



# Sunbeams

Parent Teacher Association Newsletter

Oct. 30, 2009

Dear Sunrise Valley Families,

As I mentioned in the last Sunbeams, I'll periodically use this space to share a little bit about SVES PTA's objectives. In doing so, I hope to make families more aware of available opportunities. The objective I'll discuss this week is "Informing and Educating Parents."

There is so much happening in family life these days it's hard to keep track of it all! SVES PTA uses tools like Keep in Touch e-mails and the Sunbeams newsletter to let parents know about upcoming events, student enrichment opportunities, FCPS events, etc. We also send home fliers in the Friday Folders, although we've cut back on these in an effort to be more fiscally and environmentally responsible.

That's where our redesigned PTA website comes in! Sunrisevalleypta.webnode.com is meant to be your "go to" information source – it replaces much of the old paper communication and provides instant access. So when you can't remember what time Movie Night starts, or need the form to order Skate Night tickets, it's there! Even the PTA-published Student Directory is online now, so it's easier than ever to plan those play dates and parties! The web site also includes a Parent Resources section, with educational and FCPS links, community happenings, etc. We encourage you to check it out and we welcome your input on what you'd like to see there!

Throughout the year, the PTA sponsors Spotlight on Learning parent education sessions. The Spotlight series is designed to educate and inform on common challenges and questions we face as parents. The sessions are usually held following PTA meetings, and feature experts from within and outside SVES. At our first Spotlight of the year, we learned strategies for helping our children organize for academic success. Our next Spotlight will help parents support our children as readers (see the article on p. 2). We hope to see you there! Check the PTA web site for more details and to share your ideas for future topics!

Melissa Gifford

SVES PTA President



## The Lowdown on the Hoe Down

Last Friday's Hoe Down was a boot stompin' good time! Nearly 300 cowpokes saddled up for the food & fun decked out in boots, bandanas and ten-gallon hats. After "chowing down" on steak & chicken fajitas, burritos, rice, beans and chips with all the fixin's (not to mention the delectable desserts), they joined the DJ/square dance caller to kick up the sawdust, dance some old favorites and learn a new step or two. Face painting, craft projects, friends and cold lemonade rounded out the fun. We're mighty obliged to all of our volunteers, especially Anne Moriarty, Hoe Down coordinator, and Kelley Bell, her sidekick! Yeehaw!

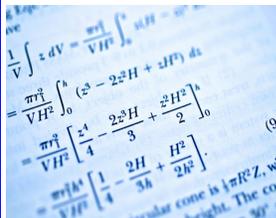
Mark your calendar for these fun events coming soon to SVES! More details to follow!

- Friday, December 4:  
Family Movie Night
- Saturday, January 16:  
Skate Night
- Thursday, February. 4:  
Heritage Night
- Friday, February. 26:  
Bingo Night



## Raising Skilled Readers – How Parents Can Make a Difference

Whether your child is an experienced reader or just learning to read, is a reluctant reader or an avid one, is a skilled reader or is struggling, this session is for you! Please join us on Tuesday, November 10<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 p.m. in the SVES Library (following the PTA meeting) as Dr. W. Dorsey Hammond presents "Raising Skilled Readers - How Parents Can Make a Difference". Dr. Hammond will debunk some common misconceptions, talk about how we, as parents, can support our young reader(s), and answer those burning questions. Dr. Hammond is a highly acclaimed literacy educator, researcher, author and presenter. As always, free childcare will be provided for both the PTA meeting and the Spotlight on Learning session. We hope to see you there!



A Math Facts Course on Fractions will be offered to 5<sup>th</sup> graders in January from Mrs. Connie Greenspan. The sessions will take place on Thursday mornings from 8 a.m.-9 a.m. There will be approximately 12 sessions. If you are interested, please watch for a flyer in your child's Friday Folder in early December.

More details about cost and dates will be included in the flyer.

If you have any questions, please contact Kelley Bell at [kelleydbell@comcast.net](mailto:kelleydbell@comcast.net).



Special thanks to Alicia Leonard for a fantastic job on the SVES Student Directory, and to Karen Macaluso and her team (Melissa Wolfe & Heather Thomas) for a thorough audit of last year's PTA books! Thanks also to all who donated baked goods for Custodian and Bus Driver appreciation, and to Sumi Vintimilla for coordinating this special recognition! And thanks again to all of our Hoe Down volunteers!



### Box Tops for Education Update

Our fall submission for box tops has been sent to General Mills. Because of your generosity, we collected over \$415 worth of box tops! This money will be used to support programs for our children. The Box Tops for Education program will continue for the rest of the school year and we'll have another submission at the end of February. An important note: Some of the box tops have an expiration date of June 1, 2010. We have to make sure that we submit them for the February collection, so that we get credit for those box tops. Thank you again!

### Keep Those Ink Cartridges & Cell Phones Coming!



SVES is off to a great start with our new recycling program through THINK RECYCLE. Not only have we raised \$48 from the items you've collected, THINK RECYCLE has planted 3 trees in honor of SVES! So keep putting your old cell phones, ink jet and laser cartridges in the THINK RECYCLE box in the school breezeway – we'll save these items from the landfill, replenish the forest and raise money for SVES at the same time. Questions? Contact Melissa Smith [svesptafundraising@gmail.com](mailto:svesptafundraising@gmail.com).

Check out our new Volunteer Opportunities link on [sunrisevalleypta.webnode.com](http://sunrisevalleypta.webnode.com)!



The site will be updated regularly, so please check back often. We welcome and appreciate your help!

The PTA would like to wish Mrs. Emma Peal a "Happy Retirement" and thank her for her 11 years of service to Sunrise Valley! The PTA has presented Mrs. Peal with a token of our appreciation, and we wish her all the best! The cafeteria won't be the same without her!

***" Though our hands are different, we are all part of one school, one community, and one world".***



The above quote was placed on a SVES bulletin board as a way to promote October as Virginia Disability History and Awareness Month. The Special Education teachers and students within the school assembled the bulletin board. All of the Special Education students traced their hands and made a sun out of them. Also on the bulletin board are pictures showing what the special education students do in their classroom and how those activities are the same or similar to those done by the general education students. Ms. Maines, for example, put up pictures of her class in circle time. Other special education classrooms put up pictures of language arts, specials, arts and crafts, etc.

The Governor of Virginia adopted a resolution establishing October as Disability History and Awareness Month in Virginia. This initiative was established to "increase public awareness and respect for persons with disabilities, inform the public concerning their many contributions to society, encourage health promotion to increase community awareness of the needs of persons with disabilities, and emphasize the abilities and rights of disabled persons rather than their exceptionalities."

SVES PTA Special Education committee thanks the teachers and students for acknowledging and participating in this important celebration. In a country with such diversity, it is nice to have a chance to celebrate how different people are also very much alike.