

school notes

COMPILED BY SUSAN BRAUN JOHNSON



Sharing a seat and a smile on a tram at the Capitol, (l to r): Maury students: Taja White, Shaylah Jackson, Genesis Palmer, and Olivia Schoell.

Maury Elementary Maury's Fundraiser at the Market

Maury's 3rd annual silent auction will be held March 20, from 7-9:30 pm at Eastern Market North Hall! Be sure to save the date – it's not only a special night out (with a little libation and conversation), it's also Maury's biggest fundraising event of the year. All proceeds will benefit the PTA, supporting part-time teacher's aides for the upper grades and extracurricular activities and special assemblies for our students such as chess and Singapore Math! Look for pre-registration at Eastern Market and Maury PTA meetings in Feb. and March. Business owners, if you are interested in helping Maury, please e-mail Kjersten Drager at kdrager@bwstrategies.com.

Maury PTA – Strength in Numbers

Maury's PTA has reached jaw-

dropping numbers of active participants. Every month, the meeting of the whole brings about 60 or 70 members who want to stay abreast of all that's happening. Committees report on their work. Academic Support works closely with the principal to find programs to enhance the students' learning. The Fundraising and Grants Committees work hard to fund them. School Improvement boasts architects among their ranks, working to shape the physical space into something greener and cutting-edge, and planning for Maury's full-scale renovation. PR will roll out a new website, and Room Parents make all the difference. Audit makes sure that all the finances are in order, and the Chair put together the enormous stack of paperwork called a 501c3 application for the Maury PTA. Continued thanks for your continued work, everyone.

Maury's Dragons Grow

In Oct., Principal Albert-Garvey



Maury's Reading Dragons grow as students earn scales.

unveiled Fire Up With Reading, a reading incentive program that will run through Feb. 12, coinciding with the Chinese New Year on Feb. 14. Each class has built a paper dragon on a wall with scales representing 30-minute reading blocks. The dragons have grown, filling the hallways with colorful reminders of how well this program has conveyed to students the importance of being avid readers. – Maury Elementary PTA.

13th and Constitution NE; www.mauryelementary.com or 202-698-3838.

River Park Nursery School

River Park Accepting Applications Until Mar 1

River Park Nursery School is accepting applications for the 2010-2011 school year until March 1. The program is led by Miss Bernadette, who provides an exceptional environment for 3-5 year olds to grow, learn and explore. The nursery school operates with 3, 4, or 5 day programs from 9 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. from Sept. through May. Download the application at www.riverparknurseryschool.org. Applications can be mailed to: Chris Wood, 413 A St. NE, WDC 20002. Feel free to contact her with

questions: dcslevinwood@msn.com.
- Suzanne Nelson. 212 East Capitol St., SE. -

Payne Elementary

Payne Welcomes Winter!

Payne's Early Childhood welcomed winter with all sorts of wonderful winter literacy, art, science, and hands on activities. They made life size snow boys and girls, created winter snacks, ventured outside and made tracks in the snow, as well as listened to many winter stories and poems. "Winter" was infused into the classroom so the students would have hands on experiences. Come visit our Early Childhood classrooms and you will see students actually in a den pretending to be bears. You will also see students experiencing what it feels like to live in an igloo. Students are exposed to rich winter vocabulary such as hibernate, habitat, and a host of other language experiences.

The students are enjoying learning about the natural world around us: winter, animals and their habitats. The children recognize that there are basic requirements for all common life forms. They will become experts when they learn the basic names for animal homes, similarities and differ-



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Payne Students, Camilo and Kenya Have Fun in the Snow

ences in animals and people in the winter. - Juanita Stokes, Preschool Teacher and Vielka Scott-Marcus, Principal. 305 15th St. SE. 202-698-3262; vielka.scott@dc.gov.

leadership, was one of just thirty schools and the only school in the District of Columbia to receive this grant, which will be used to implement parent engagement projects.

Strong John Thomson Elementary

Thomson School Celebrates 140 Years

Dr. Gladys Camp was awarded a \$3,000 "Sharing the Dream" grant from the National Association of Elementary School Principals and Met Life Foundation. Strong John Thomson Elementary, under Dr. Camp's

In other news, Strong John Thomson Elementary recently celebrated 140 years of educating the children of DC.

Their award-winning choir, led by Dr. Camp on guitar, sang the Thomson school song in English, Spanish and Chinese. The second-grade poetry group shared 140 years of Thomson history, including the fact that students come from all 8 wards of the city and speak over 20 languages. Everyone celebrated the



Buddies from Strong John Thomson Elementary School.

history and diversity and was excited to eat over 800 cupcakes baked by parents, teachers, staff and even the security guards! Many community partners, former teachers and alumni joined the event and were proud that Strong John Thomson has been a great place to learn for over 140 years! – Liz Daley

Strong John Thomson Elementary is located at 1200 L St. NW; 202-898-4660. thomson.tigers@yahoo.com

St. Peter School

Break a Leg! Using Art as a Teaching Tool

St. Peter School boasts an array of curriculum-based art opportunities for students in all grades. A neighborhood cultural magnet, the Folger Shakespeare Library houses the world's largest collection of Shakespeare items and is only blocks from St. Peter School. So it is not surprising the Bard is the subject of classroom learning and extracurricular activities. Students in grades three and four have been participating in "Shakespeare Steps Out" sponsored by the Folger. The program offers a comprehensive introduction to William Shakespeare's language and culminates with the students participating in the Children's Shakespeare Festival. The program consists of eight interactive, standards-based units. Led by Folger Teaching Artists, the first three sessions focus on Shakespeare's language. The remaining five visits are designed to assist teachers as they prepare their students to participate in the festival. The students will even get to attend a stage combat workshop at the Folger!

Through The American Poetry Museum (APM), one of the first museums in the world dedicated to collecting, interpreting and presenting American poetry Museum, students in grades two and five are participating in a four-week Youth Writing & Dialogue workshop emphasizing reading and writing skills through poetry. The workshops coincide with the school-wide focus on Langs-

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Brent Elementary School's boys and girls basketball teams meet with Coach Sarah (right) and parent coach Danny Page (left)

ton Hughes during Black History Month.

Rehearsals for the 2010 spring musical production of *Mulan* are well underway. Students auditioned for parts prior to leaving for Christmas break and started the New Year with a full rehearsal schedule. The cast gathers three mornings a week for early morning rehearsals and a longer afternoon rehearsal once a week. Finally, after a spectacular winter concert, the school band is busy with weekly rehearsals as they prepare for the spring concert. - Sally Aman.

422 Third St. SE; 202-544-1618, www.stpetersinterparish.org.

Brent Elementary Basketball Team Makes an Impact

Robert Brent Elementary School recently launched basketball teams for the school's 4th and 5th-graders.

Since the beginning of the school year, Coach Sarah Prewitt, the school's physical education instructor, has been training 14 boys and 8 girls after school. The Brent Bears play other DC Public Schools – including several Capitol Hill schools.

"The new basketball team emphasizes everything great about the Brent community," said Brent's principal Dr. Cheryl Wilhoyte. "Coach Sarah's salary is entirely supported by the Brent

PTA and students in all grade levels have enjoyed coming out to support the team. Young student journalists for Brent's school newspaper have interviewed, photographed and reported on the team. And all of our student athletes are being held to high standards of excellence for their reading, math and behavior."

Principal Wilhoyte launched a before school "Coaches Corner" where student athletes work to improve their reading comprehension. The students are using an online application called Book Adventure where students read a grade appropriate book and then afterward the students take an online assessment to ensure they have understood what they read. Brent parent Danny Page helped organize the players' parents to bring their children early each day to participate in the program.

"Brent's basketball team has been important to the entire school," said Coach Sarah. "The entire Brent community has been supportive of the team. When we needed a hoop to play home games, the PTA delivered it."

Many Brent parents say the school basketball team has enhanced school spirit.

"During a recent home game against Stuart Hobson Elementary school, Brent's younger students made supportive signs, ate popcorn, tuned out and cheered," said Kim Lankford,

a Brent parent. "My first grade son, Will, cannot wait until he's old enough to play." - Angie Lundberg

301 North Carolina Ave., SE; www.brentelemetary.org; 202-698-3363.

Tyler Elementary Tyler's After School Programs

Tyler Elementary students are participating in an Afterschool Yoga and Fitness Program, made possible by a wellness grant from the United Way. The program, completely funded by the grant, offers two yoga sessions after school four days per week and a general Family Fitness class on Friday, where families are encouraged to participate.

The classes are led by Tyler teacher Nneeka Truss, who was certified last fall to teach yoga to children. The program is off to a great start and the students and parents have been very excited to practice the poses and learn the techniques!

This month, Tyler has added three cooking classes to its After Care program. Common Threads, a Chicago-based non-profit, will cook with third, fourth, and fifth graders for twelve weeks to promote cultural awareness. The Capital Area Food Bank will be running a four-session class for the kindergarten, and teach healthy eating to our upper-elementary students through Share Our Strength's national program Operation Frontline. Tyler hopes to expand cooking and nutri-

tion education programs with a grant generously given by the Twinkling Eyes Foundation to buy cooking and gardening supplies for Tyler students of all ages.

Save the Date: March 13

The Tyler Elementary community is also busy with annual fundraising efforts. On March 13th, The Alchemy of Great Taste is a casual evening of great food paired with a range of beer and wine geared toward all palates. The event will feature a display of original artwork by Tyler students that will be auctioned off, alongside other fantastic raffle and auction items, including an Outer Banks beach house rental; financial services from Lippman, Semsker, & Salb, LLC; and much more. Early sponsors include: Dila Construction, The Smith Team Realtors, The Tom Faison Realty Team, Sticky Rice, Fresh Start Catering, and DC Access. Look for tickets to be available soon on the Tyler website www.tyleremetary.net. Proceeds from the event will fund a mobile computer lab, athletic instruction, and infrastructure improvements for the school. - Catherine Jouet. 1001 G St. SE; tyleremetary.net.

Capitol Hill Day School Plate Tectonics and Earthquake Relief

Having studied earthquakes and plate tectonics, CHDS fifth grad-



CHDS kids enjoy camp last summer. [Credit: Heidi Ruesswick]



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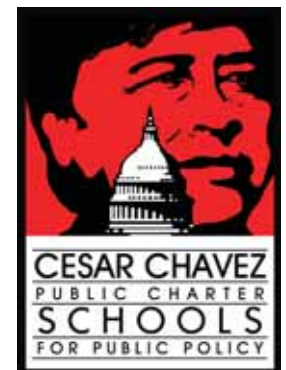
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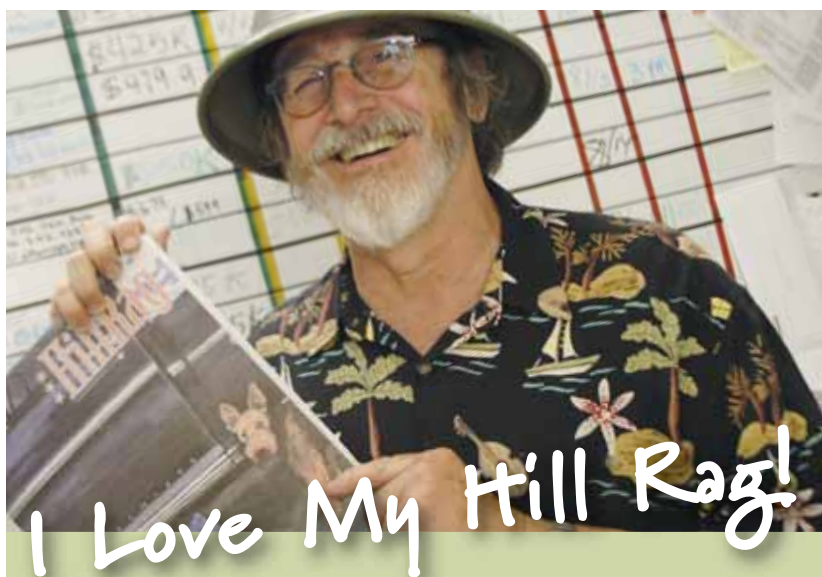
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Prudential Realtor and Hill resident John Smith depends on the Hill Rag to get the word out about his residential listings as well as keep up with Ward 6 news.

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www.capitalcommunitynews.com

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ers were naturally interested in the recent earthquake in Haiti. They discussed ways to help support recovery efforts, and devised a plan to do chores at home or for a neighbor in exchange for at least one dollar, to be donated to earthquake relief. Students created "Chore Coupons" to give donors, and charted their progress. Go to www.chds.org to see the results of this effort.

Summer Fun at CHDS!

This summer, let your child "travel" to Egypt, Hawaii, and Europe; explore their theatrical side from "Hollywood Stars" to "Capitol Hill's Got Talent"; play flag football or basketball; learn cheers, chants, and jumps; be a chef, food critic, spy, pirate, photographer, artist, outdoor explorer, and more! Capitol Hill Day School offers over 40 different week-long specialty camps for children ages four to fourteen in the seven weeks from June 21 to Aug. 6. The full schedule and brochure are available at www.chds.org.

Kindergarten Quilt Takes Shape

As winter descended, CHDS Kindergarteners turned their attention to Quilts and Patterns. Working with two-dimensional shapes and concepts (linear, radial, and concentric patterns), students studied the designs, not just of family quilts, but also of rare, antique quilts at the DAR Museum where students donned gloves to gently inspect quilts not generally available to the public. Alden O'Brien, DAR curator and parent of two CHDS alumnae, described how quilts are made and the names of some quilt patterns. Students learned that quilters share information about family history, hobbies, and more through the patterns and fabrics they use. One kindergartener noted that "Quilts really hold secret stories about many things." Now the students are busy designing and sewing squares for a class quilt, to be sold to a very lucky bidder at "Havana Nights," the April 30 CHDS Annual Auction being held in the North Hall of Eastern Market. Watch for ticket and sponsorship information! -Jane Angarola, janea@chds.org. 210



Ms. Rachele Etienne-Robinson, Ludlow-Taylor's After Care Coordinator

South Carolina Ave. SE. www.chds.org.

Ludlow-Taylor Elementary Ludlow-Taylor After Care Programs

At Ludlow Taylor Elementary School (LTES), the 3:15 p.m. dismissal bell may mark the official end of the school day, but to most students, it marks the beginning of a thriving after care program. According to Rachele Etienne-Robinson, LTES' fulltime After Care Coordinator, the presiding philosophy of the program is, "Ensuring students have a safe environment, where we provide them with structure, academic enrichment, and activities to keep them engaged." Robinson also reminds her staff that they are not only teachers for these students, but also their uncles, aunts, big sisters and brothers, the "go-to adult person."

After a snack, the "Power Hour" extends from 4-5p.m. during which students work on homework and other academic enrichments including drilling, activity sheets, and games. The staff also uses this time for individual or peer to peer tutoring or to build on the day's lesson. Afterwards, students enjoy free play outside on the brand new playground equipment or on colder or wet days, students remain in class and experiment at the learning centers, use the computers, or play organized games.

There is also a range of special activities at no extra cost such as a dance class offered by Joy of Motion or for older students a weekly sewing class offered by Ms. Robinson. A boxing class is offered by Nomis Boxing emphasizing

discipline, conditioning and teambuilding skills as well as a biweekly typing class.

Another program called, "Around the World in 100 Days" will focus on a different continent with a different country from the designated continent emphasized each Friday. If only the end of our day was as exciting! - Donny Kirsch. 659 G St. SE. www.ludlowtaylor.org


Two Rivers Public Charter School

Doing Math is Fun!

In early January, Two Rivers hosted its second annual Math Festival. Students and their families joined staff as they circulated through a series of math stations that demonstrated games that help children develop understanding about mathematics. At each station, students learned new math games that could easily be replicated at home. While students were engaged at each station, Two Rivers staff explained the games to parents, providing instructions on how to make each game more or less challenging depending on a student's age and needs. Fourth Grader, Kojo Saunders said, "It was fun when we had to do the activities." He particularly liked playing the board game Blokus, a commercial game that requires players to use their spatial reasoning skills to fill a playing board with game pieces. Two Rivers Instructional Guide, Jeff Heyck-Williams, launched the evening by discussing how math was based on patterns. With that said, he held quizzes throughout the evening where students had to guess the next number in a number sequence. Winners of the quizzes received prizes such as playing cards, tangram sets, and calculators, so they could keep playing math games at home. -Jessica K. Wodatch. 1227 4th St., NE; 202-546-4477. www.tworiverspcs.org.

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Cluster School fourth graders on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial after delivering Dr. King's "I have a dream" speech.

Capitol Hill Cluster School Casino Night is Coming!

Whether you're feeling lucky or just looking for a way to ditch the winter doldrums, the Capitol Hill Cluster School's Casino Night is the place to be on Feb. 20. The school's annual "fund-raiser" will be held from 8-11 p.m. at St. Coletta School, which is located on the Hill across the street from the Stadium-Armory metro station. As in prior years, the \$25 ticket price covers an initial allotment of chips, which can be used at roulette, blackjack and craps tables, an open bar for beer and wine, and an array of delectable deserts. And, at the end of the night, there will be a Texas Hold'em tournament. A DJ will be spinning tunes too, so don't forget your dancing shoes! To pre-purchase tickets, go to www.capitolhillcluster-school.org/casinonight.html. Tickets also will be available at the door on the night of the event.

Watkins Teacher Honored

Third-grade teacher Judy Leak-Bowers recently received her certification for teacher excellence from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. Only about one percent of D.C. public school teachers have received the award, which is given to teachers after they complete significant additional study of teaching methods, content knowledge, and student learning styles and pass a number of rigorous exams. The process typically takes about three years. Ms. Leak-Bowers joins three other Watkins teachers who already have national board certification. Congratulations

Judy! -Karen Bates, karenbates66@gmail.com.

Edmund Burke School David Shapiro, Head of Edmund Burke School, Announces Retirement

Shapiro will leave Burke at the end of the 2010-11 school year after serving as Head for 12 years. During his tenure as Head of School, Burke completed the building of its new addition at 4101 Conn. Ave. As Board chair, Andrew D. Klingenstein, states, "Without David's vision, skill and perseverance, sometimes against daunting odds, this project simply would not have been possible." Shapiro's fundraising efforts have not only allowed the construction of the new building but also an increased commitment to financial aid while keeping Burke financially sound.

Shapiro has worked with his colleagues at the school to make Burke one of the D.C. area's most academically challenging and enriching schools. He strengthened an already superb group of teachers by nurturing new teachers and by giving all teachers the resources and support they needed to continue to develop to their highest potential.

Shapiro wrote in his letter to the school community, "At its core, Burke's mission is about embracing community, excellence, civility, inclusion, and service and translating those brave aspirations into the lived experience of each student and family. Burke's mission is not only daring, it's uncommon. Very few schools truly pledge

their skills and resources to sustaining a model of education where kids are known, appreciated, challenged, and accorded dignity, authentic power, genuine respect, and deep affection." The school looks forward to 18 more months of Shapiro's exemplary leadership and has already put a search process in place to find his replacement. For more information contact Jacqueline Heard, Director of Marketing and Communications, Edmund Burke School 202-375-7634 or jheard@eburke.org.

Potomac Crescent Waldorf Early Decision Feb 1

Potomac Crescent Waldorf School offers classes for children two years old to third grade. The Waldorf education curriculum strives to teach the whole child — head, heart and hands — through a play-based morning for the kindergartens and through experiential, arts-based methods in the grades.

2010-11 Applications are available on line. Early Decision due date: Feb. 1.

923 South 23rd St. Arlington, VA 22202. 703-486-1309; www.Potomac-CrescentSchool.org; office@Potomac-CrescentSchool.org.

Opening of Early Stages Center A Free Diagnostic Testing Center for Children with Developmental Delays

Every child in the District will have the opportunity for a stronger start to school with the opening of the Early Stages Center (ESC), announced Mayor Adrian M. Fenty and

DCPS Chancellor Michelle Rhee recently. The Center is a free, comprehensive diagnostic testing facility that evaluates children 3-to-5-years-old for developmental delays and identifies the services that will help them succeed as they enter school.

The goal of the Early Stages Center is to provide individualized high-quality evaluations and services that will allow every child in the District a strong beginning by identifying any delays at a young age.

Part of the Northwest One development project, this state-of-the-art facility is located in Ward 6 at Walker Jones Education Campus (EC), which includes a Preschool-8 school, a public library and a technology center.

The ESC is staffed by dedicated educators, childcare experts, and special education professionals. Child Find Field Coordinators (CFFCs) execute the Center's outreach campaign. In pairs of two per ward, CFFCs locate, identify, and evaluate children for special education services. Family Care Coordinators (FCCs) work one-on-one with children and their families as advocates. FCCs conduct school visits with families, coordinate interpreter services, and can link families to other services such as Medicaid and food stamps.

As a team the diverse ESC staff takes a holistic approach to serving parents and families with concerns about how their child is walking, talking, playing, learning and behaving. Through the process of evaluation, determination of eligibility and the exploration of placement options -- children and families receive support



Caterpillars at Capitol Hill Learning Group Enjoy Story Time. Open House will be Feb 10&11.

services that will help them begin their academic careers on a level playing field.

Early Stages services are available to all families who live in the District, whether a child goes to public school, private school, is home-schooled or has not yet entered the school system. www.earlystagesdc.org.

Open Houses

Capitol Hill Learning Group:

Feb. 10 and 11 from 10 a.m. –Noon. Located at Washington Community Fellowship 3rd floor (9th St Entrance) at 433 9th St. NE (at Maryland Ave. NE). CHLG is co-op that meets on Tues., Thurs., and Fri. mornings. Teacher-led classes are available for 2.5 to 5-year-old children, and a parent-led co-op class is available for 2-year-old children. More info at www.capitolhilllearninggroup.com

Strong John Thomson Elementary: Feb. 4th 9:15-11 a.m. 1200 L St. NW; 202-898-4660. thomsontigers@yahoo.com.

Capitol Hill Cluster School: Peabody, SWS, Watkins Elementary, Montessori, Stuart Hobson Middle School: Feb. 9 a.m., 9:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. All three campuses open. Learn more at www.capitolhillclusterschool.org.

Maury ES: Feb. 18th, 9 a.m. - 10:30 a.m., 13th and Constitution NE. www.mauryelementary.com or 202 698-3838.

Payne ES: Early Childhood Open House March 3 from 9:30-11 a.m. 305 15TH St. SE. 202-698-3262.

Tyler ES: Feb. 3rd, 9:30-11 a.m. and Feb. 18th, 6:15-7:45 p.m. 1001 G St. SE; tylerelementary.net.

Two Rivers PCS; Feb. 2nd, 9 a.m. and March 16th, at 9 a.m. 1234 4th St NE www.tworiverspcs.org.

Please send submissions of 300 words or less along with pictures for the School Notes column to schools@hillrag.com by Feb. 18. Publication of articles is not guaranteed and they may be edited for space. –SBJ. ★



Free Preschool Enrolling for 2010-2011 Bridges is a small, public preschool and pre-kindergarten program for children 3-5 years old.

Program Features:

- School Day 8:30am-3:00pm, Before Care 8:00-8:30am, After Care 3:00-6:00pm.
- Small classroom size and well trained staff.
- Individual planning for each student.
- Thematic and project-based curriculum.

Now accepting Applications for the 2010-2011 school year. Applications accepted January 1, 2010 – April 15, 2010. Applications received after April 15 will be placed on our waiting list. Applications are available at the school or on our website, www.bridgespcs.org.

OPEN HOUSE / INFORMATION SESSIONS AT THE SCHOOL ON THE FOLLOWING THURSDAYS:

- February 25th, 2010 from 9:30-10:30 am
- March 11th, 2010 from 9:30-10:30 am
- April 15th, 2010 from 9:30-10:30 am

Bridges Public Charter School
1250 Taylor St. NW
Washington, DC 20011

p. 202 545-0515
f. 202 545-0517
www.bridgespcs.org

Bridges Public Charter School is free and open to all DC residents.
Tuition paid by non-residents.



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(no camp July 5th)
Session 2 July 19 - August 6
August week 1: 9-13th
August week 2: 16-20

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