



FANS

News & Notes

May 2007

All Aboard for Kindergarten!

Excited about your child starting kindergarten in the fall? So are we! It's fun to imagine the friendships we will form throughout the year. Here is a running list of FANS kids starting kindergarten in the fall. Let us know if we can add your child!

Kindergarteners to Be

Emily Andrews
Chance Dabbs
Teresa Felipe
Holly Matthews
Isaiah Mefford
Abby Presson
Julia Sonn
Sofia Suardi
Lia Vecchi
Kendryek Wheeler

Caterpillars and Bubbles at the "Last Sundays" Playdate

The big hit on the Abingdon playground at the FANS playdate last Sunday were the fuzzy caterpillars that seemed to be falling like pollen from the trees. Chance Dabbs' parents brought a bubble machine that added a touch of magic to the gorgeous afternoon. Abingdon families and kids turned out in numbers to wind down the weekend together.

Every last Sunday of spring and summer months, from 3 to 5 p.m., future and current Abingdon families meet at the playground for chatting and playing. Parents are invited to bring snacks or drinks to share, if desired. The next playdate is scheduled for Memorial Day weekend: Sunday, May 27.

Check out a picture of the playdate on the homepage: <http://www.friendsofabingdon.org>

Reptiles Up Close and Personal

All Abingdon children got to see, touch, and hold some unusual animals on April 17 when the "Reptile Man" brought in creatures from Central America to Australia. Students learned about the habitats, adaptations, food chains, and needs of several lizards and snakes, including pythons from Africa and Asia, Blue-tongue Skinks from Australia, and North American Corn Snakes, among many others. The special program, which integrated science and language arts, was organized by Science Lead Teacher Anne Sywilok (the "Queen of Science").

Global Understanding Becomes Real at "Peaceful World" Concert

Hand-colored flags from Italy, Ethiopia, Nicaragua, Bolivia and Sweden were among the ways that children showed pride and respect for themselves and others, as they paraded through the audience at Friday's concert. Organized by the PTA, the concert featured singer-songwriter Joshua Rich whose relaxed, playful manner made children and adults alike laugh, sing, reflect, and even do the congo line. Rich took advantage of teachable moments to talk about how hand games were born in Africa, how to say things in sign language, and how Native Americans would have experienced music.

Joshua has directed musical events for Hillary Clinton, Marvin Hamlisch, UNICEF, and Peter Ustinov (Harry Potter). To hear his music, visit <http://www.joshuarich.com>.

Poetry Library Night – Wednesday, May 9 at 6 p.m.

Come for the pizza, stay for the poems. The last in the popular Library Night series, the evening will feature Abingdon students performing both original and published works of poetry. This time each child — not just each family — will receive a free poetry book, and additional books will raffled off as prizes.

At the April “Where the Wild Things Are” Library Night, children were wowed by live birds of prey, like owls, hawks, and falcons, brought in by the Raptor Conservancy of Virginia. The Conservancy rescues injured birds and nurses them back to health. Students learned about each bird and ways that humans can protect them as they co-exist in urban settings.

Library Nights are organized by Abingdon Teacher of the Year, Kristy Nienstedt, and the Literacy Team: Ms. Moyer (Lead Reading Teacher), Ms. Reissman and Ms. Smith (Title 1 reading teachers).

How Abingdon’s Garden Grows

Now that the endless winter is over, Anne Sywilok and her students have been busy readying the vegetable and flower beds for spring. Each grade level has a raised bed with a unique theme. Kindergarteners work on their strawberry bed, first graders on their Peter Rabbit garden, second graders tend a Native American bed, third graders cultivate native Virginia plants, fourth graders have a herb garden, and fifth graders care for a red and white school colors garden.

Summer Swim Lessons in Fairlington

If you have a child age 5 and up, you may be interested in signing up for the FINS program. Children take lessons at various pools in Fairlington Monday through Thursday afternoons in July, and then participate in a race on Friday evenings. The cost is \$45 and registration for Fairlington members begins May 1; non-resident registration begins June 18. (Children must be 5 by July 2, 2007). For more information, see the registration forms attached, or contact Sue Shapiro at dsha@netscape.com.

PTA Elections & Sign-up – May 22 at 6:45 p.m.

A huge thank you to all who showed up at the April PTA meeting to learn about what PTA does, and to offer their help. The outpouring of support and the excitement about getting involved was palpable. May’s meeting will finalize these plans, with elections being held for the officer positions. If you’d like to be involved in your child’s education in an integral way (doesn’t have to be a leadership position), please come and talk to PTA officers about how you can help.

Daisies and Brownies to Plant Flowers for Abingdon

Abingdon’s Daisy and Brownie Scout troops will be planting flowers this month in the school’s front planters to earn their rose-colored petal, which stands for “Make the World a Better Place.” Led by Abingdon parents Dana Andy, Kate Maxwell and Cheryl Goodman, the troops meet two evenings a month to do fun character-building activities together. Throughout the year, the Daisies’ little blue tunics gradually fill up with multi-colored petals that stand for the values they have learned.

If you’re interested in having your daughter join one of the Abingdon troops, please contact Susan Weaver at Susan.Weaver@juno.com or (703) 671-4280. (Daisy Girl Scouts are for kindergarten girls, Brownie Girl Scouts are girls in grades 1-3, and Junior Girl Scouts are for grades 4-5.)

You Can Make a Difference - Vote for School Board this Saturday, May 5 from 11 to 7

If you’re going to be out shopping in Baileys Crossroads this Saturday, grab a friend or two and stop by Kenmore Middle School (200 S. Carlin Springs Rd. near Rte. 50) anytime between 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. The School Board is a powerful force in shaping our schools, and you can be part of that by helping choose the next member.

In supporting Democrat Abby Raphael, FANS joins area PTAs and civic organizations like Friends of South Arlington (FOSA), and School Board members such as Libby Garvey, Mary Hynes, Ed Fendley and Sally Baird. Decide for yourself by visiting Abby’s website at <http://www.abbyraphael.org>