

TUTORING NEWS: EPWORTH TUTORING PROGRAM

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CRAFTS AT SATURDAY TUTORING

The crafts section is a component of our bi-weekly program in which eighth graders from Wilmette Jr. High School come to tutor preschool through seventh graders of the Tutoring Program.

This year we asked four high school girls, graduates of the Tutoring Program, to supervise the arts section: Portia Hemphill, Barbara Taylor, Cheire Taylor, and Felecia Pritchard, all of whom have also been active in Alternatives during the last several years. These students planned the arts projects, decided on the materials, oversaw the projects, and taught and supervised the tutoring pairs.

It was a wonderful year. The students did name designs, sand painting, water colors of trees, holiday cards to senior citizens, chalk drawings, collages, lanyards, and dressed clothespin dolls.

The most ambitious project was working in clay, which had never been done before in Saturday Tutoring. The girls decided to schedule one session of Play Dough to get the students ready, and then have a session to make small items from buff clay and a session to glaze them after they dried. The students loved working in clay. After the first session of working in buff clay, students who had missed the day wanted to make something in clay, so there were two weeks of buff clay, and two weeks of painting. The girls decided to air-dry the art works rather than fire them, but another year they might have them fired.

Another highlight of the year was making little pizzas. The girls had remembered this project from years before when they were in the primary grades. This took a lot of organizing and leadership on their part and everything came out well. The children loved the pizzas.

Coordinating the Saturday art projects was a large undertaking and required a lot of leadership. Most Saturdays there were four groups of 20-30 children who did the projects (8th graders are children, too), and the girls gained good experience in teaching and supervising the students and organizing the materials. Portia Hemphill is using the experience as part of her

Gold Award for Girl Scouts. Recently Barbara Taylor was in charge of an art project with some preschool children, and an adult commented on how well she was doing. The person said, "Her experience in the Tutoring Program is really giving her good leadership training."

1ST-4TH GRADERS PARENTS' NIGHT

In May, 88 people came to the 1st-4th graders family night, including parents from 19 families.

The highlight of the evening was when 33 children recited poems *by memory!* The audience cheered as each child got up and cheered after the child said the poem. Some of the children were just beginning to learn English, but they said their poems perfectly.

One boy ("A") was afraid to get up in front of the people, but after another child said his poem, the boy got up and recited his. The whole audience was rooting for him. Afterwards a grandparent said, "All the children said their poems beautifully. Even 'A' said his poem."

A boy who wouldn't say his poem at the last Family Night got up in front of people with no hesitation and said his poem perfectly. (Hurray!)

One parent reflected on how poised and confident her 8-year old son Remi was in saying his poem. A year ago February, his first year in the program, she had to coax him to say his piece and promise a reward afterwards. This year he had fun being up in front. He has come a long way since then.

Remi's mother also said how much Remi's aunt enjoyed being at the Parents' Night. She said there aren't a lot of occasions in neighborhoods today where people come together to celebrate and enjoy being together. She said it was a really special time.

TUTORING THIS SUMMER

Tutor Beverly Shneider liked tutoring so much she wanted to continue this summer. She is working with five students Mondays and Wednesdays, 12:30-2:30, as they alternate with piano lessons. Gabby Blossom tutored as an eighth grader from Wilmette Jr. High three years ago; she is also coming at that time to help Esosa Iguogala and Iris Crawford with reading.

FLOWERING DOGWOOD PLANTED

All year the 1st-4th grade children have learned about trees with Joan Sheffield, science teacher in

the afternoon tutoring program. On a sunny day in May, the children planted a six-foot flowering dogwood tree on the northwest corner of the church, behind the sign. Pastor Joe Johnson and Rev. John Jenkins dug the hole; the children mixed black forest soil with the sandy soil from the ground; the tree was lifted into the hole; and the children put the soil around the roots and watered the tree. Then Joan gathered the children on the church steps and told them about dogwood trees. The tree looks like white lace on the church lawn. Planting the tree was a festive time for all.

TEEN STUDY GROUP and the RICKY BYRDSONG FOUNDATION

The Teen Study Group held their end-of-the-year ceremony on May 15. Shenice Reed and Gerald Boyce read poems. Gearldine Williams of Scrap Mettle Soul, a local community theater group, gave a monologue about addiction recovery. The guest speaker was Carlton Evans of the Ricky Byrdsong Foundation. After the program Carol Pearson, Ingrid's mother, served a catered meal, and everyone enjoyed good conversation and good food. Eighth graders were invited as an introduction to next year.

Ricky Byrdsong Foundation

The Ricky Byrdsong Foundation was initiated by Sherialyn Byrdsong in memory of her husband Ricky Byrdsong, beloved Northwestern basketball coach, who was a victim of a racial hate crime in Evanston. Ingrid Perlongo's PR firm, DeChant-Hughes, publicized Sherialyn's book, and Ingrid was introduced to her. Ingrid said this about the Byrdsong Foundation at the teen celebration:

"I had the opportunity to work with Sherialyn Byrdsong, a remarkable woman who met hate with love, tragedy with triumph. The Byrdsong Foundation continues Ricky's legacy and Sherialyn's spirit of love in bringing people together and bettering the lives of young people. And that's what we're about here at Epworth."

Carlton Evans, the guest speaker, was a basketball competitor of Ricky Byrdsong in high school, his college roommate, and now education director for the Byrdsong Foundation. He brought T-shirts for the Teen Study Group and told about the Foundation.

5k Run, 10k Walk for Byrdsong Foundation

On Saturday, June 29, the Byrdsong Foundation is sponsoring a 5k run and 10k walk to benefit the

Byrdsong Foundation. The Epworth Teen Group will participate, and other people are welcome. (Meet at Epworth at 7 am.)

Visit to Northwestern University

On Saturday, May 18, the group went to Northwestern University and was part of an orientation to NU held by the Foundation.

Not Just Basketball Camp

August 12-16, the Byrdsong Foundation sponsors a week-long "Not Just Basketball Camp," focusing on basketball, team-building activities, and diversity group workshops and field trips. The camp is designed to foster positive relationships among participants from different racial and ethnic backgrounds, exposing young people to enjoyable experiences that celebrate differing cultures. The Byrdsong Foundation is giving ten scholarships to students ages 11-14 from the Epworth Tutoring Program. Gerald Boyce has been chosen to be the director's assistant. The camp is held at Hoops The Gym, Stadium Club, at 1380 W. Randolph. To register, contact Ingrid or Beth P.

STUDENTS MISSING

We have had anxious times this spring as two high school girls were missing, but finally came back. A 16-year old was missing for three days; she had been afraid to come home because she had stayed out very late. A 17-year old was missing for two weeks; she had been afraid to come home because she had stayed overnight at a friend's and not told her family. Both students came back, to the relief and joy of their families, friends, and people in the Tutoring Program.

STUDENTS EXCELLING

Jessica Cox's 5th gr. class at school wrote letters to the mayor of New York after September 11. Jessica's letter was selected to be sent to New York, and just recently she received a reply.

Jacky Roman planted pinto beans and garbanzo beans in a pot and put them outside on her window ledge. The garbanzo beans didn't come up, but three plants of pinto beans did and now they have pods of pinto beans. Jacky is going to transplant them to the soil in back of her apartment building, "not too close to each other because they all need nutrients."

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

One of the goals of the Tutoring Program is for students to get the academic and emotional foundation to graduate from high school and become independent adults.

This year we know of several tutoring grads who will be graduating from high school: Shiana Beasley (Lane), Jonathan Brady (Senn), Solanna Bullette (Lane), Christell Frausto (Lane), Jose Carlos Martinez (Senn), Gerardo Mejia (the Latin School), DeJuan Mooror (Senn), Raschad Pinnix (Lane), Latonya Reynolds (Sullivan), Sarah Scott (Mather), and Ebony Tripp (Senn). Caprice Radcliffe also reported that he just received his high school diploma. We are proud of all of them.

A WEDDING: Rachel Smith/Raahmedd Williams

Rachel and Raahmedd have been planning their wedding for a couple of years. Family and friends gathered at the Greater Little Rock Church in Bucktown (formerly, "The Greens," [Cabrini Green]) the Saturday of Memorial Day weekend for the nuptial vows of Rachel and Raahmedd.

Among the wedding guests were Rachel's brothers Danny Smith and Thomas Barnes, her sister Lisa Smith; former tutoring grads Lakisha and Carolyn Moore; Monique, Myanna and Myreanna Smith, Monique's mother Cheryl Smith; and tutoring director Beth Palmer. (Rachel was a student in the tutoring program from 1991 to 1996 when she was in 6th grade through until she was a sophomore in high school.)

Among the four bridesmaids were Jennifer Smith and Rachel's sister Amilia Barnes. The bridesmaids wore forest green strapless floor-length gowns. The four groomsmen and the groom wore white tuxedos. The bride wore a satin dress with lace, pearls, a bustle and a long train of satin. All looked lovely, like a picture from a wedding magazine. Jennifer Smith looked like a movie star from the 1930's.

Rachel and Raahmedd's children were part of the wedding party also. Raahmedd Jr., the ring-bearer, was dressed in a white tuxedo. The twins, Alexa and Alanna, flower girls, were dressed in satin dresses with satin gloves. They looked so cute everyone wanted to look at them.

The pastor and deacon of Greater Little Rock Church officiated at the wedding with the music on the Hammond organ and drum set being played by the church musicians.

This was a wedding without the usual

"surprises," when things happen that are unplanned for. Everything went smoothly and beautifully. The bridesmaids walked slowly down the aisle to the music from "Lohengrin." Then flower girls and ring-bearer came. A special runner was laid down for the bride, and when the bride came down the aisle, everyone stood in awe at how beautiful she was. Rachel's mother and Rachel's mother's twin sister were dabbing the tears of joy from their eyes as they watched Rachel.

The vows were said ("a little louder, please; there will be a time when you will have to speak up for your family, so speak up now"). The rings were given, and they fit perfectly. The couple was charged, and they were pronounced husband and wife, and presented to the gathering: "Raahmedd and Rachel Williams." Everyone clapped to hear Rachel's new name. The bride and groom kissed, and the bride, groom, and the rest of the wedding party recessed. But then the pastor called them back for one extra part. The groom was blindfolded and told to hold the hand of each of the bridesmaids and the bride. He was asked to choose which was the bride, for he would be taking home whomever he chose. When he came to Rachel's hand, he knew right away that it was her. Everyone sighed in relief and joy.

After photos of the wedding party and the families of the bride and groom, everyone went downstairs to the basement of the church for a wonderful dinner of fried chicken, spaghetti, green beans, salad, rolls, and lemonade. The wedding cake was gorgeous – three tiered – and delicious.

It was a storybook wedding, and everyone lived happily ever after.

TUTORING GRAD GOES ON DIG

Carleen Amarillo was in the tutoring Program from first through eighth grades. Last summer, after eighth grade, she was accepted into the University of Chicago Summer Science Program. This school year she went to North Side Prep Academy. This summer she was again accepted into the University of Chicago Summer Science Program. She will be going with the group to Wyoming to dig for fossils.

5TH THROUGH 8TH GRADERS' ACTIVITIES

Parents' Night for the 5th-8th graders was a great celebration. Over 84 people came, bringing lots of

food. Tutors enjoyed talking with parents, students talked with their friends and tutors. Brothers and sisters enjoyed the festivities.

Nineteen students said poems – most by memory. Some students memorized the poem that evening! Two boys who came all year left before the poems were said; a boy who dropped out came, memorized his poem that night, and said it loudly and with poise.

Ingrid Perlongo, coordinator of the High School Study Group, spoke to the gathering and told them about all the activities of the high school group. Since there have been many eighth graders this year, she wanted to invite them to be a part of the high school tutoring section in the fall.

Kenny Roman, a tutoring grad who attended University of Illinois in Champagne-Urbana, also spoke, telling the students in English and then in Spanish about how important he felt the tutoring program had been for his education.

Epworth Stories: Reporting on a Website

The theme of the last issues of *Epworth Stories* was reporting on and evaluating a Website. Students could pick a Website they knew about or choose one from a list of interesting Websites that intern Nona Martin had prepared.

Students enjoyed the assignment. For some students, this was the first time they had been on the Internet. Harif Abina (8th gr.) decided to look up the Website of the university his sister is attending, Northern Illinois University. From there he looked up her name and sent her an email message. Another student, Jessica Cox, chose the World Wildlife Fund because she likes animals. She played a matching game of matching animals footprints with the name of the animal. Out of 20, she got them all right! It takes a lot of time to be able to surf the Internet. The 5th-8th graders got a start this year.

TOUGH NEWS

It is not always easy to work with the students. One elementary student tried to commit suicide by taking too many pills. A tutoring grad was arrested for being an accomplice to shooting a gun in front of a school. We keep trying to be an intervention and show students the good possibilities in life.

SUMMER MUSIC INSTITUTE BEGINS

During the first week of the Epworth Summer Music Institute, 34 students took one or two hour-long piano lessons. Many had taken piano lessons last year and were eager to play the piano

again. New students were exhilarated at the experience. We hope they continue to work hard and enjoy playing the piano.

If you know of anyone who could help teach the lessons, contact Beth Palmer, 773-561-4759. The lessons are given on Mondays through Thursdays, 12:30-8 pm, and Saturdays, 10 am - 1 pm. It is a wonderful experience for the students, and we hope for the piano tutors also.

GIRL SCOUTS TAKE TRIPS

Eight girls among the high school group went to Washington, D.C., in June. Twelve girls of the 4th-6th graders went horseback riding at the Swinging W Ranch in Wisconsin in June. The Brownies (2nd-4th graders) went on an overnight camping trip in May and slept in tents for the first time. To assist with all the trips, Pat Wilson and the Glenview United Methodist Women gave the Epworth Girl Scouts ten new sleeping bags and three used sleeping bags. Scout leader Eva Schwinge received a life-time achievement award last fall from the Illinois Crossroads Council for her work with the Girl Scouts at First United Methodist Church in Evanston and Epworth in Chicago..

SPRINGBOARD FOUNDATION BANQUET at HARRY CARAY'S RESTAURANT

The Epworth Tutoring Program was one of two youth programs invited to the Annual Dinner of the Springboard Foundation of the Chicago Community Trust. Beth Palmer, tutoring director, along with two students, LaDonna Smith and Luis De la Cruz, looked at sports pictures and memorabilia at Harry Caray's, had a delicious dinner, and talked with members of the Springboard Foundation and told them about themselves and the Tutoring Program. Ms. Palmer, LaDonna and Luis each said a few words about the program to the gathering of 100 people.

The guest speaker for the evening was Arne Duncan, Chief Executive Officer of the Chicago Public Schools. He said that in order to improve children's education he is implementing new reading programs, after school programs, and innovative educational ideas.

THANK YOU to the Chicago Bar Foundation for their Lend-A-Hand grant to the Tutoring Program; and to Wilmette Jr. High School for their gift -- proceeds from the Spring Carnival.

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

In previous years we have celebrated students

who improved two years or one and one-half years in reading and/or in math. This year the Chicago Public Schools used a different test and a different measurement, so we are not able to evaluate students as we have in the past. We don't have two-year scores from students who are new to the Tutoring Program, but we know many of them improved significantly. Here are students, whose two-year scores we do have, who improved significantly this year:

Shanese Watts-gr. 4, Reading
Niesha Lawson-gr. 5, Reading
Jacky Roman-gr. 5, Reading and Math
Elizabeth Arroyo-gr. 6, Reading and Math
Carly Hope-gr. 6, Reading and Math
Ladonna Smith-gr. 6, Math
Monique Smith-gr. 6, Math
Royale Newell-gr. 7, Math
Rick Argueta-gr. 8, Reading
Walter Beteta-gr. 8, Math
Luis DeLaCruz-gr. 8, Reading and Math
Jesus Gomez-gr. 8, Math
Edgar Soto-gr. 8, Reading and Math
Oscar Suarez-gr. 8, Reading
Sandy Suarez-gr. 8, Math

AWARDS

Here are other awards which students who have been in the Epworth Tutoring Program received at Goudy, the local school, this spring. We are proud of all the students.

KIWANIS CLUB ESSAY: Shuron Johnson-gr. 8

HONOR ROLL

Anthony Campoverde-gr. 1
Shonesha Jones-gr. 1
Marco Tony Suarez-gr. 1
Jennyfer Rodriguez-gr. 2
Ashley Lopez-gr. 5
Dennis Frausto-gr. 6
LaDonna Smith-gr. 6
Monique Smith-gr. 6
Jennifer Bollas-gr. 6
Brittney Hamblett-gr. 7

STUDENT COUNCIL:

Elizabeth Arroyo-gr. 6
Rick Argueta-gr. 8

SCIENCE FAIR

Dennis Frausto-gr. 6

Jennifer Bollas-gr. 6
Jorge Gomez-gr. 6
Miguel Monroy-gr. 6
Edgar Soto-gr. 8
Luis DeLaCruz-gr. 8

YOUNG AUTHORS

Khadijah Bradley-gr. 2
Denzell Steele-gr. 2
Jasmine Woods-gr. 3
Martin DeLaCruz-gr. 3
Ashley Lopez-gr. 5
Montrel O'Bannon-gr. 5
Niesha Lawson-gr. 5
Jacky Roman-gr. 5
Walter Beteta-gr. 8
Deron Johnson-gr. 8
Shuron Johnson-gr. 8

BILINGUAL HISTORY FAIR, Jennifer Bollas-gr. 6

PERFECT ATTENDANCE

Alejandro Soto-gr. 2
LaDonna Smith-gr. 6
Jorge Gomez-gr. 6
Salvador Suarez-gr. 6

READING RECOVERY

Rodrigo Lopez-gr. 1
Kenneth Carter-gr. 1
Lawanda Mangrum-gr. 1
Martin De La Cruz-gr. 3

WECEP (WORK TRAINING PROG.)

Edgar Soto-gr. 8
Oscar Suarez-gr. 8

LUNCH CRATES

Augusta Bullette-gr. 7
Royale Newell-gr. 7
Shuron Johnson-gr. 8

LUNCH SUPPLIES, Walter Beteta-gr. 8

LUNCH HELPERS, Walter Beteta-gr. 8