



Serra Preschool Newsletter - September 2014

a cooperative preschool in South Orange County where children and parents learn and love together



Thanks and Appreciation

Many thanks to the following local businesses for helping us prepare for the new school year:

1. Shore Gardens;
2. Medlin Landscape; and
3. South Coast Furniture and Mattress.

Serra Preschool



San Clemente, California

1005 Calle Puente
San Clemente, CA 92672
(949) 492-8188

serrapreschool@gmail.com
www.serrapreschool.org



Kids Birthdays

Eliana Martz turned 3 on 9/5
Marshall Galston turned 4 on 9/16
Marcus Vojtus turned 5 on 9/23
Bodhi Aguilar turns 4 on 9/24
Brooklyn Wills turns 3 on 9/28

Our Board

PRESIDENT	Cindy Parker	cindyparker80@gmail.com
VICE PRESIDENT	Nancy Wills	nancycwills@gmail.com
TREASURER	Devon Azzam	devonazzam@gmail.com
WAYS & MEANS	Brook Lahr	brooke501@hotmail.com
SECRETARY	Laura Changala	laura.changala@gmail.com
OCCPPNS	Amrita Sheokand	amrita.s@gmail.com
MEMBERSHIP	Stephanie Faunce	swfaunce@yahoo.com
FAMILY GROWTH	Amanda Galston	ar.galston@gmail.com
DIRECTOR and 3- DAY TEACHER	Patty Nowicki	patty.nowicki@gmail.com
2 DAY TEACHER	Joan Macker	j.macker@cox.net

Upcoming Events

Sat, Oct 4th - Dad's Pancake Breakfast (both 2-day and 3-day classes)
Sun, Oct 26th - Halloween Carnival (both 2-day and 3-day classes)
Thurs, Oct 30th - Halloween Parade for 2-day class
Fri, Oct 31st - Halloween Parade for 3-day class

Director's Message

Dear Parents,

The other day I received an email from a former Serra Preschool parent. It was a copy of an essay her daughter had written. This young lady is now in middle school, but she began her school journey at Serra. Her Mom accidentally discovered her essay while cleaning out some files on her computer. I wanted to share with you what she wrote at the end of her essay.

Where it began:

"So it all started way back when I was in preschool. I had the best teacher. Her name was Mrs. Nowicki. She taught me how to be kind to others. She also introduced me to my best friend till this day! My mother and her became really close and I still see her to this day. She really helped me become who I am and I thank her for that!"

I was deeply touched by these kind and thoughtful words that came from a child's heart. My purpose in sharing it with you is NOT to "toot my own horn", but to let you know in a way that I could never convey to you myself that Serra Preschool is more than a place where kids learn letters and numbers.

At Serra I truly believe that we are a family. The person who wrote the words I just shared with you was obviously impacted by her experiences at Serra. I highly doubt that I could make a lasting impression on anyone like that all by myself. It was a team effort. It was not due to my influence alone but due to all the parents that participated and gave of their time at the school.

By choosing to be part of a parent participation nursery school you have the opportunity to become a very meaningful person in the lives of the children you will be working with and playing with this year. At this school the children are loved, taught and cared for by many people. Their teacher and all the parents. What a gift!!!

This is an "invitation", an invitation to be a part of a wider community to give as much as you can and to embrace what I think are some very exciting adventures coming your way.

I truly feel blessed to be a part of this very special school and I'm so glad you are all going to be a part of it with me this year.

Fondly,
Mrs. Nowicki

“The Powerful Learning Experiences of Play Dough”, by Mrs. Macker

Has this ever happened to you? You ask your child, “What did you do today at school?” And she answers, “ I played with play dough.” Squishing, pounding, sculpting... This simple preschool staple lets children use their imaginations and strengthen the small muscles in their fingers. The same hand muscles that children will one day use to hold a pencil for writing. Play dough supports the development and learning in many areas. When children use play dough, they explore ideas and try different approaches until they find one that works. They compare and contrast objects and actions such as, “Mine is a fat pancake and yours is skinny.”

! Play dough supports children’s social and emotional development. Creating with play dough lets children feel competent and proud of their accomplishments. “Hey look, I cut it myself.” “I put shells on it!” Pounding, flattening and squeezing are healthy and safe outlets for extra energy. With play dough, children express their ideas through art and make believe play. At the same time, they learn symbolic thinking by pretending the play dough is something. “Look, I made French fries!”

! Play dough helps children with the development of language and literacy by building their vocabulary when they explain what they are creating. For example, when a child exclaims, “Chop!” as he brings down the plastic knife, he uses just the right word to describe his action. Children also develop their vocabulary when they use language to invent stories about their play dough creations.

! Children learn about science through hands-on experiences. They learn by observing, thinking and talking about how materials feel and how they change. “I made it lumpy when I put stones in it.” “I squished the green and the blue (play dough) together.” Children also develop their math skills when playing with play dough. “Yours is big and mine is small.” “Look, I made 3 cookies!” Play dough is a powerful learning tool that children enjoy endlessly playing with and creating.

The Pirate Song

When I was one I had some fun on the day I went to Sea

Chorus: I jumped aboard a Pirate Ship and the Captain said to me.

***Lets go this way (sway to the right) and that way (sway to the left) forward and backward.
Over the deep blue sea.***

When I was two I tied my shoe on the day I went to sea.

Chorus

When I was three I slapped my knee on the day I went to sea.

Chorus

When I was four I slammed the door on the day I went to sea.

Chorus

When I was five I took a dive on the day I went to sea.

Chorus.

UPCOMING FIELD TRIPS

Environmental Nature Center- September 26th

www.encenter.org

When: This Friday, September 26th at 9:45 am. Allow plenty of time for parking. Tour starts at 10:00 am.

What: Nature Changes

Children ages 3 to 5 learn that everything in nature changes. Children can experience the life cycle of frogs, butterflies and visit the butterfly house (still in season). Children learn that snakes shed their skin to grow, and get to meet a real, live snake! They learn that mammals have fur to keep them warm when it's cold, and gently touch the fur of several local animals. Along the trail children enjoy story time under the oak trees.

Cost: \$5.50/student, including siblings who are of age that they would go on the hike, want to touch things, etc. Babies and very young toddlers and Adults are Free!

****Bring exact change in cash to the Center on Friday. OR** You can write a check payable to Serra Preschool and bring it to the General Meeting on Wednesday. No checks to Serra will be accepted on Friday.

Details: The children will be separated into two groups, and each group will be lead by a docent. Please be mindful to keep the chitchat to a bare minimum so as not to distract the docent as she is talking with the children.

Where: 1601 East 16th Street, Newport Beach, CA 92663

Directions: From Pacific Coast Highway just to the north of Newport Bay, turn inland on Dover Drive to 16th Street. Turn left, and we are on the left side of the road.

RSVP/Contact Person: RSVP ASAP to Cori at CoriPreisler@hotmail.com.

Day of: Cori's cell (310) 809-4500

Irvine Park Railroad Pumpkin Patch – October 2nd

www.irvineparkrailroad.com

When: Thursday, October 2nd at 9:00 am for both 2-day and 3-day. Train ride departs at 9:30 am sharp.

What: There are tons of activities to do in a beautiful setting. **Please note that a gate entrance fee of \$3 will be charged by the County of Orange for each vehicle that enters Irvine Regional Park.**

Cost: \$10/child, which includes picking a pumpkin, a train ride, a hayride, and a bottle of water. Adults are \$3. Other FREE activities are exploring the pumpkin patch and giant hay maze, entering the haunted house, and various picture stands. You can also buy additional tickets to be used for face painting, pony rides, carnival games, etc.

What to Bring: snack and extra water. Sunscreen is a good idea, too!

Where: 1 Irvine Park Road, Orange, CA 92869

Directions: We are located at the far east end of Jamboree in the foothills of Orange. Our cross streets are Chapman Avenue and Jamboree Road. Take the 5 North and Exit Jamboree. Turn right, heading north on Jamboree until it dead-ends into Irvine Regional Park.

Sign-Up: Email CoriPreisler@hotmail.com

RSVP/Contact Person: Day of: Cori's cell (310) 809-4500. Email CoriPreisler@hotmail.com

BIOS FROM OUR BOARD MEMBERS

From our President, Cindy Parker

Hi!! I'm Cindy Parker and this is my 4th year at Serra. I absolutely love the school and what it stands for. I have 3 boys Nathan-6, Riley-4 in 3-day, and Miles-2. Before being a full-time Mama I was a Special Ed teacher mainly with severely autistic and traumatic brain injured children. I really enjoyed my job and I feel like one day I will go back, but for now I'm focusing on my own romper room. Besides my kids meeting friends at Serra, I feel like I have really made some friends and have created bonds that I will cherish for years to come. I look forward to what this new school year has in store for us! I think it's going to be awesome!!



From our Vice President, Nancy Wills

Hi! My name is Nancy Wills and I'm super excited to be the Vice President at Serra this year. We moved from Seattle about 15 months ago. I fell in love with our little school last year when our oldest daughter attended the 3-day class! I'm a momma of 3 spunky kids--Kennedy (just started kinder at Las Palmas), Brooklyn (2-day at Serra), and Ryder is 14 months. Before wrangling 3 kids at home I taught Kindergarten and first grade in Seattle for 8 years, one year in Garden Grove. I love, love, love the sun and sand (hence coming from Seattle), the Seahawks, my husband, playing volleyball, a warm cup of coffee and days when my kids sleep past 6:30am! Serra makes my kids feel loved by many, free to really explore and do what they really need in the moment, and express passion for learning doing what they do best--PLAY! Really looking forward to a year of new friendships, lessons learned, messes and many memories!



From our Treasurer, Devon Azzam

My name is Devon Azzam and my role is Treasurer. My husband, Tarek, and I are thrilled to be participating in our second year at Serra Preschool. Our daughter, Sophia, is in the 3-day class this year. Our son, Dominic, is two years old, and can't wait to start mini-preschool with Mrs. Macker. I am excited for the opportunity to be learning, playing, and growing alongside our children. I taught elementary school for 12 years, and have a special interest in garden-based education. I look forward to getting to know you as we share this very special year in our children's lives.



From Ways & Means, Brooke Lahr

My name is Brooke Lahr and I am happy to be serving in the Ways and Means position this year at Serra. It is our second year here and my four-year-old son, Noah, loves coming to school three days a week to play with his buddies. Both my husband, Matt, and I are So Cal natives and thankful to be living in San Clemente near family and friends. We also have a two-year-old son named Wyatt and he just can't wait to get messy at Serra next year!



From our Secretary, Laura Changala

Hi, I'm Laura Changala this is my first year at Serra. I've got 2 children, Rocco 3 and Cae 2, before being a full time mama I was the PR Director for a large non profit for 5 years, and before that a journalist. I'm currently in the process of setting up my own business so that I can work part time from home. Originally from the UK, I've hung up my traveling hat for now and San Clemente is home. When I'm not running round after the kids, you can find me learning to SUP!



From OCCPPNS, Amrita Sheokand

I'm Amrita Sheokand and this is our second year at Serra Preschool. I grew up in India but have called California my home for the past 11 years. My four-year-old boy, Arjun, is in the three-day class this year. We have been living in Dana Point for almost three years now and love it. We were in Pasadena before this and that's where we were introduced to the Co-op idea for a preschool for my older daughter, Saumya. We loved the experience and were so fortunate to have found a similar school for Arjun. When I see my kids spend hours building car garages out of cardboard boxes, never letting me throw any boxes or bottles that come into the house because they "have a plan," I know it's because of what they've learnt at their preschools. They have a confident approach to problems that arise in their creations that comes from the attitudes of the teachers and parents they work with in school all day. Unfortunately all that changes once they start kindergarten so I am enjoying every moment of our last year at a co-op. I have a background in Journalism but for now I am home with the kids and have loved every minute of being home with them.



From Membership, Stephanie Faunce

Hi I am Stephanie Faunce, and this will be my third year at Serra. I have two daughters, Sara (10) and Olivia (5). My husband and I are originally from the East Coast and gradually moved west, making San Clemente our home 3 years ago. Before I moved to SC and stayed home with the kids, I was an ICU nurse. I love Serra and the opportunities it gives kids *and* parents to explore and grow through play, develop meaningful relationships with others and themselves, and bring their unique gifts to the world. I am grateful for the way Serra Preschool has helped shape our lives and for the chance to be a part of such a supportive community. It has been a privilege to get to know all of you as the Membership Chair and I am looking forward to another wonderful year!



From Family Growth, Amanda Galston

I'm Amanda Galston and this is our first year at Serra Preschool. I have two children Marshall (4) in 2 day and Kai (2) starting the little ones class in the fall. We are excited to join Serra and become part of a wonderful community to learn and grow with. Looking forward to a great school year!



Sponsorship Rates

Business Card: \$5 per issue or \$30 for the year

¼ Page Ad: \$10 per issue or \$50 for the year

Email your ad to Claudia Rohm at claudhopper71@gmail.com

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