

THE SOULARD SCHOOL NEWS

November, 2010
www.soulardschool.org

from the head of school ...

Over the past several weeks, we have been inundated with political campaign commercials; the good, the bad, and the ugly. (I'm not sure which is which.) Experts in the field say these are targeted to the 8% of undecided voters. While I'm not in that group, I found myself drawn to these ads – because they gave me an increasing sense of gratitude each time I watched. It was not gratitude for country or democratic process (for which I am grateful,) but profound gratitude for The Soulard School's D.I.Y. educational reform.

Now in our 6th year, **TSS has become an educational model, developing in a neighborhood where every other school has closed.** Our independent urban school is fueled by **passionate and committed parents.** Real “do it yourself-ers.” Nicholas Kristof recently wrote an article for the NY Times entitled D.I.Y. Foreign-Aid Revolution. He spotlighted several individuals and their non profit organizations that are finding creative ways to help some of the world's most vulnerable people. Like those individuals, it is arguable that what we are doing is a drop in the bucket in the big picture. But as Kristof notes, that is how progress usually arrives. Moreover, if you are fortunate enough to be part of that drop, it is an extraordinary experience.

We celebrate this experience several times throughout the year. This month we kick off our **Annual Giving Campaign** which financially supports our model of educational reform; and we gather at the **Annual Feast of Thanks** to celebrate our D.I.Y. community and all those who support it. As we welcome the season of harvest, Sarah Christman and I want to take this opportunity to say **THANK YOU to the parents, staff, community, and benefactors without whom The Soulard School would not exist.**

- Kelly Bock, Head of School

Annual Giving begins 11/1 to celebrate & support the educational model that TSS has become.

THE SOULARD SCHOOL 6TH ANNUAL

FEAST OF THANKS

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 19TH 11:30 AM
AT GENE SLAY'S BOYS' CLUB

 TO CELEBRATE THOSE WHO GIVE 
THEIR TIME, TALENT & TREASURES TO OUR SCHOOL



Friday, **November 19**, 11:30 – 1:30 PM

A secret meeting of the Saint Louis Free Slave Society. Using historical facts, Metro Artist Teacher, Beth, sets up scenarios that the Mosaic class role-plays, each taking their own character. Introduced recently was the Compromise of 1850 and the dangers of being an abolitionist.

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parent & community events



feast of thanks

The Feast of Thanks is fast approaching. This is a special event that Soulard School students enjoy with their parents each year. It is a **time for us to give thanks for the support we've received from our community**. The Feast will be held on Friday, November 19. Each year we have been able to find a wonderful space in the neighborhood large enough to accommodate our generous community. This year is no different; **Gene Slay's Boys' Club will be hosting our celebration**.

Details on the new venue will be sent home soon in the Friday Notes. The meal will be served at 11:30 pm. We **ask each family to provide a dish** (or more depending on the number of children). Look for an email from Eleanor explaining what to bring and how to RSVP.

On the day of the Feast, please pick up your children from school by 11:15 to ensure the event will start promptly. **If you are unable to attend, please ask an extended family member to escort your children** to the event. This allows us to properly thank and show appreciation to our teachers as well. The Feast will end after 1:30 pm so we have enough time to clean-up before The Boy's Club opens its doors at 2:30. All **parents are welcome to take their children home after the festivities**. If your child will be returning to school, please let teachers know.

Friday, **November 19**, 11:30 – 1:30 PM

parent/teacher/student conferences

The #1 factor in how well children do in school is parental involvement.

Parent Conferences are scheduled Monday, November 22 through Wednesday, November 24 evenings. Each trimester conferences are an opportunity for **a collaborative conversation with teachers, parents and students to set clear goals and learn about strategies for supporting students in her/his learning**.

Please arrive on-time at your conference start time. You will then have 15 minutes to review your child's evaluation form which can be found outside the classroom door. Thank you for your cooperation!

Monday—Wednesday, **November 22-24**, evenings

oktoberfest recap

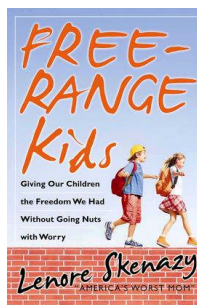
Thanks to all The Soulard School families and friends that volunteered their time to make this our most profitable Oktoberfest yet.

- Greg Redmond (Iris, Mosaic), PA Officer



"We raised over \$14,000 in 3 days which will go a long way to help fulfill the mission of the Parents Association—to support the school and those who teach our kids."

book discussion



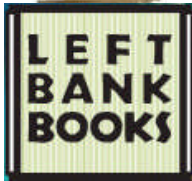
Somehow, a whole lot of parents are just convinced that nothing outside the home is safe. At the same time, they're also convinced that their children are helpless to fend for themselves. **While most of these parents walked to school as kids, or hiked the woods — or even took public transportation — they can't imagine their own offspring doing the same thing**. They have lost confidence in everything: Their neighborhood. Their kids. And their own ability to teach their children how to get by in the world. As a result, they batten down the hatches. Do you ever...let your kid ride a bike to the library? Walk to school? Make dinner? Or are you thinking about it?

Join us for a discussion of Lenore Skenazy's bestselling book **FreeRange Kids** and **here's to common sense parenting in uncommonly overprotective times!**

Wednesday, **November 17**, at 7:00 PM

more events & happenings

book fair



**Left Bank Books –
Central West End location**

Left Bank Books is hosting a Book Fair in support of The Soulard School on Saturday and Sunday, Nov. 20th and 21st, at their Central West End location. **20% of all designated purchases will be donated as store credit to acquire books for the school library and classrooms.** Last year's Book Fair raised almost \$1,600 and collected over **70 book donations.**

The Book Fair is an excellent opportunity to spread the word about the school. We will have an information table set up to answer questions about the school, and a wrap station to offer **free gift-wrapping for customers** (with a donation jar at the table), with a raffle to boot! Our own Amy Corey will be leading a **story hour with the kids at 2:00 PM on Sunday**, and there will be plenty of reading suggestions and **school wish-lists** to peruse. Thank you to all the families who turned in their book order forms! All books will be available for pick-up at the book fair. Tell your friends and family to get some of their holiday shopping done and support our school at the same time!

Saturday, **November 20**, 10:00AM—6:00 PM
&
Sunday, **November 21**, 11:00AM—6:00 PM

Integrity and respect are two words you see and hear a lot at The Soulard School. Classrooms include spaces for peace and recognize peacemakers, and we have a Teaching Peace parade each April. Respect for students is shown through their opportunity to participate in their own curriculum. Even the classroom layouts reflect the integral nature of learning, with tables rather than individual desks, arranged in circles or clusters rather than rows.

As a parent, I find **one of the most impressive aspects of our school's curriculum to be its inclusion of social and emotional development.** Here it is treated as importantly in a child's education as math and literacy. There is a recognition that, just as subjects are not compartmentalized, neither is learning itself. **Learning happens inside (and outside) a classroom full of different individuals who are also learning, quite frankly, how to relate and get along.**

October provided several opportunities for students to explore this topic, with their parents as well as their peers. Early in the month, some families attended a back-to-school workshop with Rachel Simmons (author of *Odd Girl Out*), which focused on empowering girls to cultivate healthy relationships and deal with conflict effectively. Later in the month, all elementary students attended Metro Theater's performance of *Tomato Plant Girl*, a play that directly addressed bullying in friendships.

With the recent political campaigning aired daily on our tv's and radios, and news headlines of bullying at school surfacing because of its heartbreaking consequences, I am reminded of how important it is for us to cultivate an awareness of relational aggression and its effects, even in our wonderful school that teaches tolerance. As a librarian, I know that **books can be a useful and safe portal into dialogue about emotions and relations, especially for young children who are just learning how to name their feelings.** Here is a short list of suggested reading for families. Accepting differences, finding the confidence to be yourself, and conflict resolution are at the heart of these titles.

Word.

- Erin the Librarian

library corner

Picture Books

Pinduli by Janell Cannon
The Sneetches and Other Stories by Dr. Seuss
Leonardo, The Terrible Monster by Mo Willems
Smoky Night by Eve Bunting
The Boy Who Cried Fabulous by Leslea Newman
The Lost Thing by Shaun Tan
The Grouchy Ladybug by Eric Carle

Chapter Books

(8-12 yrs.)
The Reluctant Dragon by Kenneth Grahame
Savvy by Ingrid Law
Bridge to Terabithia by Katherine Paterson
Hoot by Carl Hiaasen
There's a Boy in the Girl's Bathroom by Louis Sachar

(12 yrs. and up)

The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian
by Sherman Alexie
Stargirl by Jerry Spinelli

*"I am reminded of
how important it is for
us to cultivate an
awareness of relational
aggression and its
effects, even in our
wonderful school that
teaches tolerance."*

classroom happenings

quietude notes



The children in the Quietude Room **share a yoga pose each morning** during our meeting. We are building quite a collection of poses so we began to practice yoga in the Richter Room as well. After a challenging session filled with stories and stretching Indya, Abby, Thais, Hazel and Naomi played a silly yoga game where **we lay on our friend's tummy and laugh**.

strings notes



We are fiddling along towards our holiday concert in string class. **Students should be working on those songs** during their weekly practice. The **Mums** have been very excited to have violins, and they are **almost ready to make music**. The **Enigma** and **Alchemy** classes have been working **on their concert material**. In the next few weeks in the Alchemy class we will learn about different instruments and how they make sound. **I have introduced some civil war era songs to the Mosaic** class to complement their study of the civil war. In the next few weeks we will be learning about what type of music was written and popular in that time.

Soulard School classes have been applying their collective knowledge of "**How to think like an artist**" in various directions over the last few weeks.

The Mosaic class (4/5/6) is exploring concepts of "A Surreal Life in Missouri". Students are **creating artworks influenced by famous historical paintings of Missouri artists such as Bingham and Benton**, while inserting modern day details that reflect their life in Missouri. I have been encouraging students to insert photographs of themselves, as well as images of their everyday environment. At home you can encourage your child to **look through photographs to bring in for this project**. Please keep in mind photographs will be cut and collaged. This class will also be taking a trip to the Saint Louis Art Museum to see the work of Bingham, Benton, and the special exhibit of Joe Jones.

studio connections

The Alchemists (2/3) are **exploring patterns and repetition** and how art is influenced by mathematics. We are studying the tessellations of MC Escher, and creating our own. Students have been designing **their own totally unique motifs**, which will be cut out of multi-colored patterned fabric. At home, encourage your child to look for repeated patterns. I am also asking students to "up-cycle" by **bringing in a patterned fabric** for this project if at all possible: an old t-shirt, old clothes, table cloth...

The Enigma class has been **creating their own mythical creatures** with all kinds of special powers. In the coming weeks we will be taking a field trip to the Kemper Museum at Washington University to view the works of Rivanne Nueschwander. We will be studying in depth her exhibit of constellations. During Studio, kids in this class will be creating their own galaxy of constellations, while designing one very special constellation for their mythical creature to call home.

And **the Mum's (Kindergarden)** have been **studying the science and art of food**. We will be making art from a beautiful still life of baked goods, as well as making dyes from the foods we eat. As a class we will be batiking banners and using our handmade dyes for coloring.

This week all classes have been creating "**Sur-real**" **oil pastel designs of a fall still life**. These beautiful drawings will become centerpieces for everyone to see at the Feast of Thanks!

- Sarah Rye Bliss
Studio Instructor

more music notes from Tina ... Thank you to all the students and parents who came to the **Spooky Hoe Down and participated in the square dance**. You did a great job and I appreciate the effort. It was a great opportunity for the students to **learn about American folk songs, instruments, dances and costumes**. It was the first time trying something like this and my first time "calling" a square dance (or rather, a circle dance) so thanks for bearing with me. The kids had a good time learning the square dance steps in class during October, I had a good time teaching them and I think everyone enjoyed the evening. I also enjoyed meeting many of you, **and I look forward to seeing you again at our winter concert**. We will begin practicing for this soon so be sure to **ask your child to sing you the songs they have been learning**.

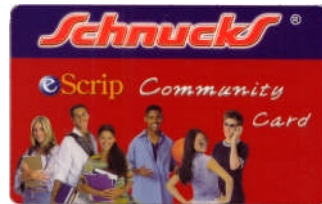
"I'm glad to be able to work with such a creative, talented, enthusiastic bunch of kids."

cash back programs

What you need to know and how your participation will benefit our school

schnucks eScrip card

Schnucks eScrip Community Card Program, an effortless way to raise money for our school. Every time you use your Schnucks Community Card, **The Soulard School will receive up to 3% of your purchase**. Right now we average \$30 per month but know with your full participation that number would easily double or triple.



So, we challenge everyone to try and **get 5 of your nearest and dearest friends and family to pick up a card and activate it for The Soulard School**. We have made it even easier for you, email Katie Mack at info@soulardschool.org and she will activate a card for you and

use your eScrip card
EVERY TIME you
shop at Schnucks

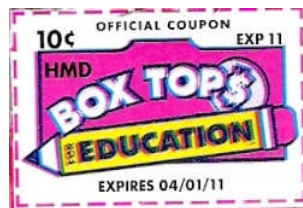
ask family &
friends to
participate
with you

don't forget —
present your card
BEFORE you pay!

eScrip Math: @ 80 families x \$50/week in groceries
from Schnucks x 3% x 52 weeks =
\$6240 for the school!

boxtops for education

Clip **Box Top coupons** from hundreds of participating products and **send them to school**. Box Tops coupons are worth 10¢ each when our school redeems them from Box Tops for Education. We just turned in a collection of Boxtops and will receive \$240 for the Culinary Arts Program. The **next time to redeem is February** so let's see if we can increase to \$300.



make sure the
expiration
date isn't cut
off

ask Grandparents,
Aunts & Uncles, and
Friends to collect for
you — it really adds
up.

Examples of where to find Boxtops:

Avery office supplies;
Yoplait Go-Gurts;
Land o Lakes Butter;
Kleenex tissues;
Old El Paso Taco Shells;
Green Giant Vegetables;
Cheerios; Total;
Huggies;
Pull-ups;
Hefty Trash Bags ...
and a thousand more items!

we just turned in **\$240** in boxtops ...
the next turn in date is February, so start collecting!

shopping cards

We are expanding the cash back program. **Shopping Cards** are another way to make easy \$\$ for our school. Here's how it works, simply by shopping where you already shop and **instead of using cash or credit to pay for your regular household purchases, use scrip gift cards**. The School can pre-order gift cards (from places like, iTunes, Shell, Shop 'N Save or Office Max) and when they are redeemed, the school gets a percentage of the sale, some up to 10%. This will be an expansion of what we already do with Schnucks, done in a slightly different way. **Keep watching for more details** to come home soon.

get gift cards for
places you already
shop — like iTunes,
Shell & Office Max —
and help raise even
more \$ for school

2010/11 calendar

note: school is **CLOSED** on Friday, 11/12 for Records Day; and school is **CLOSED** Thursday & Friday, 11/25-26 for Thanksgiving

November

1	M		Annual Giving Kick-Off
2	Tu	8:30am	Parent Coffee
12	F		School Closed- Records Day
17	W	7:00pm	Book Discussion – “Free Range Kids”
19	F		End 1st Trimester
19	F	11:30am	Feast of Thanks
20-21	Sa (10-6) Su (11-6)		Left Bank Book Fair
22-24	M-W		Conferences: Parent & Teacher
25-26	Th-F		School Closed- Thanksgiving
29	M	2:30pm	Assembly: Birthday Book

December

7	Tu	8:30am	Parent Coffee
TBA			Winter Concert
20-31	M-F		School Closed- Winter Break

January 2011

4	Tu	8:30am	Parent Coffee
13	Th	7-8pm	State Of The School
14	F		School Closed- Prof. Development
17	M		School Closed- MLK Jr. Day
22	Sa	1-4pm	Open House
31	M	2:30pm	Assembly: Birthday Book

February

1	Tu	8:30am	Parent Coffee
5	Sa		Trivia Night @ Mad Art
18	F		School Closed- Records Day
21	M		School Closed- President's Day
28	M	2:30pm	Assembly: Birthday Book

* event added/changed this month + mandatory attendance

Warm-up activity: “What Am I doing?” Each student takes a turn calling out an everyday task which the person next to them acts out. For the second part of the warm-up



they brainstormed tasks that a child from the 1800's might be doing and acted those out around the circle.

March

1	Tu	8:30am	Parent Coffee
5	Sa		Madri Gras
8-10	Tu-Th		Conferences: Parent, Teacher (& Student K+)
11	F		End 2nd Trimester
14-18	M-F		School Closed- Spring Break
28	M	2:30pm	Assembly: Birthday Book

April

1	F		School Closed- Prof. Development
5	Tu	8:30am	Parent Coffee
22	F	10:30am	Teaching Peace Parade
25	M	2:30pm	Assembly: Birthday Book

May

3	Tu	8:30am	Parent Coffee
tba	Sa		Soulard Soiree
13	F		School Closed- Records Day
23	M	2:30pm	Assembly: Birthday Book
25	W	6-8pm	Student Art Show & Concert
27	F		Last Day: Field Day & Portfolios

tomato plant girl recap

By Elijah, Amelia, Collin, & Simon

On October 13 the whole school, except the Pre-K, went to a play. The play was called the Tomato Plant Girl. It was put on by the Metro Theater Company. **It was about having healthy relationships with your friends.** Bossy Best Friend (BBF) tricked Little Girl into giving away her plant. As a class, we thought it was a very exciting play. The BBF is the Little Girl's “best friend”, but did not treat her fairly. The Tomato Plant Girl taught Little Girl to stand up for herself. **We learned that we can stand up for ourselves if our friends don't treat us kindly or fairly.** Having healthy friendships means a lot at our school because of our philosophy of being good, respectful friends. Sarah H. added her insight, “you don't have to let people take advantage of you, even if they are your friend.”



“Having healthy friendships means a lot at our school because of our philosophy of being good, respectful friends.”