

Side by Side's Monthly News

Jan. 25, 2012

Issue 104

FROM THE DIRECTOR:

Dear Side by Side Families,

The Side by Side Winter Concert 2011 took place last Thursday, January 19th. On behalf of the entire SBS community, I would like to congratulate and thank Ms. Angela Nida and all of the student participants for an incredible performance. It is quite amazing to know that Ms. Nida has only been with Side by Side since September and that many of these children are new to choir and playing instruments. It is summed-up best by repeating what one of our 1st grade audience members told me that afternoon, "This was the best Side by Side concert ever!"

Parents, please be reminded that this upcoming Wednesday, January 25 is a 1pm early dismissal. This is one of our scheduled professional development days for our teaching staff. On this day, our teachers and assistants will be working with a consultant from Cooperative Educational Services with expertise in instructional "Differentiation." Our teaching staff will be learning how to understand the different types of learners in their classrooms and will explore ways to create tiered instruction that meets a wide range of student needs.

IMPORTANT—The Annual Side by Side Gala Dinner & Silent Auction has been set for **Saturday, March 31 from 7-10pm at Harbor Lights Restaurant in Norwalk**. This is sure to be another fun and festive evening that will include great food & drinks and a silent auction to benefit our school. You will be receiving your invitation in the near future. The evening will be led by Master of Ceremonies, CT House Minority Leader, Larry Cafero. We are currently seeking donations for the silent auction, including vacation rentals, gift certificates to area restaurants, professional services, and performances, event tickets, original art, electronics, and new household items. If you, your place of employment, or someone you know is interested in making a donation, please contact Evelyn Quigley at ext. 130.

Lastly, but not least....Let's go NY Giants!

Sincerely,

Mr. Nittoly

ANY QUESTIONS?

Main Number	857-0306
Fax Number	838-2666
Director	Matt, x133
Nurse	Maria, x118
Social Worker.....	Marlene, x126
Assistant to the Director.....	Lilly, x132
Parent Coordinator.....	Evelyn, x130
Family Resource Center	Susan, x111

SAVE THE DATES:

Friday, February 3 – Dress down day for students and staff
Side by Side Open House Dates and Times: Wed., Feb. 1 at 10:30 A.M.; Wed., Feb. 29 at 5:00 P.M.; Wed., March 14 at 10:30 A.M. and Wed., March 28 at 10:30 A.M.; Wed., April 11 at 5:00 P.M. The Side by Side Lottery will take place on Wed., April 25 at 5:00 p.m.

Please share this information with relatives, friends, co-workers, and neighbors interested in learning more about Side by Side. Lottery applications will be distributed at the conclusion of each information session.

Thursday, February 9 – PTCO meeting at 6:30 P.M.

Wednesday, February 15 - Family Fun Night at My Three Sons from 6-8 P.M. \$10 admission per family (immediate)—tell your friends! Bring your neighbors!!

Friday, February 17 through Tuesday, February 21 – School closed for Winter Recess. School will re-open for students and teachers on Wednesday, February 22.

Friday, February 24 R.I.S.E. Meeting at 2:30 P.M. in the gym; all are welcome to attend.

Tuesday February 28 @ 5:15 P.M.– Board of Director's Meeting

Preliminary Agenda for February 28 Meeting

Public Session

Director Update

Auditor Report

Finance Committee Update

Safe School Climate Plan

Spring Recruitment

PTCO Update

PR/Outside Fundraising Update

Facilities Search Update

Increasing Community Service for Upper School

Gala

Strategic Planning

Monday, March 5 through Friday March 30 Connecticut Mastery

Tests will be administered to all students in grades three through eighth. A detailed schedule will be provided once it is available and as is our SBS tradition, families will be invited to send in healthy snacks to share before the exams begin each day.

Thursday, March 22 Conference Night: students are dismissed at 2pm, regular bus transportation at dismissal, no after school enrichment or extended day

Friday, March 23 School will be closed for students; teachers convene for professional development. Please note there will be one more **Early Dismissal** for Professional Development which will take place on Wednesday, May 9.

Announcements:

Sibling Survey and Lottery Applications are due back to the school office by Monday, February 27th, even if the sibling survey does not pertain to your family.

Side by Side School will be hosting the **Community Health Center's Mobile Dental Program** during the week of February 13 through 16. Please look for flyers sent home today from Maria, our school nurse and return the permission form to her by Friday February 3 if you would like to have your child seen by the mobile dentist here at school.

Please note that **Movie Night**, originally scheduled for Friday, March 30 will be rescheduled so as not to conflict with any last minute preparations for the Gala on Saturday, March 31. We'll keep you posted once a new date has been set for this fun family night.

The Courage to Speak, Empowering Youth to Be Drug-Free Family Night will take place on Tuesday March 20, beginning with a free dinner at 5:15 and a presentation by Ginger Katz and student program participants at 6:15. The evening will be moderated by Representative Larry Cafero, with Mayor Moccia, Chief of Police Harry Rilling and Superintendent of Schools Dr. Susan Marks in attendance. Please RSVP by completing the bottom portion of the flyer and return it to the school office.

January 29, 2012 1:30 - 4:30 P.M. College Goal Sunday Open to all College-bound students interested in applying for financial aid. Get expert help in filling out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form at Norwalk Community College in the NCC East Campus building. To register for College Goal Sunday at NCC, go to: <http://www.collegegoalsundayct.org/> In order to complete the FAFSA, students and their parents should bring the following: Driver's license, social security number, previous year's W-2 forms, student and parents' recent Federal Income tax returns, current bank statements, untaxed income records for previous year, current business records and information, and proof of citizenships. For more information, contact Rebecca Darragh-Savvaides, NCC Financial Aid Services Assistant, at (203)857-3311.

Free Income Tax Preparation and Electronic Filing at NCC: Under the IRS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program, NCC students who have passed IRS qualifying examinations are providing these services to NCC students and families in the Norwalk area who qualify based on income levels and other considerations. NCC VITA is open each Saturday from January 28 through April 14. Hours of operation are from 10:00 A.M. to 3:30 P.M. in Room W138 and from 12:30-3:30 P.M. in Room W135. Both classrooms are in the West Campus building. Services are provided on a walk-in basis only. No appointments are necessary. For information, email nccvita@ncc.commnet.edu or call (203)857-7144.

Classroom News:

PK 103 (Teachers, Judie and Kim) - Our class is currently learning about all the ways in which our families are the same and different. In sharing about their individual families, the children have noticed the differences in each other's family size and family members that live with one another. Our families range in size of two members to eight members. We have noticed that a family size of four is the most common in our class community. One of the highlights to our family study is to have family visitors come in to cook a family recipe, share a story or craft project. In the past week, parents have joined us to cook delicious foods from India -pakora, Mexico-tortillas and Colombia-arepas, and of course, the All -American favorites of macaroni 'n cheese and chocolate chip cookies. The children also enjoyed having a class parent visit to read The Cat in the Hat by Dr. Seuss. We look forward to the many upcoming visits...each one is a new experience for us to share together then revisit again and again. With great anticipation, the children check our morning message to see who will visit that day.

PK 104 (Teachers, Jen and Carmen) – PreK 104 has been fortunate to have several parents come into class to cook their favorite family recipes with us. So far, we have tried an Indian pancake called Dosa that Sid's mom and grandma made, and delicious chocolate chip cookies from Valerie's mom. Yum, Yum! The children were so excited about the first real snow of the year! We have been sharing things we like to do in the snow, and what changes occur in the season of winter. **Kindergarten** - The Kindergarten kids are making fantastic progress on their reading. We have only been doing the 100 Book Challenge since November and we already have a couple of children ready to receive their bronze medal. Nice work folks!

1st Grade – The first graders are collecting data and creating survey charts in math. Their survey questions are limited to two possible answers and we are having fun while learning that sometimes the outcome of the survey is a lot different than what we expected...So what were some of the questions our 6 and 7 year olds came up with, you ask? Here's a few... Would you rather be a shark or a whale? Would you rather be a gingerbread man or a snowman? Which do you like better --helping mom clean the house or helping dad clean the car? Would you rather get a sting from a bee or a shot from the doctor? Which do you like better --pizza or spaghetti? Would you rather be a cowboy or an alien? Would you rather be a kangaroo or a bunny? (think: hopping), Would you rather ride in a jet or a motorcycle? Would you rather be a killer whale or a dinosaur? So...What would you rather?

2nd Grade – Greetings from room 204! We have been doing a lot since our return from break. The students are now beginning to explore solids, liquids, and gases and they're learning how each of these states of matter is important in different communities. We are also reading different Folk Tales and discovering how they are passed down through generations. The students are comparing character traits throughout the stories and have begun to use some of the stories we have read as models to write their own! In Math, we continue to work on a variety of activities designed to further develop our number sense. That is all to report for now, but please check the next edition for updates.

3rd Grade – 3rd graders had an amazing adventure as we went back in time to explore life on earth 500 years ago. As part of our yearlong Gifts of Land and Water Study, 3rd graders shifted from investigating gifts of land and water as marine biologists to investigating the gifts of land and water through the eyes of an Algonquin Native American. The kickoff of this learning adventure was January 13 when 3rd graders visited the Mashantucket Pequot Museum, where students explored life without a supermarket. Visitors here journey back in time from the ice age to 500 years ago, discovering what it was like to live as a Pequot by visiting an authentic Pequot Village. A HUGE thanks to all the parents who chaperoned, and a BIGGER thanks to all of the wonderful 3rd graders who continued to RISE beyond the walls of our school!

4th Grade – Happy New Year! 4th grade Mathematicians are exploring division and will be learning how to divide with remainders. Scientists are investigating the world of Forces and Motion and will soon be going on a school-wide "scavenger hunt" to look for simple machines. Please send in any old newspapers and magazines you have for our Simple Machines catalogue project. Writers are busy writing narrative stories using the Narrative Writing Diamond....ask your child all about the diamond "slices"! Book Clubs have gotten under way and we are all excited about our books and the discussions they've generated. It is cold outside so please remind your child to dress appropriately for the weather (long-sleeved shirt under uniform shirt, warm coat, etc) Thank you!

5th Grade Humanities - Fifth graders continue to investigate the events leading up to the Revolutionary War. They have been using metaphors to enhance their understanding of laws like the Stamp Act and the Proclamation of 1763. Next, students will be asked to examine both sides of what happened during the infamous Boston Massacre.

6th Grade Humanities - Students have been comparing and contrasting the Maya, Inca, and Aztec civilizations which led them to discover that although these civilizations encountered different challenges posed by their unique geographic location, all three empires invented farming methods that enabled them to thrive and prosper.

5th & 6 Grade Language Arts – Students will begin exploring nonfiction texts this week, first identifying both visual and text features that are found in nonfiction, and then determining how these features help us as readers comprehend the material better.

7th and 8th Grade Language Arts and Social Studies - 7th and 8th grade students have begun a unit entitled Civil Rights Study 1954. We will be reading the memoir “Warriors Don’t Cry,” a personal account drawn from news articles and the diary of one of the first nine African American students to integrate Central High School in Little Rock Arkansas. Our study delves into the Supreme Court ruling, “Brown vs. Board of Education” which stated that segregation in schools and other public places, under the legal doctrine “separate but equal” was unconstitutional.

Spanish News - Spanish students have been very busy since returning from the winter break! The seventh and eighth grade classes have spent a great deal of time studying the rules of conjugation. We have utilized verbs to tell stories, report information and tell about the school day. This is a fairly difficult concept to master for Spanish students, but they have done an excellent job! Eighth grade is also working on cultural projects. They are allowed to present on anything culturally that is of interest to them; some of the topics include The Day of the Dead, Running of the Bulls, and Salsa dancing.

Fifth and sixth grades have been studying about school subjects and school supplies. We have talked about favorite classes, items we need for each class and eventually will study how to tell time in Spanish.

The goal is to be able to narrate their schedules completely in Spanish as well as tell what items are necessary for each class. It is a slow process, but progress is being made! As always, if you have any questions or concerns about your child and Spanish class, please do not hesitate to email me at a.hamor@sbscharter.org.

Upper School Math News – In 5th grade math we just finished our place value unit, and we are moving into fractions, decimals, and percent. Mr. Nittoly came in to teach a lesson about fractions. Throughout the unit, students will be using fraction-percent equivalents to solve problems, order fractions, and add fractions. Students will be playing math games and using math manipulates throughout this unit. In 6th grade math we are working with fractions, decimals, and percent. We have worked on improper fractions, mixed numbers, and equivalent fractions, and currently students are mastering their ability to switch between fractions, decimals, and percent with and without a calculator. Students are doing a fabulous job of explaining their reasoning.

In 7th grade math we have begun the CMT glog project. Students will be creating a glog by taking the statistic: 71.6% of students reached Goal on the CMT’s, and finding some factors that might influence this statistic. Students are working in groups and are having deep conversations about this topic. The project will culminate with two in class presentations; however the first one will be considered a practice run through. In 8th grade math we have just finished up percent of change and the Pythagorean Theorem, and now we are moving into equations of a line ($y=mx+b$), where m is the slope and b is the y -intercept!

Upper School Science News - The fifth graders are learning about sound and how it travels. We’ve completed many hands-on activities to see how sound gets from the sound maker to the listener. We have also been thinking about the difference between sound and noise. The students constructed chimes and composed pieces to share with classmates. The sixth graders are currently investigating the structure of the periodic table. We have sorted and categorized elements based on their properties and are learning how to diagram atoms. The seventh graders are studying the dynamic structure of Earth. They

have researched and mapped earthquakes to see if there are patterns as to where they occur. They have also mapped the major tectonic plates and researched the types of boundaries that exist in various locations. Be sure to ask your seventh grader all about Alfred Wegener’s Theory of Continental Drift. The eighth graders have been learning about Newton’s Laws of Motion. They have worked in small groups to design a car made completely of pasta and glue in order to test the concepts they’ve learned. I’ve been amazed at how unique each group’s design is considering the limitations of the materials!

Physical Education News

Lower School: Pre K 4 students have recently finished a gymnastics unit during which they worked on skills such as tumbling and balance. Students learned how to demonstrate a forward and backward roll, cartwheel, and a basic headstand as well as many other types of balancing stances. Students in grades Kindergarten through Fourth have now begun Health Class, where they are learning about the dangers of drugs such as alcohol, tobacco, and the improper use of prescription medicines, as well as how to keep their bodies safe.

Upper School: Grades 5-8 students have also just completed a more advanced gymnastics unit. Students have perfected skills that they’ve learned over the past several years and choreographed them into a 2 minute long gymnastic routine, which they performed for their classmates this past week. We have also just recently started our Drug Prevention Unit in all grades. 5th and 7th graders are participating in the Courage to Speak program, while 6th and 8th graders are studying The Great Body Shop curriculum.

Music News - US & LS: We just completed an amazing winter concert at which both schools performed all ensembles. A huge thanks goes to all students and parents for showing their support as well as the PTCO! Please look for a letter that will be sent home at the end of this week which opens enrollment for the Children’s Choir and Show Choir; participation in ensembles requires a signature from the student’s parent/guardian and teacher.

Art - Pre-K and Kindergarten artists have created unique fish inspired by the classic book “Rainbow Fish.” Pre-K artists created their fish using mixed media, including oil pastels, tissue paper, and glitter. Kindergarten students drew their fish using silver marker, then colored them in using chalk pastel. Lastly, students will make the fish three dimensional by stuffing them with tissue paper. **First grade** artists learned about Pablo Picasso and his cubist portraits. Students observed the way he created his faces and learned the difference between creating a full view and a profile portrait. Students combined the two different angles or portraiture to create a Cubist inspired portrait using mixed media to create these pieces. **Second Grade** artists are currently working on their cut paper “city scenes.” Students studied the famous work by Vincent Van Gogh known as “Starry Night” and used tempera paint and glitter to create a starry nighttime sky of their own. Rather than creating a rural landscape below their sky, students are adding a city scene using cut paper collage. **Third grade** artists are creating artwork inspired by Van Gogh’s “Wheat Fields and Cypresses.” Students learned about the meaning of foreground, background, and middle ground by observing the landscape. Students then replicated Van Gogh’s painting style by using a combination of tempera paint and chalk pastel. **Fourth Grade** artists are going to begin an assignment inspired by the Op-Art Movement. Students will create the illusion of form through a tricky use of shape and color. **Fifth and Sixth Grade** Artists have begun working on personal Mandalas, which is a Sanskrit word that means circle. Students learned about the different uses of Mandalas throughout the world. The Mandalas will reflect student’s names, nicknames, or personal style. **Seventh and Eighth Grade** students are in the process of completing African masks. Students created African mask designs after learning of their different purposes in African cultures. Students attach dry beans to a foam mask to give the mask a naturalistic texture and will add raffia to accentuate different areas of the masks.

Parent Community Coordinator News- Thank you to the following current and former upper school students and their parents: Tes and Joy DeJaeger, Chris, Sarah and Cindy Shillinglaw, Kevin Moratoya, Kevin Nava, Myah Simms, and Thomas and Kim Mendola, who volunteered to gift wrap at Barnes & Noble on Christmas Eve. Together they collected over \$350 during their very busy four hour shift.

211: Call 211 if you need food, utility assistance, clothing, childcare services, financial assistance, housing, legal assistance or counseling, among other services.

PTCO Update

At the January 12 meeting, an idea for a spring fundraiser that would involve students, their sunny classrooms and seeds has taken root. If you've guessed tomato plants, you're correct! Anyone with a green thumb and/or friends at local nurseries and garden centers should contact Jen Weiss or any of the PTCO officers. Thank you to Alix and Luis Silva-Meza for creating nifty PTCO refrigerator magnets which were distributed at the Winter Concert refreshment table. Thank you to Alix, Jen, Jessie, Kristina, Lenora, and Monee for your help serving refreshments with a smile and a warm invitation to attend an upcoming PTCO meeting. Elections for PTCO officers for the school year 2012-2013 will be held in May. Current officers will serve until then. Several PTCO members agreed to help with the upcoming lottery by placing lawn signs in their neighborhood and serving as greeters during upcoming open house tours.

FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER:

Parent Educators Susan Arnold, Carmen Fraguada and Marlene DeBellis are offering personal visits for parents of newborns to 5 year olds. If you would like to receive monthly information about your child's development including fun activities, please call Susan (x111) in the office.

Early Learning Groups (Playgroups) – Early learning groups for parents/caregivers and their babies & toddlers are held at St. Joseph's social hall from 9:00-10:30 am every Wednesday. All caregivers and their toddler children are welcome to attend. The group is run by Carmen Fraguada, certified parent educator and a representative from Birth to Three. Please call Susan in the office (ext. 111) if you have any questions.

Saturday Morning ESL Class- Taught by a certified ESL instructor, these free Saturday classes meet from 9:30 -10:30 am in the annex. The winter session has begun. Please call Susan in the office for more information.

Adultos interesados deben registrarse. Llenamos las clases de acuerdo a los primeros en registrarse. Pongan en cuenta que no ofreceremos cuidado de niños. ¿Preguntas? Por favor de llamar al 203-857-0306 ext. 135 y pregunte por Carmen Fraguada.

Free & Reduced Price Museum Passes: Visit the Norwalk Public Library website at www.norwalklib.org/passes.htm for instructions on obtaining free and reduced passes to local museums, nature centers and state parks.

Stepping Stones Museum Activities: Saturday, January 28 at 2:00 pm –A Hungarian ethnic dance ensemble and folk music group visits the museum. On Sunday, January 29 from 3:00 – 5:00 pm, there will be a discussion for teens and their families on internet safety. Call 203-899-0606, x277 to register.

Reach Out & Read Volunteers Needed: The Norwalk Early Childhood Council is seeking volunteer readers for the Norwalk Community Health Center's pediatric waiting room. If you have an hour per week to read to children and their caregivers, please contact Susan in the office for more information.