

school notes

COMPILED BY
SUSAN BRAUN JOHNSON

Cluster School News

SWS at Peabody Says Farewell to Long-time Teacher Louise Chapman

The School-within-School community bid a fond farewell last month to Louise Chapman, who retired after 22 years at the Peabody Early Childhood campus of the Cluster School. She began in the traditional program, teaching pre-k and kindergarten for seven years before founding the Reggio-Emilio inspired School-within-School program with fellow teachers Margaret Ricks, John Burst, and Sarah Burke and spending another 15 years there. She taught over 260 students in her tenure at Peabody and SWS, and her impact was reflected by the fact that virtually every class was represented by students or parents in a class parade.

A passionate educator, Mrs. Chapman has been recognized with many awards and accolades – the one that is perhaps most telling is her nickname among parents and staff, who call her “The Child Whisperer” for the rapport she has always been able to establish with her young students. Mrs. Chapman took the podium only briefly, to hand off her classroom chime to Jere Lorenzen-Strait, who will take over her classroom in fall, thank her colleagues for their going away gifts and sentiments, and express her gratitude to all of the par-



SWS Teacher Louise Chapman, who retired this year after 22 years at Peabody!

ents who entrusted their young children to her over the years.

Watkins Students Test New Physical Science Curriculum

At Watkins, third-graders in Kendra Heffelbower’s and Judy Bowers’ classes and second graders in Lauren Tate’s class spent the past month “field testing” a new Physical Science curriculum for elementary students called “MechAnimations.” The curriculum was created through collaboration between the Engineering and Education School faculty at City College in New York, with support from the National Science Foundation.

The hands-on, inquiry-based program is designed to help students understand science concepts through direct experience, using models they build and manipulate and incorporating them into fun, kid-friendly activities. For example, the second and third graders at Watkins are learning about force and motion by working with levers, which they build, test, experiment with, and ultimately use to create puppets (“MechAnimations”) that animate stories, also of their own creation.

Ms. Heffelbower likes the program because it reinforces the District Science standards and also supports her students’ development in English/Language Arts and because the kids have fun with it. She and her colleagues have also found the “field test” process interesting, because it has given them the opportunity to provide feedback to the program developers on what works and what doesn’t before it’s formally launched. More information about the City College curriculum is available at <http://city-technology.org/node/12>.

Stuart-Hobson’s Living Classroom Grows

Fifth graders in Sandra Burst’s class were hard at work a few weeks ago on the newly expanded native wildlife garden at the southeast corner of the Stuart-Hobson campus. The garden was created two years ago through a partnership between 5th grade science teacher Nina Harris and Living Classrooms, a non-profit dedicated to educating children and young adults about the environment. Living Classrooms of the National Capital Region has worked with both Stuart-Hobson and Watkins through its DC-Schoolyard Stewards Program, which brings project-based learning experiences to area schools that focus on storm water pollution and its prevention. Through hands-on activities, the program aims to teach students how watersheds work and how activities in their neighborhoods (and even at their schools) can impact the Anacostia River and the Chesapeake Bay.

Ms. Harris says that all four of Stuart-Hobson’s 5th grade classes have contributed to the development and maintenance of the garden, learning techniques for making their school and community “greener” in the process. Ms. Harris believes the work not only reinforces good conservation practices and strategies by

the students, but also “creates student educators for family members and neighbors who may not have yet reached the same level of ownership regarding what happens in their communities and the environment.” In short, the DC Schoolyard Stewards Program is living up to its name, creating stewards, and advocates, for the environment, one class at a time.

More information about Living Classrooms and its school-based programs can be found at <http://www.livingclassroomsdc.org/SchoolPrograms-inschool.html>.

-Karen Bates. The Capitol Hill Cluster School has three campuses: the Peabody Early Childhood Center, at 425 C St, NE (698-3277), Watkins Elementary, at 420 12th St, SE (698-3355), and Stuart-Hobson Middle School, at 410 E St, NE (671-6010).



CHDS Math Teacher Yvette Yamagata received the 2010 Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (grades 7 through 12).

Capitol Hill Day School News CHDS Teacher Honored by President Obama

CHDS Math Teacher Yvette Yamagata has received the 2010 Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (grades 7 through 12). Ms. Yamagata is the

only Washington, DC recipient of this prestigious award, which will be presented officially later this year. Congratulations, Ms. Yamagata!

www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/presidential-math-and-science-teachers-award-release

Looking Back...

A Sampling of CHDS's busy year

Community Service: Under the guidance of the parent-run Community Service Committee, CHDS families

- Provided over 2,283 lunches through our weekly "Extra Lunch" program.
- Filled over 150 bags of groceries for food banks.
- Provided food and bedding to animal shelters.
- Brightened the holidays for families with toys, books, and winter clothing, including \$600 in gift cards to Our Place and Camille's Place.
- Raised over \$500 through the Help the Homeless Walkathon.
- Dressed and accessorized women preparing to re-enter the workforce, furnished apartments for families moving out of shelters, and provided books, videos, and games for community child care centers.
- Joined over a 100 volunteers to help clean-up and maintain the Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens.

Field Education: Students benefited from over 325 field trips, all related to the curriculum, including overnight trips to New York City (4th), the National Radio Astronomy Observatory in West Virginia (5th), Port Isabel Island in the Chesapeake Bay (7th), and the Sheridan School Mountain Campus (6th and 8th).

After School Music Program: This year's Program culminated in a recital with performances by 60 students (including the five-person Jazz Band) who were taught by 7 musicians.

Eighth Grade: At the June Graduation Ceremony, students, teachers, and families wished the 22 eighth graders well as they prepared to move on to 12 different high schools.

—Jane Angarola. janea@chds.org. 210 South Carolina Ave., SE, 202-386-9919.

St. Anselm's Abbey School News

The 32 young men of the Class of 2010 received a total of 168 college acceptances at 112 colleges in the United States, Canada and Europe. The students will attend a diverse mix of highly-ranked private universities, liberal-arts colleges and large public universities. The class, more than a third of which was honored by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation and the College Board in their annual scholarship competitions, has also been awarded a total of over \$2.5 million in scholarship aid for college.

As a Catholic school, St. Anselm's typically gets many students into the nation's finest Catholic institutions of higher education, and this year was no exception. There were 16 acceptances to Catholic colleges and universities, including Georgetown, Fordham, Notre Dame and Boston College. Students were also accepted at several Ivy League schools, including Princeton, Harvard, Brown, the University of Pennsylvania and Cornell. Three students will be attending service academies: the U.S. Military Academy (West Point), the U.S. Air Force Academy and the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy.

Given the present economy, several St. Anselm's graduates will take advantage of lower tuition rates at state schools, including the University of Virginia, the College of William & Mary, the University of Maryland, the University of Michigan and the University of North Carolina. Five graduates are taking advantage of the tuition break given to District residents attending public universities across the country.

In many cases, students chose more-affordable public colleges over higher-priced private institutions to which they were also accepted, including the University of Chicago, Duke and Johns Hopkins. One hard-working young man will be attending Stanford University, having turned down Harvard, Princeton, Columbia, the California Institute

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St. Anselm's Abbey School graduated its 65th class on May 29 at their campus in Northeast Washington.

of Technology, and the University of California, Berkeley. He is the recipient of a Gates Millennium Scholarship, which pays for tuition and all other related expenses for up to five years of undergraduate and up to six years of graduate education.

St. Anselm's Abbey School is an independent Roman Catholic day school for academically gifted boys in grades 6-12 located on a quiet, wooded 40-acre campus in Brookland. Limited spaces remain for the 2010-2011 academic year. For more information, please contact E.V. Downey, Director of Admissions, at admissions@saintanselms.org.

Brent News

Brent Students Show off Their Talents

At the end of the school year, Robert Brent Elementary School students showed off their talents by performing in two amazing performances.

Brent's 5th grade students capped off their year-long partnership with the Folger Shakespeare Library by performing an act from Hamlet at the George Didden Shakespeare Festival

"Brent is fortunate to be one of five schools on Capitol Hill to participate in this introduction to Shakespeare and the world of theater led by artist-educators from the Folger," said Dr. Cheryl Wilhoyte, Brent's school principal. To prepare for the event, Brent 5th graders explored the language and world of Shakespearean England, learned about period costumes and stage combat, then performed in the Folger's Children's Festival.

Lastly, Brent's talented young actors in nearly every grade level performed in school's second annual play - The Wizard of Oz on June 10. During the school day, 48 student actors preformed a matinee for the entire student body, which includes students in grades PK-3 through fifth grade, and later in the evening they performed for a packed audience of family, friends and neighbors.

For Brent's student actors, being in the play was thrill of a lifetime. "This was my first time in a play and playing the scarecrow has been a dream of mine," said Madison Van Eyken, a Brent 2nd grader.

The entire Brent community, including parents and teachers, helped

make the play a huge success. Specifically, Brent's PK-3 teacher, Ms. Stacy Miller and Brent's kindergarten teacher Ms. Shohreh Homayoun provided excellent leadership and coaching to the young performers.

Robert Brent Elementary School Brent is located at 301 North Carolina Ave, SE, serves students in grades PK-3 through 5th grade; www.brentelementary.org; 202-698-3363.

Maury Elementary News

Maury-Nationals Partnership

Maury's first partnership game at Nationals Park was an enormous success! Maury sold a whopping 750 tickets to the Nats. v. Orioles game, cementing a mutually beneficial (and fun) relationship with the Club. The next Maury at the Park day will be Sept. 12 against the Florida Marlins. Tickets are \$10, and kids 4 to 12 run the bases after the game!



Pre-k students Elaina, Mikayla, Jessie, and Ellie. Sing it, baby!

Spring Concert

Maury's music teacher Mrs. May, along with every student, put on an entertaining showcase of talent during the June 3 Spring Concert and Art Show. The small students sang, clapped, and snapped. The older students performed an arresting version of "Stand by Me," and the orchestra played violin, xylophone, and recorders. The whole audience joined in to sing a little Stevie Wonder for the grand finale!

\$25k Grant Awarded to Pre-K Program

The Maury Early Childhood Education program just learned they are the recipients of a \$25,000 grant from the DC office of the State Superintendent of Education. The grant is intended to assist the pre-k programs

in meeting the required high quality standards. Maury preschool and pre-k teachers will be able to use these funds for accreditation and training, instructional and support materials, age-appropriate curriculum and related training, support for development of family engagement programs. Thanks to all who worked to make it happen!

Bon Chance, 5th Grade!

Mrs. Cooper's 5th grade: you have been wonderful people to have around, and great role models for the younger children. Your deeds have not gone unnoticed, from reading to the preschoolers, helping with the fresh fruit and veggie snacks, being lunch monitors to the younger classes, and politely holding the door in the morning rush. You have been appreciated and you will be missed. Keep up the hard work and your fine citizenship, and we wish you all the best in middle school and beyond!

- Heather Schoell. Maury Elementary, 1250 Constitution Ave., NE. Carolynne Albert-Garvey, Principal. www.mauryelementary.com; 202-698-3838. Check them out on Facebook!

St. Peter School News

Moving On Up!

Thirteen St. Peter's School eighth graders kicked off graduation ceremonies with a class trip to Williamsburg, VA and Busch Gardens. On June 4, the class participated in the Rose Ceremony, a St. Peter School graduation tradition at which siblings and underclassmen present roses to graduates. Friday evening, graduates donned blue caps and gowns and processed in St. Peter's Church for Mass and the graduation ceremony. Honors awarded for academic excellence and community service included:

- St. Peter's Award to William Neidecker-Gonzales for demonstrating academic excellence, leadership and spiritual development;
- the Distinguished Student Award to Edmund Hundley for excelling academically and displaying exemplary character;
- the Presidential Award for Academic Excellence to Marissa

On June 10, 48 Brent Elementary school students performed in the Wizard of Oz - an end of the year school performance - to a packed audience of family, friends and neighbors.



Donnelly, Victoria Smith, William Neidecker-Gonzales, Edmund Hundley and Meron Hagos for maintaining a grade point average of 90 per cent or higher.

Also, the newest members of the O'Sullivan Society were recognized for attending St. Peter School from Pre-K through eighth grade. Following the conferring of diplomas, a reception was held in the Church Hall hosted by the seventh grade class. Congratulations to the St. Peter's Class of 2010! Enjoy your summer!

First Holy Communion

Forty-seven second graders not only from St. Peter's School but from across Capitol Hill, celebrated their First Holy Communion at St. Peter's Church. Hundreds of friends and family attended the First Communion Mass to witness the children receive their first sacrament of the Eucharist. A reception was hosted by the St. Peter School third grade class in the parish hall following the service.

Sally Aman. St. Peter School, 422 Third St., SE, 202-544-1618, www.stpetersinterparish.org.

Two Rivers News

And The Tony Goes To.....

On June 4th Two Rivers Public Charter School Middle School students took the stage at The Atlas Performing Arts Center for the annual Two Rivers Middle School Musical with a production of Willy Wonka, Junior. Congratulations to the students and thank you to the teachers who made it all possible, Ms. Tonia, Ms. Zahra, Ms. Kali, Ms. Janet as well as the staff and parent volunteers!

-Barbara Silva. TRPCS is located at 1227 4th St NE. Become a fan of Two Rivers on Facebook, follow them on Twitter or join them on LinkedIn to keep up with all the latest news.

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First Communion for three St. Peter School second graders.
[Credit: Sheila Walter Faison.]

Payne Elementary School News

Payne Celebrates a Year of Learning with the Annual Carnival

June 10 was a day when students, parents, teachers, Payne staff, and the community celebrated the success of the 2009-2010 school year with the annual school carnival. Since the school will open its doors for the 2010-2011 school year as a World Cultures themed school, the carnival this year kicked off with an energetic and informative performance by KanKouran West African Dance. Following the dance and drumming performance students got their faces painted, took a spin on the ferris wheel, jumped in the moon walk, circled the school in a train, danced to a DJ, and appreciated their time with each other. One look at the faces of the students when the bell rang to go home showed that the annual carnival was again a huge success!

Literacy through Photography at Payne

During May, Payne's fifth graders had an opportunity to explore their own lives through the lens of

The Two Rivers Cast of Willy Wonka



a camera. Turning the Page, a local non-profit and partner of Payne supplied each student with a digital camera and gave them a week to take pictures of their world. After trips to local museums, discussions with real life photographers, and time to explore with the camera the children brought their images back to the classroom. The results were incredible: artistic and thoughtful images of families, neighborhood buildings, teachers, houses, pets, and friends brought the lives of the children to the school. Students then had the challenge of selecting one photo to use as a visual prompt for written and verbal expression. The projects were presented to families, the community, and Turning the Page at the last Payne community night in May and are still on display in the front hallway of the school. Stop by and check out the amazing photographers at Payne!

- Vielka Scot, Principal.. Payne is at 305 15th St., S.E., 202-698-3262; Vielka.Scott@dc.gov.

Tyler Elementary School News

Strawberries & Salad Greens

On June 3, students across Capitol Hill got to sample fresh, locally-grown strawberries and salad greens in their school lunches! This was part of a celebration called "Strawberries & Salad Greens" organized by the DC Farm to School Network. Ludlow-Taylor, Maury, Peabody, Tyler and Watkins

elementary schools participated in the event.

Tyler to be Renovated

In August, Tyler Elementary School students will walk into a completely new building to match its beautiful outdoor classroom. Over the summer, Tyler Elementary will be transformed into a state-of-the-art, green, modern school. From classrooms with smart boards, display space for student work, anti-allergenic flooring and top-of-the-line furniture, to all-new music and art rooms, and a bright library with a stage for acting out plays, Tyler's redesign is a wonderful inauguration of its



Tyler students enjoy their strawberries and salad greens after a demo from Chef Lauren Von Der Pool of Cafe Green.

approach to integrating the arts in all subjects, grade levels, and programs. The environment will be much more conducive to learning with improved acoustics, air quality, and natural lighting. Work is scheduled for completion by August 15th. To see the floor plans, visit <http://tylerelementary.net>. -Suzanne Godec. Tyler is located at 1001 G St. SE.

Ludlow-Taylor News

Rosa Simon Retires

When you ask somebody at Ludlow-Taylor to tell you about Ms. Rosa Simon, who will be retiring after 35 five years of service to DCPS, with the last 23 years serving as Maintenance Supervisor at LTES, you get a lot of puzzled looks. That is because, in the words of longtime fourth grade teacher Ms. Francis, "Ms. Simon's job



Payne Kids Enjoy their World Cultures Carnival

is undefined. She wears so many hats at Ludlow-Taylor -- teacher, friend, and grandmother to all."

Many hats indeed! Ms. Simon is also a longtime member of the PTA executive committee, and the LSRT.

According to Principal Cobbs, "Ms. Simon is the heart and soul of Ludlow-Taylor ES. She embodies the spirit of who we are, a person who loves and cares about this building, the staff, and the students. She has devoted years of her life trying to make it the best school it can be."

Ms. Simon will be greatly missed by the entire LTES community. As PTA President

Ms. Champion puts it, "She has a big heart and will do anything for anybody. "At the same time, Ms. Simon asserts she will remain a presence at LTES, in her capacity as grandparent, volunteer, and active member of PTA and LSRT. Shahna Gooneratne, frequent school volunteer agrees, "Ms. Simon's devotion to LT is without question. . . I don't think she'll be able to stay away!" - Donny Kirsch. 659 G St. NE. 202-698-3244, www.ludlowtaylores.com.

Editor's Note: There will be no School Notes column for the August issue. Please email submissions for the September issue to dcjohnsongypsies@yahoo.com by Aug. 13. Thanks to all who have contributed this school year! Have a great summer!- SBJ. ★