



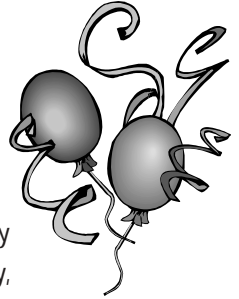
Island Breeze

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Newsletter of Island Creek PTA

February 2007

Kicking Off "Crocs' Creed Crocs Read" with a Birthday Bash (and My Great-Grandmother Knew Dr. Seuss)!



By Liz Dunn, PTA President

If I told you that on Friday, March 2 from 7 to 9 p.m. at Island Creek Elementary we are having a birthday party for Theodor Geisel—complete with storytelling, costumes, and a cake decorating contest—you'd probably say, "Who is Theodor Geisel???"

Well, you may know him by his other name—Dr. Seuss. And, yes my great-grandmother Nana Balch knew him when they both lived in Springfield, Massachusetts. But let's go back in time a bit to learn a little more about the creator of our beloved Cat in the Hat who turns 50 years old this year.

Theodor Seuss Geisel was born in 1904 in Springfield. His middle name, Seuss, was his mother's maiden name, which he ended up using as his pen name for all the wonderfully imaginative stories he wrote as Dr. Seuss. As a matter of fact, his mother often soothed Ted (Theodor's nickname) and his sister, Marnie, to sleep by chanting rhymes remembered from her youth. Ted credited his mother with his own ability to create the rhymes for which he became so well known.

Ted used many of his memories from Springfield in his books. The truck driven by Sylvester McMonkey McBean in *The Sneetches* may have been the Knox tractor that he saw on the streets when he was growing up. His first book, *And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street*, tells the story of a real avenue in Springfield with look-alike drawings of the mayor and police officers at the time.

He left Springfield for college, and then worked for Standard Oil and even the U.S. Army. Soon after, Viking Press offered him a contract to illustrate a collection of children's sayings. Although the book was not a commercial success, the illustrations received great reviews and provided Ted with his first big break into children's literature. However, getting the first book that he both wrote and illustrated, *And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street*, published, required a great degree of persistence; it was rejected 27 times before finally reaching the bookstores.

The Cat in the Hat, perhaps the most popular of all the Dr. Seuss books, actually began as a challenge from Ted's publisher: Write and illustrate a children's primer using only 225 "new-reader" vocabulary words. Of course, he accomplished this task—and then some!

At the time of his death on September 24, 1991, Dr. Seuss had written and illustrated 44 children's books, including *Green Eggs and Ham*, *Oh, the Places You'll Go*, *Fox in Socks*, and *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*. His books have been translated into more than 15 languages, and more than 200 million copies have found their way into homes and hearts around the world.

If you ever find yourself in Springfield, Massachusetts, stop by the Dr. Seuss National Memorial Sculpture Garden at the Springfield Museums. Located in the heart of the city, you'll see many endearing bronze sculptures of Dr. Seuss and his most beloved characters—

the Cat in the Hat, Horton the Elephant, Thing One and Thing Two, Sam-I-Am, Gertrude McFuzz, and the Grinch and his dog, Max, just to name a few. Happy Birthday!

Calendar of Events

- Mar. 2 Dr. Seuss Cat in the Hat Birthday Bash, 7–9 p.m.
- Mar. 6 PTA Meeting, 7 p.m., Library

Web page: www.islandcreekpta.org



Reflections Ceremony

The student participants in this year's Reflections competition were honored at the PTA meeting in February. They wrote, drew, and



took photos about "My Favorite Place." At the ceremony, they enjoyed cake, certificates, and congratulations for all their hard work. Great job!



Summer Foreign Language Camps

Fairfax County Public Schools offers two-week foreign language camps for elementary school students at several area schools this summer, from July 9–20, from 1:00 p.m.–4:00 p.m., Monday–Friday. The school locations are: Centre Ridge, Colin Powell, Colvin Run, Great Falls, Mount Eagle, Ravensworth, Springfield Estates, Vienna, White Oaks, and Woodley Hills. Language offerings vary from school to school. For more details, call (703) 658-1293/1291. Visit the web site at www.fcps.edu/aceclasses in March 2007 for registration information. Parents may be interested to know that Springfield Estates Elementary School is closely located to Island Creek. It is about a 10–15 minute drive from Island Creek, off of Franconia Road.

Yin Mei Hueskes, FLEX Coordinator

Box Tops Due!



Send in your Box Tops by February 23 for this quarter's collection. Help the PTA help our school!

And don't forget to visit boxtops4education.com for more chances to contribute to Island Creek.

Get Your Domino's Pizza Coupons and Save!

Island Creek families are really helping rake (or shovel!) in the dough by purchasing \$10 Domino's Pizza Coupon Cards. For \$10, you get one medium, one topping pizza absolutely free and 9 free pizza coupons redeemable when you buy a pizza at regular price. You'll get a second pizza of equal or lesser value FREE.



The cards are good through 12/15/08 and can be used at several local Domino's for carry-out or delivery. Don't forget ... the class that sells the most Domino's cards this month wins a pizza party! Questions? Contact Coleen Murray at CMurray341@aol.com or (703) 550-1857.