What's Happening at South Side School
South Side PTA's Weekly Newsletter February 6, 2009

Please email newsletter submissions to Mark Atkinson at mark.a@southsidepta.org by 6 p.m. any given Wednesday
South Side News listerv: http://groups.yahoo.com/group/southsideschool
WH online: http://sites.google.com/a/southsidepta.org/whats-happening/Home/pdffiles

South Side Family: Thanks for a FUN Night!

To South Side parents, faculty, and staff: Your hard work put smiles on a LOT of children’s faces last Friday. Thanks again for all you did to make our annual Fun Night a success!

Special thanks to this year’s hard-working Fun Night Committee: Dena Bagger, Sara Balgoyen, Dave Beck, Karen Carney, Emily Klose, Sujata Dey-Koontz, Caren Spencer-Smith, Tim Tufte, and Judy Webber; to Mr. Taylor and the office staff; to Mr. Reynolds (and the helpful custodians); to Mrs. Bellington (and the wonderful Windsor of Savoy for their donation of van rides); and to the ever fabulous Ms. Parnell. We could never pull this event off without you!

Ruthie Counter
Coordinator, Fun Night ’09 Committee

As a member of the Fun Night Committee I would like to thank Ruthie Counter for chairing the committee. She delegated well, kept us on track and did it all with a smile.

Judy Webber

Box Top News

We had a great Box Top collection in January. We had a total of 1618 Box Tops turned in for the school. We have a new Box Top Queen.... Mrs. Johnson. She is wearing the crown proudly for the month. We also have a new class leader. Mrs. Burgett’s kindergartners grabbed the lead for the school. They have been steadily turning in Box Tops and now top the school with 1611 Box Tops so far this school year! Our next collection will be February 19th. This will be a special “100 day” collection. To celebrate the 100th day of school, we will reward all classes that turn in 100 or more Box Tops in February with a brownie treat! Keep clipping and bringing them in.

Jump Rope for Heart

Our annual Jump Rope for Heart activities are coming very soon. All the information has gone out to students. The event will be held Feb. 17-20 during PE classes. Let your children explain to you why we are doing this important event. Please make sure all checks are made out to American Heart Association as we send all money directly to them. There is also an online donation site that makes it very convenient for relatives or friends who may live out of the Champaign-Urbana area to donate. The instructions are on the back of the information sheet handed out to each student. All donation envelopes should be turned in by Feb. 20th at the latest. Thanks for helping support this organization that helps save lives every day.

If you need any information regarding these events please contact me at 351-4011.
Thanks, Ms. Parnell

Are you a South Side Parent?
Are you a South side Teacher?

If you answered yes to either of these questions, you are qualified to attend the next PTA meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 18th from 6:30-8pm in the South Side Library. Childcare will be provided.

“The heart has reasons that reason cannot know.” ~ Blaise Pascal
As the soil, however rich it may be, cannot be productive without cultivation, so the mind without culture can never produce good fruit. ~ Seneca

4th grader Lorren Krantz recently read *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* by Jeff Kinney and liked this tale of a boy who gets in a lot of trouble. Lorren says, “The most interesting part is when [characters] Greg and Rowley got chased by someone with a _____ (read the book to find out what!) at the haunted Crossland High School. I recommend this book because it is funny, weird, and basically a story of a boy’s life.”

Fellow 4th grade student Maddie Atkinson recommends *Jacob Have I Loved* by Katherine Paterson, a book that has nearly become a classic. “It is about a girl who is treated unfairly by her family.” says Maddie. What part did she find most intriguing? Maddie says, “When the girl had a baby in a valley.” She adds, “I like this book because it has a good meaning.”

If you’d like to tell your South Side friends about one of your favourite books, find and complete the form on the PTA table in the upstairs hallway at South Side. You may send a photo of yourself to lammers@illinoisalumni.org

The following is valuable information for everyone about up-coming events, from your Principal, Mr. Taylor

**International Day**

International Day is coming!

That’s right - a new name with a few new twists. In preparation, I would like to lay out our plan for this year’s festivities. For the 2009 International Day, South Side will celebrate cultures from around the world in the following ways:

- As mentioned before, we are replacing the month-long international activities with International Day (April 30)
- There will be no tours in the school
- International Night will be April 30 and will feature:
  - Each classroom will choose a country to study during the day
  - Each classroom will either have an in-class or out-in-the-hallway exhibit for the parents in the evening
  - Exhibits will be available for visiting from 6-7 p.m., and dinner will be from 7-8 p.m.
  - Classrooms will be closed promptly at 7:00 p.m.

- International clothing may be worn to school as well as the dinner by faculty/staff as well as students on April 30
- International flags and other decorations will be put up around the school the week before April 30
- As more details become available, of course we will let you know

South Side is very excited that International Day is approaching. We look forward to celebrating many different cultures from around the world. I know teachers are already talking about the different activities. See if you can generate meaningful conversations at home about different cultures, countries, and customs from around the world!

"As the soil, however rich it may be, cannot be productive without cultivation, so the mind without culture can never produce good fruit." ~ Seneca
Building Council - What Is It?

Building Council (BC) is a group of South Side teachers, parents, and administrators that meets once a month to discuss issues pertaining specifically to South Side. These issues could have anything at all to do with South Side. Some examples are: starting a new club at the school, parent-initiated ideas for assemblies/get-togethers, or even ideas about the actual physical structure of the school. If there is something you would like BC to discuss, please stop by the school office and ask one of the secretaries for the BC binder. In there, you will find a form to complete, giving a brief description of what you would like BC to discuss. That form will then be reviewed by Mr. Scott and me and a decision will be made if that is, in fact, a BC issue. It’s as easy as that!

ISAT - Bring it On!

March 2nd marks the beginning of ISAT week. ISAT is the annual state assessment given to 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders. Look for more information regarding ISAT in the coming weeks. To get things started, I would like to provide you with a partial list of some test taking tips.

Test-Taking Tips for Elementary Students
Tests are important because they help the teacher evaluate a student’s needs and progress, the student gauge his or her own level of mastery, and the parent monitor his or her child’s progress.

Tips to give your child about taking tests:

** Relax. Just do the best you can.**
** Your first choice is usually correct. Don’t change an answer unless you have a good reason to do so.**
** Be aware of key words such as “all,” “now,” “always,” “never,” “only,” “exactly.”**
** In multiple-choice questions, don’t skip the longest answer. It should be considered, since test writers want to be sure the correct answer is accurate—they may add lots of details to insure accuracy.**
** Watch for negative words like “not,” “no,” “never.”**
** Look for information in some of the questions. This information may help you answer other questions.**

You can assist your child prepare for testing by doing the following:
** Make sure your child gets a good night’s sleep before a test, and make sure your child eats properly the day of a test.**
** Maintain a pleasant home environment and avoid unnecessary conflicts. Try to make the morning of the test a pleasant one. Do not add to your child’s stress.**
** Make sure your child has taken any needed medication.**
** Ensure that your child is present during testing (children generally perform better when taking tests in their groups rather than at a make-up time).**
** Get your child to school on time the day of the test.**
** Wish your child good luck each morning of the test. Tell your child that he/she is special and that you believe in him/her!**
** Remind your child the test is important. Encourage him/her to do his/her best.**
** If your child is too ill to attend, please call the school office.**
** Remind your child to listen carefully to the instructions from the teacher and to read the directions and each question carefully.**
** Explain to your child the importance of using time wisely. If your child gets stuck on a question, encourage him or her to make the best guess and move on.**
** Tell your child to attempt to answer all of the questions and not to leave any blank.**
** Encourage your child to stay focused on the test, even if other students finish early.**
** If your child is disappointed after taking a test, reassure him or her that there will be plenty of opportunities to improve and succeed.**

I can’t stress enough that ISAT should NOT be a stressful time for our students. The way I look at it, ISAT is a chance for your child to show their stuff! Our teachers are doing a great job of preparing the students for the test. It is extremely important that the children come to school with a positive attitude. That is the best way to ensure they do their best on the test!

“The space within becomes the reality of the building.” ~ Frank Lloyd Wright