



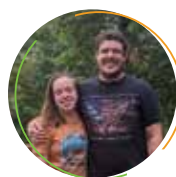
ALEXANDER BETZ '13 is currently in his fourth year at Ball State University where he is majoring in Landscape Architecture with a minor in Criminal Justice and Criminology. He was a summer intern this summer, which was very interesting with all the COVID-19

restrictions. Once he graduates and passes the test to become a registered Landscape Architect, Alexander will pursue a job with a Landscape Architecture firm. He is currently employed as a barista with Starbucks.



GREG BRUGGER '10 graduated from Mount Saint Joseph University with a major in Sociology and a minor in Leadership and Civic Engagement in 2018. Post-graduation, he relocated to Mason, OH to move into his first apartment. Greg gained valuable career experience working at a child care facility and later decided that childcare was not for him. In 2019, the opportunity to move to the Dayton area presented itself, to seek out other jobs and volunteer opportunities in theatre. Greg joined a local theatre organization known as Dayton Theatre Guild, signing on as their Social Media Coordinator. His primary tasks include the following: promoting current shows, introducing cast members to the public, sharing the progress of stage construction, engaging with patrons, and creating hashtags. Greg continues to be involved with Dayton Theatre Guild promoting their 75th Season and is employed at Lowe's Home Improvement in Paint Sales

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EVAN PHILLIPS '08 graduated from Springer in the spring of 2008 and from Elder High School in 2012. He served for six years in the U.S. Army as an infantryman. After leaving the military, Evan started his own landscape business, Legion Landscape, here in Cincinnati, with his girlfriend Bailey.

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Springer's four-week Adventures in Summer Learning programs are specially designed for students in grades 1-6 who struggle with reading, writing, math and problem-solving skills. Students learn through small group instruction in a positive and supportive environment. Programs specially designed for students in grades 6-8 who need support in writing and/or math are also available. These two-week courses teach children strategies for success they can take into their next school year. The Springer Activity Club will be returning this summer and offered for children in grades 1-3.

