

Lin Link

Mary Lin Elementary School PTA

www.marylinelementary.com

December 17, 2007

In the news ...

Everybody visualize water! Well at least visualize gray water.

We have some great news about the Freedom Park Bird and Butterfly Garden . First, on October 8th, the City of Atlanta Parks Dept. (thank you Parks Dept.!) approved our request to expand the garden by approximately 38 x 24 feet. Secondly, on Thursday, November 15, the Mary Lin Elementary School Challenge (gifted)Classes and their teachers, Krystal Manning and Ms. Caller, helped us plant over thirty native plants in the new section of the garden and also fill in some new plants in the old sections. A group of Paideia School students recruited via the Atlanta Food Bank by Master Gardener Phil Edwards had helped clear the English Ivy and other invasives from the area the week before. And thanks to the Atlanta Sanitation Dept. for taking all those bags which the students had filled away.

We seem to be on a roll (and wishing we'd need a raft) since an article about the garden by John Becker appeared in the Atlanta Journal Constitution in late October highlighting our water needs during the drought.. Thanks to Tom Painter of Audubon for letting Janea Boyles and Lauren Welsh know about those needs. Lauren has provided us with many jugs of gray water. Janea has been dropping off several 5 gallon containers of gray water at my house each week which I transfer to gallon jugs for transportation to the garden. Hats off to Janea who started a gray water recycling program at the restaurant where she works, and, hearing of our plight, volunteered the gray water they'd been collecting. Also thanks to Robert MacLeod, who lives across the street from the garden, for pouring countless gallons of his own gray water on the new plants. And, again, thanks to neighbor Jim

FROM THE PRINCIPAL...

December is here! Can you believe it!

I would like to provide an update on our attendance data. True, this is the second article in a row regarding attendance, but I must impress upon you the importance of punctuality and attendance. Our 2007 District attendance target is to have less than 54 students absent 10 or more days. Sounds like a lot, right? Take a look at our current attendance numbers:

Number of Absences	Number of Students
10 or more	2
9	0
8	4
7	7
6	9
5	18
4	30

As a father of two small children, I certainly understand the need to keep our children home from school when they are ill. My intent of this article is to share Mary Lin's current attendance data.

Thank you for your support and all that you do for Mary Lin! I would like to wish everyone a Happy Holiday Season!

Brian Mitchell-Principal

OPERATION CAREBASKET -

The outpouring of Operation Care Basket donations was staggering. We received 600 non-perishable food items, which means there was more than one item donated for every child in the school! Six families were presented with CareBaskets - each was a two-bushel laundry basket containing a 12 - 15 pound turkey and lots and lots of non-perishable food items. After creating the six baskets, there were still some canned items left over - these were donated to the Atlanta Community Food Bank, via the Inman Park Kids' Food Drive.

Thank you so much to the Publix on Ponce for their assistance and the donation of the turkeys; and thank you to all our Mary Lin families who participated. It was these generous donations which made Operation Care Basket so successful.

In the News. . . (Cont'd)

Satcher, who was so generous in letting us use his spigot to water the garden until the total water ban. Audubon volunteers Dorothy Dabbs and Martha Treadwell Justice have been toting those water jugs over to the garden with me a couple of times a week to keep those new plants watered. We'll do this until the weather gets colder-usually mid-December but who can tell these days when that will be.....maybe Santa will be helping us too-ho, ho, ho

Soon Phil Edwards and the DeKalb Master Gardeners will be expanding the low fence around the garden to include the new area. In the mean time those pesky red landscaping flags will be in place. Also, once the leaves have all dropped and the Parks Maintenance crew (thanks!) has stopped cleaning them up, Phil will be putting down pine straw to mulch the garden for the winter.

Dot Roger has been helping Phil and I develop markers for the plants in the garden. The markers will include the growing habits of each plant, their benefits to wildlife and more. We hope to have some of them in soon.

Other garden notes: Last month a Red-tailed hawk landed in a pine tree across the street from the garden. Hope it doesn't visit too often! Red-tails can often be seen soaring around in-town neighborhoods. They've nested off Page Ave., in Candler Park, for the last few years. Red-tails (*Buteo jamaicensis*) are permanent residents here in Georgia. Their breeding "season lasts from late February to early September. Mates stay together between breeding seasons and perform elaborate aerial courtship displays prior to nesting", (watch those skies!) according to the Georgia Wildlife Web.....Also we now have 3 American Beautyberry (*Callicarpa Americana*) plants in the garden. Beautyberry can grow in full sun to full shade. Its fruits eaten by purple finches, Carolina wrens, towhees cardinals, catbirds, robins, mockingbirds, wood thrushes and brown thrashers. It is propagated by seeds, cuttings and division, and is found in the Coastal Plain, Piedmont, and mountains of Georgia.

Good gardening, good birding and good cocooning to all,

Carol Vanderschaaf
Atlanta, GA. cvanderschaaf@bellsouth.net

FROM THE PTA PRESIDENT. . .

As we near our Holiday Break, it's a great time to think about how much the Lin PTA has accomplished so far this year. I'd like to thank the committees and ALL of the many volunteers who have stepped up to improve the day-to-day experiences of our children in so many ways.

Don't miss tomorrow's PTA meeting and Holiday Show! We'll try to make the PTA meeting brief, as always (probably not as brief as the record-setting 5 minute meeting before Science Night, but brief nevertheless.) We'll be voting to approve several teacher Grants as well as some purchases the Technology Committee is recommending in anticipation of the Thin Client project in January. Then, we'll all get to enjoy our little musicians!



Kelly Mann
president@marylinelementary.com

PTA Education Committee News

Just to let you know how some of our PTA dollars are spent, here are a few highlights from the PTA Education Committee.

Visiting Artists

We sponsor several Visiting Artists throughout the year to enhance the learning experience at Mary Lin. Our first performance was by Andy Irwin in September. As part of his "Environmental Epic Show" Andy sang, whistled, played guitar, made funny noises and told stories. His theme was environmental responsibility and the far reaching impact of our individual actions on the environment. Although it sounds a bit heavy, he was very funny. Our children were really engaged and we received great feedback from the teachers and kids.

The next performance was Eric and Michael's "Groovapalooza" in October. It was billed as a sing-along with lots of audience participation. The "Groovapalooza" was held in the gym so there was plenty of space for singing, dancing and silly audience participation. The kids loved it! Patter Byrne previewed and booked all of our acts for this school year and made terrific selections for us. We will have at least three more Visiting Artists next year.

RIF

The first RIF book distribution took place on November 13th. Each student at Mary Lin received a book of his or her choice, at no cost. There was a wonderful selection of books for all interests and reading levels. Karin Dusenbury is heading RIF this year. She and her committee members did a great job! There will be two more distributions after winter break. If you would like to volunteer for the Education Committee, please email me at education@marylinelementary.com.

SStacey Collier
PTA Education Chair

Thanks to Science Night Volunteers

I hope everyone had a wonderful time at this year's Science Night. Since we are just past Thanksgiving I think it is appropriate to give thanks to the following groups who helped make the event a success:

Emory University for supplying the brains, Georgia State University for providing the Bio Bus, Zoo Atlanta for bringing animals for the kids to see and touch, The teachers for the wonderful classroom projects, The fourth and fifth grade students for their hard work and amazing experiments, All the parents who volunteered their time and talents, Robin Robins for coordinating everything, The folks who served as Judges, and to the PTA for organizing and funding the event.

Amanda Bell-Kirson, Abby Bennet, Julie Blevin, Becky Dowd, Jennifer Gerz-Escandon, Jane Chisholm, Kathy Evans, Reuben Haller, Katie Hartley, Jen Giersch, Rene Godiers, Gillian Grable, Magda Kline, Tim Kline, Jeff Kling, Elizabeth Mothershed, Claire Pate, Julie Pittman, Paul Smith, Tamika Taylor, Jim Zingesser, Plus Mary Lin alumni Marie Godiers and Skyler Swift.

Mary Lin Community Partners

Some more Partners that help make Mary Lin the great school it is!!!!

2007-2008 SILVER LEVEL (\$200)

Mojo

Radial Café

Small Carpenters at Large, Inc

Ashworth Ventures, Inc

Victor G. Polizos, MD

Little Five Points Pharmacy

Banzai FunSpace

Intown Financial

Splash Colorful Interiors

Communications Info

Make sure to join the yahoo group that sends out the Lin weekly email update, the **Monday Rocket**, at www.marylinelementary.com.

Deadlines for upcoming Links are 1/7 (for 1/14 edition), 2/4 (for 2/11 edition).

Articles for the **Lin Link** are always needed. Would you like to get the **Link by email**? Contact me at linlink@marylinelementary.com and I will get you on the mail list today.

Technology Update

Mary Lin Technology Committee Update

Atlanta Public Schools (APS) will upgrade the classroom computers and wiring at Mary Lin during January, 2008. The upgrade will occur over a 2 week period. Mary Lin will receive thin-client computers. Thin-client computers are like regular PCs, except all the programs and data are kept on a server instead of on each individual PC. This allows us to update all computers with new programs or information by just updating one or two servers instead of needing to update each (hundreds) of individual PCs. Thin client workstations also use less electricity than PCs and take up less room!

Some of the thin client workstations could be used for a second computer lab. The current lab (in the library area) and the computers within it will remain untouched. Our school is responsible for obtaining any needed furniture / tables (we already have some and will acquire more) and printers (we already have these). The PTA still has approximately \$25,000 available in our technology budget to assist with these type purchases. But, we expect the furniture and other incidental purchases to be less than \$1,000 for the January event. The remaining funds will be earmarked for training (over and beyond what APS will provide), additional hardware, or other needs that are identified after implementation. As usual, all future purchases will be submitted by the Technology Committee for approval to the PTA.

APS is also providing Mary Lin with 1 (one) Promethean white board. The technology committee will discuss installation options for the board and will make recommendations to the Leadership Team.

If you have any questions or suggestions regarding the upgrade, please contact John Downey at John.Downey2@SunTrust.com OR 404-827-6964.

Links to other sites discussing thin-client solutions

- Thin Client Technology defined - <http://www.dpsolutions.com/thinclient.aspx>
- Wikipedia - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thin_client
- Links to other sites involved with or who have already implemented thin-client solutions within elementary / middle schools...
- Atlanta Public Schools Technology - <http://www.atlanta.k12.ga.us/CMS/Default.aspx>
- Inman Middle School - www.inmantech.org
- Morris Brandon Elementary School (the technology link is on the left of the screen) - <http://morrisbrandon.com/index.php>