



THE LATEST NEWS FROM
**SILVER SPRINGS -
MARTIN LUTHER SCHOOL**

WE LOVE THEREFORE WE SERVE
(AGAPOMEN DIAKONOMEN)

FALL 2011



“Gardening takes a plot of land, a hoe, and willing muscles. Scratching the soil, harvesting garden fruits, are peaceful results. With a garden, there is hope.”

– Grace Firth

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Help to Unlock Children's Potential!



Through the support of many, we opened this school year with a SmartBoard, an interactive white board, in each classroom at Luther School. As we move into the next phase of our Technology Initiative, we hope to provide each Luther School

student with a computer to use during the school day.

Can you help us reach our goal? For more information,

please visit our website at

www.silver-springs.org and click

on Happenings, or contact

Lynn Unipan, Development Officer,

at (610) 825-4440, Ext 206 or

lunipan@silver-springs.org.

Thank you!



AGAPOMEN DIAKONOMEN

"WE LOVE THEREFORE WE SERVE"

Silver Springs - Martin Luther School is a Social Ministry Organization affiliated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America and its Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod. This periodic newsletter is published to provide staff, families and friends with news and information about Silver Springs - Martin Luther School and its mission. Please direct inquiries or comments about the newsletter to Lynn Unipan, 512 West Township Line Road, Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462-1001; Tel: (610) 825-4440, ext. 206; Fax: (610) 825-3839; e-mail: lunipan@silver-springs.org.

Visit us on the web at www.silver-springs.org

A mosaic of public and private funding makes possible these services to children and families. Silver Springs receives funding through managed care organizations, the Commonwealth and the federal governments. Non-allowable and capital expenses are funded by individuals, businesses, groups, congregations, corporations, foundations, other friends, Lutheran Home at Germantown Foundation, and Silver Springs - Martin Luther School. Funding is received from Bucks, Chester, Delaware and Montgomery Counties (and other counties), the Pennsylvania Department of Education, local school districts, the City of Philadelphia Department of Human Services; a partnership in serving children and families in need.

From Seedlings Onward...

After a field trip to Temple University's Earth Fest last spring as part of their Ecology unit, Luther School students wanted to plant flowers of their own. "We started growing plants in our classroom," explained teacher Denise Gillespie. "They loved watching the little plants shoot up." A garden began to take root.

Gardens are everywhere on campus. So, when the seed was planted to start another garden, it was quickly embraced by staff members and children alike. "I thought it would be great to build on their excitement," explained Pat Oliff, Special Education Supervisor, "and so we used the greenhouse on campus for the children to start their seedlings and then moved them into a garden."

Giving the students responsibility for their own garden presented a wonderful opportunity for hands-on learning. "Children learn best when you integrate classroom instruction with hands-on experience and having their garden on campus presented that perfect opportunity," explained Neil Clark, Operations Director, who pulled the project together, starting with envisioning the space and collecting tools.



Clark planned for a 10'x15' garden behind Hess Centre. John Morton and John McNulty, Maintenance Department, with the help of Morton's two teenage daughters, Arbor Day volunteers, tilled the ground and fenced in the area to prevent furry friends from feasting on the vegetation. "We designed a special system to deter the groundhogs from digging under the fence and getting into the garden," explained Morton.

In late spring, two classes of Luther School students began planting. Gillespie and fellow teacher, Dale Massimo, showed them how to set the plant in rows, how to stake the tomato vines, and how to deter rabbits and other critters from eating the plants. "I learned that marigolds keep the animals from eating the vegetables," said one 11-year-old gardener, explaining why they planted a flower border.

"This has been an opportunity for the children to learn about the cycle of growing and harvesting," said Oliff. They even got to taste test from their garden. "We planted mint because you can pick it and eat it right out of nature," recalled one smiling 12-year-old girl. On many sunny afternoons, the students could be found in the garden they proudly called their own, harvesting string beans, zucchini, and cucumbers, their faces shining and hands full with the fruits of their labors.



Congratulations Ezra!

Ezra being congratulated by Philadelphia Police Commissioner, Charles H. Ramsey

Ezra was 11 years old when he entered the Community Based Program at Silver Springs. After several temporary placements in foster care, he found a permanent home and, at age 14, an adoptive family.

Now a senior in high school, Ezra also is an athlete and volunteer. He recently helped lead a school program designed to stop the daily teasing, violence and

alienation faced by youth. He shares his personal experiences, to benefit others.

In recognition of his achievements, generosity, and great potential, last spring Ezra received the Union League's Good Citizenship Award. As part of this honor, Ezra participated in the League's Youth Work Day and enjoyed an elegant awards dinner. We are so proud of Ezra, and excited to see his future unfold!

Celebrations!

There were many opportunities for fun and celebration across the Silver Springs campus in recent months.

Thanks to Carlo Malantonio, Jr., and other friends from the LuLu Shriners, for hosting, once again, a delicious spring BBQ and picnic on campus, replete with balloon and stuffed animal giveaways. On the same sunny spring day, the children enthusiastically explored the Philadelphia Modifiers' hot rod cars that roared onto campus for a visit.

Thank you!



Staff and children alike enjoyed field games during Luther School's annual springtime Color Day, and were thrilled to win generously donated prizes at this summer's Fun Day!



In June, we applauded the 13 boys and girls who graduated from Eighth Grade at Luther School. Great job!

This September, Luther School welcomed more than 160 excited boys and girls to start the 2011/2012 school year.

Best of luck!



Recognition Day, June 2, 2011

On a lovely June evening, staff members, children, foster parents, volunteers and other friends of Silver Springs gathered on campus for a Silver Springs tradition. Recognition Day began with the unveiling of the 150th Anniversary Plaque, which is located in the Harrison Centre lobby (picture 1). The plaque celebrates those who donated at least \$1,859 during Silver Springs' 150th Anniversary celebration years 2008–2010, an amount symbolic of Silver Springs' founding year of 1859. Later, the gym filled with approximately 700 guests and momentum grew as announcement of the Harrison Award Recipients neared.

The evening's program also celebrated tenures of staff members and volunteers, honored Noted Community Partners, and recognized lifetime commitments made by Silver Springs adoptive parents to a child.

Recognition Day ended with The Allentown Band and a picnic assisted by Trustee, Steve Wetherill, and volunteer, Kristen Whited (picture 2). As smiling faces of children and adults alike attested, a joyful time was had by all.



4



SAVE THE DATE
for
Recognition Day
June 7, 2012

2011 Harrison Award Recipients

The Harrison Award was established anonymously in 1989 to honor the memory of Walter R. Harrison who was the Superintendent-Pastor and then first President of Lutheran Home at Germantown for forty-three years and to recognize staff members and foster parents who "continue the positive spirit of (this) dedicated Christian leader...and who provide a moment of hope and love for children in the greatest need."

- Charles Cooper, Residential Life Supervisor
- Vicki Ann and Richard Dean, Foster Parents
- Sharon Hamilton, Classroom Assistant
- Stephen Haney, Teacher
- Mark Hargrove, Senior Child Care/Mental Health Worker
- Kristen E. M. Gay, Development Director
- Lynne Gernet, Service Evaluator
- Jamie Gorman, Child Care /Mental Health Worker
- Margaret Landis, Seamstress
- Elijah and Peggy McDaniels, Foster Parents
- Melody Myers, Classroom Assistant
- Judith Nelson, Reading Assistant
- Patricia Oliff, Special Education Supervisor (picture 3)
- Marialana Picchio, Teacher
- Gretna Rodgers, Librarian
- Kathryn Ryan-Amankwaah Home/School Visitor

Noted Community Partners

- Peter McVeigh, Germantown Academy
- St. Matthew Lutheran Church, Springfield: Nancy Regan
- James Munz, Martin Luther School Volunteer
- St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Lafayette Hill: Sarah Cohen, Debbie Graham, and Pastor Bruce Todd (Pastor Todd is shown in picture 4 receiving award from Kristen Gay, Development Director.)

Congratulations to all!

Six Degrees Of Separation

A Random Reunion

"I recognized Mr. Basham one day here on campus — he was my high school principal!" exclaimed Alvin Swindle, Luther School Classroom Assistant since 1997. "Mr. Basham has the same calm demeanor he had back then," said Swindle as he described his memory of Basham, now retired from the Philadelphia School District and a member of the Silver Springs Board of Trustees since 2007. Basham was thrilled to learn of Swindle's career choice and



commitment to Silver Springs, an organization he helps to shepherd as a Trustee. "That's what we tried to instill in children, that you've got to get your education so you can take care of yourself," Basham explained, "and look at him, now he's making a contribution to society, working hard and taking care of other children."

Full Circle Farewell

At Luther School's graduation in June, grand applause followed School Director Nan Porter's call for long-time employee, Dot Wimber, to come to the stage in celebration of her retirement. The cheers swelled when the crowd saw that "Miss Dot" was being escorted by Luther School



Classroom Assistant Jeff Kemp, a young man she had cared for as a child. Dot began her career at Silver Springs in 1983 in the residential program and, coming full circle, retired as a Classroom Assistant working side-by-side with Jeff. "I personally respect, love, admire and honor Miss Dot as an additional mother in my life who has given me much positive encouragement and advice," stated Jeff in remarks written for the occasion. "Miss Dot's love has remained unchanged for me and the children, and I am inspired to emulate the same love, commitment and dedication that she has shown."

Best wishes, Miss Dot!

Giving From The Heart — Now And For The Future

There's Still Time to Make a Tax-Free Gift from Your IRA!

Under a federal law that applies only until the end of 2011, if you are age 70½ or older, you can make a gift to Silver Springs - Martin Luther School directly from your IRA without unwelcome tax effects.

Under this law, you can transfer funds directly from your IRA to Silver Springs without the amount of your gift being counted as taxable income. Consequently, you do not have to pay federal tax on this amount. (You also cannot take a charitable deduction for the gift.) Each person can make a gift up to \$100,000 in 2011, and the direct transfer from your IRA will count toward your minimum required distribution.

If you are interested in this unique giving opportunity, please contact Joan Plump, Development Officer, at **610-825-4440 Ext 318** or jplump@silver-springs.org for more information. Please also consult with your personal tax or financial professional.

A gift to Silver Springs directly from your IRA will qualify you for membership in our *Society of 1859*. We would love to welcome you as a member this year!



In One Caring Donor's Words

A staff member (and Society of 1859 member) arrived at Silver Springs more than two decades ago and quickly fell in love with our mission and the children. She dreamed of being able to work with these boys and girls directly, but realized her skills were better suited elsewhere. So, in order to make sure that this work continues now and in the future, she became a faithful and generous donor—both currently and through a planned gift in her Will.

"I give because I see the good that it does," she explains. "I cannot personally reach out and care for the children myself, but I **can** help make sure that we are able to engage others who can."

On behalf of the children, we are grateful!

Welcome New Friends!

Two new residents at Silver Springs greet passersby with friendly bleats, enthusiastically calling for folks to visit with them at the fence. Marley and Mable, our newest barnyard friends, are owned by Vicky and her 10 year old son Kender.



As a member of 4-H, Kender helps to raise and care for various animals. "Kender's passion is animals," Vicky explains. "We bought the little goats last spring and kept them at a friend's farm 45 minutes away, but we wanted to move them closer to us so we could take care of them every day."

From friends, Vicky heard about Silver Springs and its Companion Animal Program history. "Our last goat passed away last year," said Kristen Gay, Development Director, "so

when Vicky asked if we might be interested in hosting two goats, we were excited about the possibility of having animals in the barn again." Vicky and Kender were thrilled. "Kender now gets to take care of them full time," Vicky said, explaining that she and Kender visit the goats twice daily, in the mornings and afternoons. As part of Kender's 4-H responsibilities, he keeps a log of all the care he provides for the goats, which includes feeding and brushing them, and taking them to medical visits. Kender also shows the goats at fairs where they are judged on their grooming, the cleanliness of their stalls, and their responses to commands.



Mable and Marley are very social and always welcome children at the fence, ready for a friendly petting. "They are so happy," says Vicky of Mable and Marley. "They get so much attention here." Silver Springs is happy too, because the children have two new animal friends.

Welcome Aboard – To Two New Trustees



Charles Gulati

Charles "Chuck" Gulati received a Bachelor of Science degree from West Chester University in 1995 and an MBA from the Pennsylvania State University Smeal College of Business in 2006. Currently, Chuck is

President of SafetyCare Technologies, LLC, Avalon Technologies, LLC, Transrex Ag, and Stokesay Castle, LLC. SafetyCare, Avalon, and Transrex are leading suppliers of quality products and services for seniors and senior living facilities, allowing for longer independence and increased security. Stokesay Castle, located in Reading, PA, provides a fine dining experience and banquet facilities.

"When Jen and I visited SS/MLS for the first time, we immediately fell in love with the kids, the staff and the campus. It is a wonderful place where children get the support they need and deserve. I am pleased to be serving on the Board of Trustees now." Chuck also serves on the board for the Penn State Smeal MBA Program. He has served as a board member for the National Defense Industry Association and remains an active member of the Association of the United States Army.

Chuck lives locally with his wife and their four children. In his free time, Chuck enjoys spending time with the family, coaching his son's baseball teams, and training for triathlons.



Lisa Dent

Lisa Dent has an extensive background in the insurance, human services, health systems, work-life, and wellness/fitness fields – in both profit and nonprofit arenas. She is a former

Chief Underwriting Officer for an international managed care corporation. She also has taught on the collegiate (Math) and elementary (Health Education) levels. Additionally, Lisa is an American Council on Exercise (ACE) Education Specialist, and has created and taught health-education and fitness workshops to young children, teenagers, and adults. She frequently speaks and writes as an advocate for community health for children and adults. Lisa is a Philadelphia native and a graduate of St. Joseph's University.

Lisa currently is president of LLD Systems Corp., a provider of corporate wellness and health promotion programs. Dent says, "I decided to be a part of the Silver Springs - Martin Luther School family as a tribute to my late mother, who was a Silver Springs foster mother and trainer. More importantly, I believe in the work this organization does with children and their families, on a daily basis. Never have I met such a caring group of servant leaders."

Silver Springs – Martin Luther School



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or email info@silver-springs.org.

Bring Joy This Season!

You, our generous and energetic partners, enable Silver Springs to continue a tradition of festive celebration and bountiful giving each Christmas. Here are four ways to make a positive difference in the life of a special boy or girl this year:



- Make a financial contribution to Silver Springs in honor of someone on your holiday list. We will share the news of your gift with the honoree, or provide you with a card that you can use to tell them yourself.
- Tell folks that what **you** want for Christmas is for them to make a gift to Silver Springs!
- Provide a gift for a child. Contact Joan Plump at **610-825-4440 Ext 318** or jplump@silver-springs.org for ideas. Please deliver gifts (UNWRAPPED and on weekdays only) November 28 thru December 5, 2011.
- Donate Walmart, Target, Acme, ShopRite or Pathmark gift cards so that children and families in our school and community based programs can celebrate at home.



Chefs for Silver Springs 2011 is right around the corner..

On November 18, 2011, friends will gather for good food and good fun — all to benefit the children's programs of Silver Springs. The evening will highlight the culinary creations of Chef Guillermo Tellez, Executive Chef at Square 1682 in Philadelphia, and will be held from 6 PM to 10 PM at the Philadelphia Marriott West in Conshohocken, PA. The evening also will feature silent and live auctions with many exciting items. Reservations are required.



Chef Guillermo Tellez,
Square 1682

If interested, please contact Joan Piasecki at jpiasecki@silver-springs.org or (610) 825-4440, Ext 209.

Please join us!