

ABINGDON *elementary school news*

Abingdon Principal Named Arlington Public Schools' 2006 Principal of the Year

Abingdon Elementary School Principal **Joanne Uyeda** has been named the Arlington Public Schools' 2006 Principal of the Year and winner of The Washington Post's Distinguished Educational Leadership Award for Arlington.

Uyeda is a dedicated educator providing an excellent education for the children in Arlington.

During her more than 25 years as a classroom teacher, administrator and principal at Abingdon, Uyeda has made a lasting contribution to her students, her faculty and the entire Arlington community.

Fall Festival

Abingdon PTA sponsored a very successful Fall Festival at the end of October. More than 60 parent, teacher, staff and community volunteers helped make this a fantastic event. The night included raffle drawings for four gift baskets, each filled with \$50 worth of art supplies donated by Pearl Art & Craft Supply (Bailey's Crossroads), and a wide array of food choices and games for children of all ages. There was a moon bounce, cake walk, tattoos and face-painting. A pumpkin dessert contest was judged by staff of Best Buns of Shirlington. The bakery also

donated a \$25 gift basket and a \$50 gift certificate to contest winners.

Gifted Services



Arlington Principal of the Year Joanne Uyeda.
Photo provided by Arlington County Public Schools.

At the Abingdon PTA meeting in October, Gifted Resource Teacher **Jackie Wolford** spoke to parents about differentiated instruction in the classroom as well as more targeted services for gifted students. Wolford splits her time between Abingdon and Drew Elementary and works with all the grade levels, supporting creative and critical thinking skills. If you would like to learn

more about differentiated instruction and gifted services, contact Jackie at 703-228-6650 or check out her gifted services Web site at www.arlington.k12.va.us/schools/abingdon/programs/Gifted/gtwebindex.html.

Library Nights

Abingdon's Literacy Team is proud to announce the return of Library Nights this year. The first of four Library Nights was held at Abingdon in mid-November and featured author and illustrator **Janet Morgan Stoeke**, creator of the Minerva Louis book series. Every family in attendance received an autographed copy of one of Stoeke's books. The evening included free pizza, a bonus library check-out and other book

giveaways. The next Library Night will be held in January and will have a mystery theme.

To learn more about what's going on at Fairlington's neighborhood school, see Abingdon's Web site at www.arlington.k12.va.us/schools/abingdon/index.html, the Friends of Abingdon Neighborhood School (FANS) Web site at www.friendsofabingdon.org, or contact Abingdon PTA co-president Tina Masciangioli at 703-931-7086 or at tina.masc@verizon.net.

Girl Scouts Arrive at Abingdon

Abingdon Elementary School is now home to three new Girl Scout troops: Daisy Girl Scouts for kindergarten girls; Brownie Girl Scouts for girls in grades 1-3; and Junior Girl Scouts for girls in grades 4 and 5. All troops will meet in the evenings twice monthly at Abingdon.

To register your daughter for a troop, please contact Susan Weaver at 703-671-4280 or at Susan.Weaver@juno.com.

Abingdon Partners with Harvard University

In 2003, Abingdon Elementary created a new school focus in collaboration with the Harvard School of Education's

Project Zero. Abingdon's transformation was triggered by boundary and curriculum changes across



Arlington. At one time, Abingdon and Oakridge elementary schools offered a Spanish immersion track. About one-third of Abingdon's students participated in this program. However, in 2003, the school system merged the two school's partial programs to create a school-wide immersion program at Claremont Elementary.

Abingdon's principal, **Joanne Uye-da**, and Arlington Public Schools' (APS) Exemplary Project Coordinator, **Rhonda Clevenson**, worked with the community and staff to come up with a new identity for Abingdon. This is how Project GIFT was born.

Gaining Instruction, Fostering Talents

GIFT's two big ideas are Gaining Instruction and Fostering Talents. In order to increase instruction time, Clevenson worked with APS to eliminate almost all of Abingdon's early-release Wednesdays. (Most Arlington public schools let out about two hours early on Wednesdays for teacher planning.) As a result, Abingdon gained almost three more weeks of teaching time.

With the extra time and funding from APS' Exemplary Projects, Abingdon hired new teachers to teach courses in Architecture, Communications, and Science Lab. In addition to expanding the learning spectrum, these courses were de-

signed to recognize and encourage children's many strengths.

How Are You Smart?

The theory that inspired these choices is Multiple Intelligences. Developed by **Howard Gardner** at Harvard's School of Education, the theory argues that humans not only possess linguistic and logical-mathematical intelligence, but a whole range of other "intelligences" such as spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, musical, naturalist, interpersonal, and intrapersonal. While each of us is born with a unique collection of these intellectual strengths, we draw on them differently and prefer some to others. Instead of asking "How smart are you?" the theory asks "How are you smart?"

Teach or Learn Anything Eight Different Ways

One of the useful features of the Multiple Intelligences theory is that

it provides eight different potential pathways to learning. If a teacher is having difficulty reaching a student in the more traditional linguistic or logical ways of instruction, the theory suggests other dynamic approaches, including music, cooperative learning, art activities, role play, multimedia, and inner reflection.

A Harvard researcher who has worked with Gardner for 20 years came to Abingdon to consult with teachers and staff in early November. Author of "Multiple Intelligences in the Classroom," **Julie Viens** also outlined the theory to parents on the evening of November 2. Free babysitting was provided by Abingdon's Extended Day staff and was sponsored by the Abingdon PTA.

The theory of Multiple Intelligences has grabbed the attention of many educators around the country, and hundreds of schools (including Kenmore Middle School in Arlington) are currently using its

philosophy to redesign the way children are educated. To find out about Multiple Intelligences, a good place to start is educator and psychologist **Thomas Armstrong's** Web site at <www.thomasarmstrong.com>.

To stay informed about events at Abingdon and to sign up for the monthly newsletter published by FANS (Friends of Abingdon Neighborhood School), visit <www.friendsofabingdon.org>.



Abingdon Student, Alexander Patron of Fairlington, Works in the Claymation Studio. Photo courtesy of Amy Suardi.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE *Minutes*

FCA Monthly Meeting

November 14, 2006

Attending were president Kristi Daniels, treasurer Ed Hilz, secretary Nancy Hunt, board directors Hugh Baumgardner, Tracy Darroch, Virginia McGee and Sheryl Scull and invited guests and residents of Fairlington.

Special Presentation

Joanne Uyeda, principal of Abingdon Elementary School gave a brief overview of Abingdon's programs, accreditation, and project GIFT (Gaining Instruction, Fostering Talents). Uyeda, who was named Arlington County's principal of the year, explained that Abingdon is using Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligence Theory approach to education: "All people have the potential of all intelligences" and "Intelligence is developed through use."

She has eliminated the early release Wednesday and programs the time for Abingdon's K-5th grade students with a choice of architecture, science lab, or 21st century communications including Claymation courses in addition. These courses are in addition to word study, Orff music instruction, history alive, art, and math. Students also produce their own morning news show, the Cardinal News Network and learn to use technology including computers, scanners, video and still cameras to communicate, investigate and create products. All classrooms use interactive notebooks in science and/or social studies. As students learn new ideas, they use several types of writing and innovative graphic techniques to record them.

Uyeda reported impressive improvements in the SOL assessments. For

example at the 3rd grade level, the 2003/2004 English score averaged 47%. By 2004/2005, the average score was 95.3%. For mathematics, the 3rd grade score average for 2003/2004 was 77%, which climbed to 95% in 2004/2005. Uyeda attributed meeting the goals of No Child Left Behind to her strategy of focusing on literacy and staff education.

President Daniels congratulated Uyeda on the school's accomplishments under her tenure, and the programs are so exciting that she wished she was back in elementary school again.

Business Meeting

Daniels gave the Treasurer's report.

The minutes of the October meeting as amended were unanimously approved.

Old Business

Daniels reported on the final plans for the November 18 health fair and said that more than 60 people had signed up for flu shots. Hunt volunteered to set up an FCA/FHS table at the event.

Hunt noted that the positions of vice president and secretary were still in need of nominees for the 2007 slate of officers.

The next meeting will be the annual meeting on Tuesday, December 12, at 7:30 PM in the North Fairlington Community Center on S. Abingdon Street. ACPD District 3 Commander Michelle Nuneville will be the speaker. All Fairlington residents are invited to attend the meeting and vote for the 2007 officers and directors.

