

## SERRANIA CHARTER FOR ENRICHED STUDDIES



*Serrania's motto:  
Inspiration,  
Imagination,  
Innovation*

February 2014



See p.4 for all the fun activities



## Serrania Spellathon

Congratulations Serrania!! We raised an amazing profit of \$6,400 from our recent Spellathon. Our students are amazing spellers and enthusiastic about raising money for our school. Here are the winners:

- \* Class and teacher: 5th grade, Room 35, Mrs. Hakobian at \$ 940.50. Mrs. Hakobian won a \$25 gift card and the class won a pizza party!
- \* Grade: Kindergarten at \$ 1,877.80 - they won a popsicle party!
- \* Student First Place: Piper Mape (Room 35, 5th grade) at \$ 350.00 - she won a \$150 gift card!



Honorable Mentions: Thank you to the following students who competed for the top prize: Second Place: Pierce Peterson (Room 15, 2nd grade), and Bryce Peterson (Room 22, 4th grade) at \$300.00 each, Third Place: Berkley Mape (Room 19, 3rd grade) at \$228.00, Fourth Place: Leila Algee (Room 11, Kindergarten) at \$225.00, Fifth Place: Benjamin Quillian (Room 14, Kindergarten), and Jady Mape (Room 12, Kindergarten) at \$180.00 each.

Thank you to everyone who participated and helped us raise money for the school. A special thank you to Karen Solari, for chairing this wonderful event. Thank you as well to Shave It in Reseda and Wahoo's Tacos in Woodland Hills for sponsoring prizes for the Spellathon.

# PRINCIPAL'S CORNER *By Theresa Wedaa, Principal*



## Early is on Time

When it comes to starting your child's school day, it's important to remember the old saying... "Early is on Time... and on time is late." Our goal is to have every student in the classroom by 8:00 am when the bell rings so that teachers may immediately begin teaching to a full class. Parents often don't realize how disruptive it is to the class to have students coming and going... or the challenges it represents to both teachers and students to start and remain focused. We believe that students need to be responsible for their behavior and for taking initiative in their education. In an effort to better understand and address this issue, this past November, we began having students fill out a 'tardy to school' form to explain their reasons for being late. Below are just some of the reasons students shared about why they were late. We thank them for their honesty. As a working mother who often drops two children off in the morning, I understand morning pressure... but a little planning goes a long way. Please enjoy what the students have to say... and perhaps give some thought to how you can make "early is on time" a bigger part of your school day routine.

Reasons written by students about why they were late to school:

- Wrapping presents and lost track of time.
- My mom was in the gym
- My mom's car got stolen over the weekend and she found it in the morning
- Car problem and also had to wait for target to open to by him some gloves, bennie and jacket
- My mom was putting on makeup and my brother was crying
- Because my mom woke up late because it was my mom's birthday
- I had to go to the ATM
- My mom had to drive carefully so that we didn't die
- My mom had to put sunscreen on
- My dad was eating breakfast
- I took too long to get ready
- My dad woke up late
- I live far away and my grandma likes to walk
- My sister didn't want to get up and it took a long time.
- Because I had to brush my teeth
- My dog took my socks. We also got stuck in traffic
- My mom took forever
- My sister threw a temper tantrum and my mother had to deal with it

And the two top excuses for being late.

- Traffic
- Woke up late



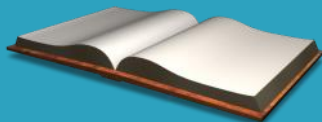
## 2013-14 Yearbook on Sale Now!

Order your  
yearbook today!

\$26 Soft Cover/ \$31 Hard Cover

Order yours today as quantities  
will be limited.

Visit [www.serraniaavenue.org](http://www.serraniaavenue.org)  
to learn more.



## Save the Date!

### Restaurant Nights

- Tuesday, Feb. 11  
at **CPK in Woodland Hills**
- Wednesday  
March 11  
at **Islands in  
Woodland Hills**



20% of your bill is donated to Serrania

# Join The Serrania Suns In The Fight Against Cancer At Relay For Life!!

Last year more than 100 Serrania students, teachers, parents and friends participated in the Woodland Hills Relay For Life raising money, awareness and support in the fight against cancer! Between the “Serrania Suns” team and the “Teachers Teaming to Remember” team, Serrania raised more than \$4,500 at Relay For Life!

Serrania was there to cheer on cancer survivors at the Opening Ceremony. Serrania was there to honor and remember people who have fought cancer by dedicating and lighting beautiful luminaria bags for the Luminaria Ceremony in the evening. All the while we enjoyed music, food, games, a Kids Club, and lots other festivities as we embraced giving back to our community!

But the fight is not over. Want to help in the fight against cancer?? Please join the Serrania Suns team at: <http://main.acsevents.org/goto/SerraniaSuns>

Any questions?? Please contact Yvette Peterson at [ywpeterson@gmail.com](mailto:ywpeterson@gmail.com)



*One Day*



*One Night*



*One Community*

## Join the “Serrania Suns” at Relay For Life!

**April 5<sup>th</sup> 9:00 a.m. – April 6<sup>th</sup> 9:00 a.m. at Pierce College**

### What is Relay For Life?

Relay For Life is an inspiring 24-hour event where teams of friends, family and colleagues **take turns walking** a track **relay-style**, and communities come together to raise awareness and funds in the fight to end cancer. Relay For Life is about **celebrating cancer survivors, remembering those we have lost, and fighting back against a disease that takes too much from us!**



**Sign up now at: <http://main.acsevents.org/goto/SerraniaSuns>**

***Join our community in the fight to end cancer!***





Luck of the Draw Opportunity Drawing

In January students received booklets of tickets to sell to family and friends to support Serrania Charter for Enriched Studies.

Grand Prize - Xbox 360 E KINECT Holiday Value Bundle, exclusive Amazon DISNEY INFINITY Bundle, and the DISNEY INFINITY Starter Pack Xbox 360 (\$560 value)

1st Prize - 4 Disneyland passes (\$516 value)

2nd Prize - Samsung Chromebook with \$25 Google app card, case and warranty (\$354 value)

3rd Prize - "Get out of the Kitchen" Restaurant Gift Card package (\$350 value)

4th Prize - Kindle Fire HD (\$140 value)

\*\*\*Drawing will be February 14th at the morning assembly  
(Ticket holders do not need to be present to win!)

\*A Book of Tickets is \$20 (\$2/ticket) Help Serrania - Win GREAT Prizes!

\*Make checks payable to Friends of Serrania (FOS)

\*Sell as many ticket booklets as possible!

For Every Booklet you sell you will be entered for a chance to win Lunch with Principal Wedaa!

Top Seller will be Principal for a Day!

Just in time for Valentine's Day to show your love for Serrania Charter! Thank you for your support!



## Please join us for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Serrania Family Dance Feb 8th at 6pm

This year's dance will feature a Valentine's Day theme, and will give families the opportunity to get dressed up and enjoy a night out together. All activities including food, drinks, arts & crafts, DJ, pictures, etc. are included for the price of admission....JUST \$10.00! And remember, all of the money raised goes to support our school! So don't wait... you won't want to miss it! Tickets are available for purchase now. Please send your payment (\$10 per person if purchased in advance, \$15 at the door). Please make check payable to FOS and bring to school before the January 31st deadline.

For more information contact Tammy (818) 518-

## Valentine Gift Shop – Coming Soon!



Serrania Students and Parents Get Ready! The Valentine Gift Shop will open February 12th-15th and will be filled with lots of fun gifts for kids and parents. This is a great opportunity not only to support our school but to empower our kids to

make decisions, think about their friends and family, and learn a little about the value of money as well. Everything will be under \$10, with most items costing between \$1 and \$2.





# *In Our Community:*

## *SCES Campus Cleanup and E-Waste Fundraiser*



This past month *Serrania Charter for Enriched Studies* hosted two great events to improve both our school and community.

On Sat. January 18th many of our wonderful *Serrania* families participated in the first *Serrania Campus Cleanup* event of 2014! Working together, the more than thirty students and families made good progress in re-establishing berms in the planter beds, pulling weeds, sweeping leaves/trash and collecting jackets that have overtime scattered around campus. A big 'Thank You' goes out to all those who participated. If you missed out this time, be sure to check your weekly student flyers for our next event... every extra hand counts, and we'd love to see you there!

For more information on how you can help, contact Andy Weisser at [aweisser@earthlink.net](mailto:aweisser@earthlink.net)

In addition to the hard work SCES families dedicated to improving our own little part of the world, January also saw the return of another event intended to help our larger community, the *Serrania E-Waste Fundraiser*. This year, *Serrania* families and our community worked together to collect and donate a full truck load of electronic waste. The proper disposal of the ever-growing volume of e-waste is a serious challenge, and efforts like our E-Waste Fundraiser not only keep potentially harmful items out of our landfills, but also ensure that the tons of precious metals, plastics and other recyclable components can be identified and reused.

Working together, we can make our community a better, more beautiful place.

*By Jeff Kovacs*





# Behind the Scenes at Serrania! *By Scarlett Mendoza and Ilisa Pasternak*

Ever wonder what goes on 'Behind the Scenes' of our special school? Well you're not alone... so we thought we'd take a moment each month to highlight some of Serrania's fantastic teachers, staff and volunteers – the people who work so hard every day to make sure SCES remains the wonderful place we all love. In this issue we'll visit with our long anticipated new science teacher, Mrs. Becky Brady and our lovely FOS (Friends Of Serrania) President, Shannon Hall.



## **Becky Brady — Science Teacher**

Five Things You Should Know about Serrania's new science teacher - Mrs. Becky Brady

It's the moment we've been waiting for... our new science teacher is finally here!



## **Shannon Hall – FOS President**

Shannon Hall is not only Serrania's FOS President, but one of our very committed and devoted volunteers who has done so much for our school! Shannon came to Serrania when her daughter Hannah started kindergarten in 2009. She has a background in Sales Management and worked for ADP – (Automatic Data Processing) as a major account sales manager until Hannah was 3 years old. At that time Shannon

decided she wanted to be a stay-at-home mom so that she could be with her daughter who has had kidney and liver disease since birth, and a transplant 2 1/2 years ago. In her spare time Shannon loves spending time with her family and friends. She also loves going to the movies and reading. "It's my get-away time!" she adds.

## **Why Shannon Became Involved...**

"I wanted to make a difference in the school and I wanted to bring new and fun events to Serrania. My daughter loved having me help in her classroom and wanted to see me run events on campus." Shannon's involvement started with the Fall Catalog fundraiser. She then co-chaired a new event with Amy Lichtenstein 3 years ago called the Father/Daughter Dance, and chaired the Street Fair for FOS that same year. Two years ago, when Friends of Serrania needed a new President, Shannon decided to take on the responsibility. Her management experience no doubt helped her to make the transition. Last year she helped FOS raise more than \$70,000, and expects to raise over \$85,000 this year!

## **A Day in the Life...**

Shannon is usually on campus everyday from 8:00-9:30. Her daily tasks are varied, and include helping the main office, copying materials for the teachers, collating flyers for the Tuesday packets, and selling pizza and snacks at the snack shack. Shannon also chairs the Holiday Gift Shop, is in charge of Outdoor Movie Night, and hosted the Back-To-School BBQ. Shannon meets with Mrs. Wedaa weekly to go over the calendar and events, updates her on important details, and she attends a weekly executive board meeting for Serrania Charter with Mrs. Wedaa. And if that's not enough, Shannon leads the monthly FOS meetings, attends the principal coffee talks, and parent seminar discussions. Shannon goes to all the restaurant nights and helps chair movie nights. "I love working with our principal and staff, and our wonderful active parents. No matter what the event, whether I'm chairing or not, I am there supporting the parents and volunteering!"

## **Best Part About Being at Serrania...**

"I love the families I have gotten to know. The Friends of Serrania Board is a very supportive group and we have a lot of fun hosting events and meetings! I love that my daughter sees that I am active on campus and that she is so proud that I help so much. She pushes me to do more-she loves the involvement!"

## **The Benefits of Getting Involved...**

Shannon can't say enough about the benefits of getting involved. "I have made some wonderful friends. I have made great connections with teachers, and I have worked closely with the principal and staff. I am looking forward to passing the baton over to another parent to lead FOS next year and want to spend my last year at Serrania helping the next President be even more successful!"

## **Getting to know Mrs. Brady...**

### **What interested you the most about Science?**

I love science because it helps the world make sense through exploration. Science creates a curiosity and can be found everywhere. Teaching in the lab will give me an opportunity to get kids curious about how things work and ask questions like, "What will happen if...?"

### **What's your favorite topic in Science?**

I love Chemistry most. What happens when we mix a few things together? The Vinegar Volcano is a classic. The Diet Coke eruption is another fun one. Testing your taste buds is a fun experiment, too. Do foods taste the same if you cannot smell them? Chemistry leads to so many opportunities to pique a child's interest. I also love natural science.

### **What scientists do you most admire and why?**

One of my favorite scientists is one we all know, Thomas Edison. Not only did he invent so many things we use today, the light bulb for example, but rumor has it he had to overcome a learning disability to do so. He was unable to read until he was 12 years old! His mother was worried about his ability to learn, but he worked hard and followed his passion to become one of the most significant contributors to our society. He even became a successful business man later in life.

### **When will you begin teaching Science at Serrania?**

The Science lab is now open. Science classes are held on Wednesdays and Thursdays.

### **Is there anything you'd like to share with the students, teachers and parents about what they can expect?**

Serrania is fortunate to have the funding for a science lab thanks to donations to Friends of Serrania to make this possible, and I am so happy to be a part of it. Getting children excited about school and science is my goal. If I hear kids say "What if?" ... my goal will be accomplished.

At the same time, I will likely need volunteers in class on various days. I will let the teachers know what days in particular after we get into the swing of things. Then, once the class schedules are firmed up, we'll reach out for volunteers. We will have lots of hands-on experiments, so volunteers will be welcome.

It's clear that we were lucky to have such an enthusiastic and dedicated new teacher join the Serrania family. Please join us in welcoming Mrs. Brady to Serrania!

# UNSUNG HEROES

By Shannon Hall, FOS President



An 'Unsung Hero' is defined as "One who does great deeds but receives little or no recognition for them." As I'm sure many of you know, Serrania is lucky enough to count many "unsung heroes" among our volunteers, and we'd like to change that, and start recognizing and thanking them for all they do!

Did you know... that our fabulous yearbook doesn't create itself? Nor is it created by an outside company... it is pulled together by a staff of dedicated volunteers that work incredibly hard to ensure that it captures the best of what makes Serrania such a special place. Thanks to the hard work of Amy Klosterman (photography) and help from Jodye Alcon, Jennifer Termini, Gary Pollak and Rachel Tuber, it is filled with beautiful pictures of our students and staff at fun events on campus. These parents come to events to get the shots and spend their time reviewing, loading and placing pictures in just the right spots so that our yearbook looks beautiful each and every year!

Did you know... that parents volunteer every week to run the Snack Shack? Thanks to the hard work of volunteers Tim Jones, Neil Manganaro, Zoraida, Jeff Sturges and Christine Pollick Flowers our students can enjoy pizza and snacks afterschool every Tuesday! Additionally, thanks to the hard work of Karen Solari, Tracy Leiterman, and Lucia Downey our students enjoy popsicles and snacks on Friday afternoons. These parents, with help from a welcome mix of others, show up on a weekly basis to volunteer, help raise money for the school and provide students the opportunities for a quick snack after school.

Did you know... Friends of Serrania (FOS) organizes teacher appreciation events and provide gifts to our amazing staff? Thanks to Amy Lichtenstein, and others, we presented our teachers with goodie bags during conferences, lunch before the holidays and welcomed our new teachers with shirts and goodie bags! Stay tuned for information about Teacher Appreciation Week coming soon!

Did you know... that Jim Riley and a select group of volunteers are responsible for all of our great Serrania spirit wear? Together, they order, inventory and distribute all the great t-shirts, pullovers, sweatshirts and other "Serrania / SCES Suns"

wear... raising money and morale for our school. Jim is also chair of our e-waste event!

Did you know... Classes earn "Serrania bucks" for good behavior during school hours, and when they collect 20 Serrania Bucks, they get an ice-cream party! Marc Blaiwes coordinates and hosts the weekly ice cream parties for our classes! He also helps with our website updates and our facebook page! If you haven't "liked" us, please visit: <https://www.facebook.com/SerraniaCharter>.

Did you... Notice our new Tuesday flyer packets – collated and stapled? Thanks to Adrienne Doty, Melissa Mandyam, Joy Schneider, Karen Solari, Ilisa Pasternak, Tracy Leiterman, Lucia Downey, Nell Javid and Sandra Hernandez who come every Monday afternoon to help make assemble these packets.

Did you think... that LAUSD had someone update our website? Does the school? No! FOS pays for and runs the website with help from Marc Blaiwes and Orit Bonver! What about the gorgeous newsletter? Orit Bonver leads the way with help from Jeff Kovacs, Ilisa Pasternak and many others! Our goal is to go greener and they are putting a plan in place to get us there in the next year!

As you can see, it takes a lot of help and participation to make a school like Serrania run smoothly. With regular cutbacks on staff and more and more demands on those who remain, it is more important than ever for parents to participate. Whether it is copying flyers for the teachers (thank you Chanda Dutta and others), watering our beautiful trees and plants (thank you Jennifer Termini, Andy Weissner and the Green Team) or posting a Happy Birthday or School Update messages on the marquee (thank you Yvette Peterson and Jeff Stuges) there are lots of opportunities to help and contribute to our wonderful school. So, step forward and get involved. It's fun, rewarding and makes a real difference to our kids. If you know of an unsung hero who should be highlighted and thanked, please email: [FOS@SerraniaAvenue.org](mailto:FOS@SerraniaAvenue.org) We haven't thanked everyone yet and will continue to post updates monthly.

## FREE PARENTING SEMINAR SERIES

Seminars are open to every-one and feature volunteer professional facilitators at every meeting. The seminars are a place for parents to discuss relevant topics and share ideas and strategies.

- **8 a.m., Tues, Feb. 4:** Trust and Lies: Building and Keeping Strong Communication Lines with Your Children
- **8 a.m., Tues, March 4:** Raising Happy, Healthy Children without Siblings
- **8 a.m., Tues, April 1:** When Do I Need to Seek Help for My Child's Speech, Language, or Hearing?
- **8 a.m., Tues, May 6:** Raising Confident, Respectful, Happy Children

Any Questions? Ask Andy Weissner: [aweissner@earthlink.net](mailto:aweissner@earthlink.net)



# Serrania Student Council is on the Job!

SCES teachers asked student council to write essays highlighting important ideas or themes. Here is what they have to say..

## Peace on Earth

**By Iggy Glassman**

There's an old song that says in the lyrics "Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me." I like this thought because it takes the very big and almost impossible notion of Peace on Earth and makes it manageable. Peace on earth is a very difficult notion – there are countries, dictators, different beliefs – all this makes it very complicated to achieve or even think about.

But the thought of "Let it begin with me" makes it feel like there is something that I can do about it. If every person took more responsibility for being peaceful and rational with each other, there could be peace.

If we were peaceful and rational with each other, there could be peace on the playground. If kids chose not to argue and worked out solutions to their problems, the playground would be a more peaceful place. Peace on the earth and peace on the playground can begin with the individual choices a kid makes every day. If we start here, maybe peace on earth won't be such a big idea someday.



## Traffic Safety

**By Maryam**

Student Council is giving out these cool buttons. So when you guys get 10 tickets come to one of us with the blue vests. Or just look at our faces for in case if we don't have these blue vests on. Next Friday start trying to get your buttons.

\*When you are crossing the street look both ways and always be with an adult so they can protect you.

\*You should never J walk cause you never know what's gonna happen if you J walk.

\*You should never walk in between two cars because maybe someone doesn't see you and the person in the car pulls forward and hits you.



## Attack the Snack

*By J. Gillearn, RD and Parent Volunteer*



Last month my article was focused on the importance of healthy lunches and its effect on our kids' health. This month, some teachers and aides have asked me to address the snack issue.

Just like meals, the overall goal of the snack is to provide a well balanced (complex carbohydrates, lean proteins, and healthy fats) and sustainable form of energy so that your kids are more focused, alert and ready to learn. Highly processed packaged snacks will provide too much sugar and fat for a young growing body and brain. Instead of a sustainable form of energy, the result will be a spike in blood sugar followed by a "crash" resulting in a very tired, crabby and less focused kid.

The key to making change with kids is to make snacks more fun and interesting. Think like a food company does by "marketing" your snacks better. Get them involved in snack planning and preparation and they will be more likely to make changes. In keeping with last month's article, gradual changes are more likely to provide lasting results. Let's get rid of our overly processed (not to mention expensive) snacks by swapping them out for things like whole grain bagel with low fat cream cheese or nut butter, apple slices with peanut butter side dip. How about freezing a Trader Joe's yogurt stick (lean protein and calcium) or a small snack size bag of homemade "chips" (baked tortillas) with a side of salsa (vegetable) and hummus (lean protein).

Ask your kids tonight what healthy snack ideas they can come up with. They just may surprise you!