

# The Rising Star

Swarthmore-Rutledge School

*Home of the Panther Cubs!*

Volume 13, Issue 8

May 2007

*From the Principal's Desk*

**May 2007**

**Student Placement Requests:** The faculty will decide student placement for the coming school year. Parents may discuss placement with their child's teacher. We ask that discussions focus on "suitable environments" as opposed to personalities, gender, or requests for specific teachers. The final decision will be made by the faculty and the principal.

**The SRS Primary Program:** In our primary program we have single-grade first grade classes, single-grade second grade classes, and multiage first/second grade classes. Each class is a heterogeneous grouping with differences in interest, gender, ability and neighborhood. Gifted students, students with special needs, students with emotional and behavior issues are equitably placed in all of our classrooms.

All primary classes, regardless of straight or multiage format, provide structure as well as independent exploration, flexible small group as well as whole group instruction, challenge as well as remediation, and thematic integration of all subjects guided and supported by the WSSD primary curriculum. Regardless of the configuration, the needs and interests of children are at the center of every primary classroom. Cooperation and respect for the individual are high priorities in all of our primary classrooms.

In our single-grade first and second grades, children meet a new teacher and set of classmates each year in contrast to a multiage classroom, where children stay with a teacher for two years. Multiage teachers start each year knowing half of their students. Multiage second graders know their teacher and half of their classmates when they go into the classroom in September. In multiage classrooms, children work and learn within a slightly larger range of ages and abilities.

We do not believe that multiage classrooms are best suited for a "certain" type of student. Multiage classes are not set up for faster-moving first graders and slower-moving second graders, nor do more advanced second graders assume the role of teacher for their less advanced classmates. Because multiage classes are a nontraditional grade configuration, the majority of students in these classes are there because of parental request. However, not every parent that asks for a multiage class receives one because we typically only have 26-30 openings for first graders in these classrooms each year. **Parents who are interested in having their child placed in a multiage classroom should submit a letter to that effect to Dr. Davis by Friday, May 11, 2007.**

We will continue to have nine primary classes next year: 3 first grade classes, 3 multiage first/second grade classes, and 3 second grade classes. We will also continue to have thirteen intermediate classes next year: 4 third grade classes, 4 fourth grade classes, and 5 fifth grade classes. I will be able to share the specifics of our staffing assignments in my August letter to parents.

**Notice Regarding 2007-2008 Classroom Assignments:** Elementary parents throughout the district will be notified of their child's classroom assignment in August. Sending out notifications during the second week in August will allow us to fine tune classroom assignments. The usual summer mailing will be sent home during August to first graders and students new to SRS. (Note: Second through fifth graders will bring this information home the first day of school. We have found that critical school information is often misplaced with an earlier mailing.)

**National Schools of Character Application:** I am sorry to inform you that SRS wasn't selected as a finalist for this award. The application review committee states:

Swarthmore-Rutledge School has designed an effective and intentional character education program built around four cornerstones -**kindness, manners, courage, self-control**. An exemplary feature of the school's program is its inclusion of service-learning projects at each level. With an engaging curriculum that shows relevance to life's problems, the school focused on developing students' intrinsic motivation. Committees such as Social Awareness and School Advisory take active roles in moving the school forward. The school has been successful in developing in their students "a sense of otherness" and a commitment to help those in need.

The review committee suggests that assessment of our character education program is an area of growth that we should focus on in the future.

Applying for this award has been a valuable learning experience. We are ready to move forward next year with the implementation of the Olweus Bully Prevention Program.

Copies of our National Schools of Character Application are available for review in the SRS library and in the SRS office.

Principal

Gary Davis

Dear SRS H&S Community,

The final stretch of the 2006-2007 school year is upon us, and the warm weather is a welcome relief. As most of you know, a new slate of H&S officers for the 2007-2008 school year were voted on at the April H&S meeting. New officers include Mary O’Gorman and Linda Armour as the new H&S vice co-chairs, Sharon Mester treasurer, Jodi Dawes receiving treasurer and Sharon Graham as secretary. We welcome each of them to their new positions and wish them a very successful 2007-2008 year.

The H&S community would like to extend our appreciation and thanks to Marcia Heihle and Karen Piechel for all their hard work co-coordinating the Scholastic Book Fair. They did a fabulous job organizing, planning and carrying out all the responsibilities that go into making the book fair a reality. The beach party theme was a hit, and the foyer decorations were so inviting and creative. The fair was a great financial success, as well as a success for the students who visited and purchased books, and for the teachers who received books from their “wish list”.

We have so much to look forward to in the very near future, including field trips to the Philadelphia Zoo, the Capitol in Harrisburg, and the Wetlands in New Jersey. The Blue Rocks baseball game on Sunday Apr 29 was a huge success, the 5<sup>th</sup> grade class sang “America the Beautiful at the start of the game. All had great fun socializing and enjoying the game. Field day will be held on May 11. Additionally, I am sure you have heard about the “J’Makin Me Dance Event” to be held at SRS on May 4th from 6-8:30 PM in the courtyard behind the school. It will feature “Trinidad North”, a Steel Drum Band, delicious island food and many activities for the children. Information and order forms are available at [SRSkids.org](http://SRSkids.org), as well as in back pack mail. The event will also feature a marketplace which will include moonbounces, hair braiding, Dippin Dots ice cream, and virgin pina coladas. Funds raised will go towards SRS Relay for Life team.

We look forward to seeing everyone at the next SRS H&S meeting scheduled for May 9 at 7:30 p.m. in the SRS Lib. The budget for H&S 2007-2008 year will be discussed and voted on.

Sincerely,  
SRS H&S co-chairs  
Kate Dickey, [dickeysw@aol.com](mailto:dickeysw@aol.com)  
Beth Resweber, [sresweber@pol.net](mailto:sresweber@pol.net)



## **SRS Staff Spotlight**

*Featuring John Wesley, the Crossing Guard*

**Interview by Travis DeBruyn**

1. **What is your name?** John Wesley
2. **Is being a crossing guard fun?** Yes.
3. **How long have you been a crossing guard?** 7 years
4. **What is the hardest part of your job?** Getting the kids across the street when we have a heavy rain. Traffic is very heavy.
5. **Why did you become a crossing guard?** I was a policeman here in Swarthmore and retired in 1996. A few years after that they needed a crossing guard so I became one. I like doing it very much. You kids are great.
6. **What do you do over summer vacation?** I work with the Swarthmore Recreation Association Summer Camp staff for 5 weeks. The rest of the time I work around the house and also take small trips.
7. **What is your favorite sport and what is your favorite team?** Football and the Eagles
8. **Do you have any kids?** Yes, I have three grown sons and three granddaughters.

## **Is Your Child Gifted?**

Some Wallingford-Swarthmore parents are forming a chapter of PAGE (Pennsylvania Association for Gifted Education) so that we can join together for advocacy and support. Please join us at our next meeting,

**Monday, May 21**

**7:30 PM**

**Furness Memorial Library Auditorium**

For more information, please contact Lauren McKinney at [lauren@mcswartz.org](mailto:lauren@mcswartz.org) or at 610-541-0125.  
Also, see [penngifted.org](http://penngifted.org) for more information about PAGE.

# News from Dimensions in Art

The committee for the **5<sup>th</sup> Grade Art Project**, chaired by Sally Fullam, has been busy preparing for the Class of 2007's collaborative art installation with artist and SRS parent **Jennifer Baker**. A graduate of Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts and Philadelphia College of Art (now the University of the Arts), Jennifer Baker has exhibited extensively in Philadelphia and New York and is the recipient of a prestigious Pennsylvania Council of the Arts "Visual Arts Fellowship". Beginning her professional career as a sculptor of life-sized figures, she later turned to mono-prints and painting, drawing inspiration from scenes of the Northern Liberties neighborhood where she has a studio. Ms. Baker's resume also includes teaching art at Greene Street Friends School and chairing the Dimensions in Art program at SRS for several years, bringing to the school visiting artists Big Man, Eiko Fan, and performance artists from Pig Iron Theater Company.

Jennifer's idea for this year's project is to combine large triangular pieces of glass donated from the old Liberty Bell Pavilion with mirror, ceramic tile, and stone, thus creating a massive mosaic mural depicting a sprawling central tree, the "**SRS Tree of Liberty**". The artist acquired several pieces of the liberty glass after the pavilion was dismantled when the Liberty Bell moved to its new home, and hopes the "SRS Tree of Liberty" will be the first in a series of liberty glass murals installed around the region.

Before spring break, the children gathered in the auditorium where they met Jennifer and saw a slideshow of her sculptures and paintings, as well as photographs of the careful dismantling of the Liberty Bell Pavilion. The children began working right after spring break to design on paper

their individual parts of the overall mural, which will be installed on the outside wall (facing the cafeteria) of the Trinity building. While the tree, clouds, and horizon line, will unify the over 90 individual sections, Jennifer has encouraged each child to add their distinctive ideas to the mosaic landscape. Over the next couple weeks, the children will transfer their designs onto a cement board panel and begin the process of creating a vibrant mosaic.

Each fifth grade class will work with Jennifer for about an hour every Tuesday and Wednesday until mid May. If you would like to help during your child's class, please contact Sally Fullam at [fullam@verizon.net](mailto:fullam@verizon.net). Also, **we are in need of brightly colored ceramic tile; especially reds, pinks, greens, and yellows.** If you have any you would like to donate please let Sally know.

Dimensions in Art is one of the many programs funded by our Home and School Association. The 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Art Project is much more than art enrichment; it's a long embraced tradition, a rite of passage. Dr. Davis, Teacher Helen, and all the fifth grade teachers, have been dedicated partners and facilitators throughout this project's long history. Each year many parents generously volunteer their time, talent, and energy to this ambitious venture. **Many thanks to this year's dynamic parent committee: Sally Fullam, Julie Kroon, Carol O'Dea, Jackie Linn, Jean Tierno, and Linda Armour.** And thanks to our artist, Jennifer Baker, who has already logged countless hours to ensure the children have a memorable art experience.

By Maureen Rutkowski

### *Get involved with the Relay For Life of Wallingford-Swarthmore!*

The Wallingford-Swarthmore School District is hosting its annual American Cancer Society Relay For Life on May 18 & 19, 2007. The event raises money and awareness for the American Cancer Society and its mission in the fight against cancer. If you are interested in participating in the Relay For Life by **organizing or joining a team, being celebrated as a survivor, remembering a loved one, donating money or services, or becoming a business sponsor**, contact the co-chairs of the Wallingford-Swarthmore Relay at [wsrelay@hotmail.com](mailto:wsrelay@hotmail.com), or visit the website, [www.acsevents.org/relay/pa/haven](http://www.acsevents.org/relay/pa/haven). Last year, the Relay For Life of Wallingford-Swarthmore was the largest and most successful youth-sponsored Relay in the United States. Get involved now and help make the 2007 Relay the biggest success yet!

#### WELLNESS TIPS



##### **Sun Safety**

Studies have shown that most of the sun damage which leads to skin cancer is acquired during childhood. For this reason, we strongly recommend sunscreen usage as one component for sun protection. Most dermatologists recommend the use of **sunscreens** which provide a SPF of 15 or higher and ones that block both UVA and UVB light.

Sunscreen should be applied generously to exposed areas. We suggest that sunscreen application be supervised by a parent/guardian in the morning prior to school. Even on cloudy, cool, or overcast days, UV rays travel through the clouds and reflect off sand, water, and even concrete.

Another way to protect the skin from the sun is to cover up and shield the skin with **clothing**. To ensure that clothes will screen out UV rays, place your hand inside the garment and make sure you can't see your hand through the fabric. **Wearing hats** outdoors is another excellent way to reduce sun exposure to the face, head and neck. **Hydration** is especially important during hot weather. Encourage children to carry a water bottle and to drink plenty of water before, during and after an activity. Protecting your child from sun damage now will reduce his/her risk for developing skin cancer in the future.

##### **Bicycle Helmet Safety**

Each year, more than 500,000 people in the U.S. are treated in emergency rooms and more than 700 people die as a result of bicycle-related injuries. Wearing a helmet properly when cycling is your best means of protection against injury. Helmets can reduce serious head injuries by 85% in a crash. A few tips to remember:

- Always wear a helmet that fits on top of the head, not tipped back
- Always wear a helmet while riding a bike, rollerblading or skateboarding
- Replace your helmet after a crash or any impact that affects your helmet
- Find the smallest helmet shell that fits over your head
- Leave about 2-fingers width between your eyebrows and the front of the helmet
- Straps should be joined just under each ear at the jawbone
- The buckle should be snug with your mouth completely open
- Buy a highly visible color
- HAVE FUN!!!

CONTACT: Jennifer Vincent  
610-745-3086  
jennifervincent44@yahoo.com

## **NEW SWARTHMORE WRITERS ROOM LAUNCHES THIS SUMMER**

Classes for Children, Teens and Adults Provide Opportunities for Learning, Sharing and Artistic Discovery

*Hard, brown, rough on the top.*

*Smooth on the bottom, like a thatched hut in Africa.*

*I smell the scent of the oak tree, and the new earth.*

From a poem by Melinda R, Swarthmore-Rutledge Student and Nature Artists and Explorer Writer, Summer 2006.

SWARTHMORE, PA (March 26, 2007) – *The Swarthmore Writers Room will open its doors this summer to provide quality programs to writers of all ages in a supportive learning community. Summer camps featuring a variety of topics from the practical to the fanciful will be taught by a team of regional professionals between June 25 and August 3, 2007.*

*Housed at the Trinity Episcopal Church, 301 North Chester Road / Route 320 (the corner of College Avenue and Chester Road), **The Swarthmore Writers Room is dedicated to developing the unique voice of every writer.** The concept for The Swarthmore Writers Room was born in the Summer of 2006 when Joanne Sutton-Smith, a Poet in Residence for both the Swarthmore and Kennett Square school districts, and Michael Haines, a teacher at SRS and visual artist, joined forces to teach a course through the Swarthmore Recreation Association (SRA) called “Nature Artists and Explorers.” The program combined drawing and writing skills to promote creativity among the 25 local children who participated. This course will be offered again this summer at the Swarthmore Writers Room.*

*“Writing has always been an important element of the Swarthmore community,” said Joanne Sutton-Smith. “By bringing together accessible, award-winning teachers of writing with students of all ages in an environment that is both artistically safe and stimulating, we can build on that legacy. We are thrilled to provide this resource and can’t wait to see the work that is nurtured and developed.”*

*The Swarthmore Writers Room will also have a not-for-profit division called “Every Voice Matters” that is an important extension of its mission. Professional teaching artists plan to provide quality writing programs to under-served populations throughout the Greater Philadelphia region.*

*The Swarthmore Writers Room (cont.)*

*In addition to Sutton-Smith and Haines, teaching members of the Swarthmore Writers Room team include Jennifer Connolly, a teacher at SRS and avid book lover; A.V. Christie, a national award-winning writer, poet and writer-in-residence for more than 15 years; Elizabeth Mosier, a published author and expert in memoir writing; Reisa Mukamal, a former editor and current freelance writer and teacher; and Beth Abrams, a theater arts specialist.*

*Scheduled courses for children, teens and adults include:*

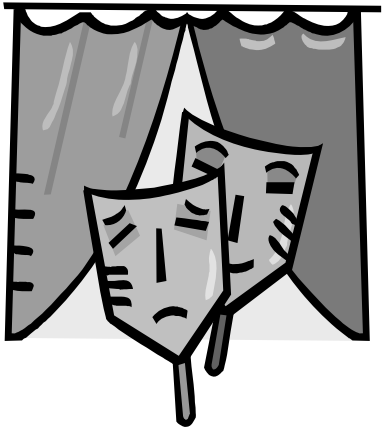
- **Mythology Comics** (for rising 3-6 Graders; July 16-27)  
*Learn the art of comic book making while discovering more about the original superheroes: Greek Gods and Goddesses.*
- **Journal Making** (for rising 3-5 Graders; June 25-29)  
*Create a unique, special writing space to capture thoughts, wishes and dreams.*
- **Fairytales, Fables and Fantasy: The Art of Mural Making** (Session A – for rising 1-3 Graders; Session B – for rising 4-6 Graders; June 25-29)  
*Explore storytelling strategies and learn the basic techniques of figure and animal drawing.*
- **Nature Artists and Explorers** (for rising 2-5 Graders; July 16- 27)  
*Explore the area around Crum Creek while investigating how to sketch, draw, paint and write about the wonders you discover.*
- **Bookcrafts** (for rising 1-3 Graders; July 2-13)  
*Engage your mind with creative crafts that are connected to the books read aloud or with partners.*
- **Playmaking: Collaborative Playwriting** (for rising 6-8 Graders; July 30-Aug. 3)  
*A highly participatory process that combines improvisation, movement, poetry, voice and visual art to create a play.*
- **Writing the College Application Essay** (for rising 12th Graders; July 16-20. Second session will be added if needed, July 23-27)  
*Examine successful essays, brainstorm ideas and explore styles to select the question that suits you best and develop a solid working draft.*
- **The Poet at Work** (Adults – 18 and older; Wednesday evenings, 7-9 PM, June 25-July 27)  
*Explore the subjects that appeal to you and discover your poet's voice to elicit strong, lush, meaningful poems.*
- **Writing Your Life** (Adults 18 and older; Tuesday evenings 7-9 PM, June 25-July20)  
*A workshop on writing a memoir is for the beginning or experienced writer who has true stories to tell.*

*For additional information about courses, faculty and the mission of The Swarthmore Writers Room, please visit [www.swarthmorewritersroom.com](http://www.swarthmorewritersroom.com) or call 610-328-7950.*

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**Swarthmore-Rutledge Elementary School**  
*in conjunction with*  
**Young Audiences of New Jersey**

*Presents*



Seth Reichgott's

**"The Golden Lyre" and "Chariot of the Sun".**

In these performance demonstrations, students meet the heroes, monsters, gods and goddesses of Greek mythology. In the "Golden Lyre" teaching artist Seth Reichgott uses poetry, masks and mime to bring to life the story of King Minos and his stolen golden lyre. In "Chariot of the Sun" Seth introduces the classic myth of Phaethon and his chariot, Pandora, Odysseus and the Cyclops.

The student audience serves as the traditional Greek chorus.

These two performances will be held on May 10th in the SRS Auditorium. "The Golden Lyre" is geared towards the primary grades and will be presented at 10:15. "Chariot of the Sun" will be presented to the intermediate classes at 1:45 in the afternoon. This special presentation is being sponsored by the SRS Home and School Association.



### The Rising Star

*Published monthly*

*Deadlines: 20<sup>th</sup> of each month*

*Submit materials to:*

*Robin Boyer*

*Rdgenter@aol.com*

### Swarthmore-Rutledge School

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Swarthmore, PA 19081  
610-544-5700

Attendance Line:  
610-544-5702

Check out our Website!

<http://wssd.org/>  
(click on SRS)

*A*

*A proud member of Wallingford-  
Swarthmore  
School District*



### Dates to Remember

\*\* PLEASE REMEMBER THAT ALL ENTRIES FOR THE RISING STAR ARE DUE IN BY THE 20<sup>TH</sup> OF EACH MONTH.

- \*5/4: Family Dance – J'Makin' Me Dance (6pm)
- \*5/9: H&S Mtg (7:30pm)
- \*5/11: Field Day (1pm)
- \*5/15: IN SERVICE DAY – NO SCHOOL
- \*5/16: 5<sup>TH</sup> Grade Orientation (SHMS – 7pm)
- \*5/18: Volunteer Appreciation Coffee (8am)
- \*5/23: Special Person's Breakfast (Grades 1-2) – 8am
- \*5/24: Special Person's Breakfast (Grades 3-5) – 8am
- \*5/24: Instrumental Concert (7:30pm)
- \*5/28: MEMORIAL DAY – NO SCHOOL
- \*5/24: 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Choral Concert (7:30pm)

## Last Call for Reporters!

There is one last chance to interview a staff member or community member of SRS for the June edition of the Rising Star. Students can do the interviews alone or with a friend. Please send me an email ([rdgenter@aol.com](mailto:rdgenter@aol.com)), call me (215-327-7866), or send me home a note via backpack express. Notes can be sent by Bryan Boyer (Ms. Benson's class). Remember the deadline for entries is the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month.

