

# TUTORING NEWS: EPWORTH TUTORING PROGRAM

5253 N. Kenmore, Chicago, IL 60640-2405, 773-561-4759, Fax 773-561-6419

www.geocities.com/epworthtutoring EpworthTutoring@aol.com

Volume 10, Number 4, June 2001

## EPWORTH MUSIC INSTITUTE BEGINS SECOND SUMMER

The Music Institute will run for nine weeks, from June 11 through August 8. Free piano one-hour private lessons will be offered to students of the Tutoring Program twice a week. Students will also be able to rehearse with the Community Youth Choir once a week. This program is in partnership with the Kiwanis Club of the North Shore, which provided two keyboards for the Institute, with Goudy Elementary School and Epworth Girl Scout Troop 11, which are encouraging this experience for the students, and with Methodist Homes & Services. It is hoped that during the summer some of the students will be able to perform for the Kiwanis Club, the Methodist Home, and senior citizens in the neighborhood.

In addition to tutoring director Beth Palmer and Eleanor Bilby, piano teacher and tutor, several tutors have volunteered to teach. Katherine Ziegler, a seminary student at Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary who was a piano performance major in college will also teach. High school students will help, and students who did well in the program last summer will serve as coaches for younger children under the supervision of experienced teachers.

Last summer we had hopes, but nothing to refer back to: everything that happened was a gift and everything was magical. This year we will try to reach last year's success level. We hope the same wonder will be present this year, with wisdom from last year informing what we do.

**Anyone who can help teach beginning piano students one afternoon or evening a week this summer, please call Beth, 773-561-4759, or e-mail her at epworthtutoring@aol.com.**

**GIRL SCOUT TRIPS** The 4th-6th grade Girl Scouts went to the zoo in June to see the jaguar they adopted last year. The 2nd-3rd grade troop went on an overnight trip Memorial Day weekend and will be going on a camping trip at the end of June. The 7<sup>th</sup>-HS Girl Scouts will go on a trip July 6-8.

**PARENT OF THE YEAR: Wanda Mangrum** Wanda has been helpful as a volunteer with the Epworth Youth Choir. She has been a chaperon on four trips the Youth Choir has taken this year. She has

assisted the children in taking the bus in the December snows to reach a nursing home and walking through the neighborhood in cool April to reach another nursing home to sing. She has brought her infant daughter along, wheeling her in her stroller, in order to be a chaperon and help the Youth Choir. This trips could not have been done without her.

**YOUTH CHOIR TRIPS** The Epworth Community Youth Choir went to the Carmen Manor Nursing Home to sing in April. In May they went to the Methodist Home. Both concerts were within walking distance, so 12-14 children, along with chaperons Wanda Mangrum and Selah Rufus and director Beth Palmer, walked the 15-20 minute distance to each of the nursing homes, pulling shopping carts full of robes, folders, keyboard, and sound equipment. The children sang beautifully at the concerts, and residents of both homes enjoyed the children singing.

**PRESCHOOL TRIP** Eighth grade tutor Vadan Gottlieb knew the preschool children would enjoy the Kohl Children's Museum in Wilmette. With the help of coordinators Eva Schwinge and Gigi Head, Vadan organized a trip for the tutoring preschool children, ages 2-6. Six preschool children, two older sisters, one infant, two parents, and the tutors, enjoyed the trip to the Kohl Children's Museum.

**WNUR, Northwestern Univ. Radio, 90.6 FM** Three of our students were interviewed in February by Tina Vu, student at NU and reporter for radio station WNUR, Augusta Bullette, age 11, Luis Munoz, age 12, and Carleen Amarillo, age 13. They spoke into a special microphone and talked about test-taking, textbooks, and class size at their school. They were featured on "Primordial Soup" in a program devoted to education.

**AFTERNOON TUTORS' IDEAS FOR FALL** The Tutoring Program will resume Monday, Sept. 24 for 5th-8th graders and Tuesday/ Wednesday, Sept. 25/26 for 1st-4th graders. Saturday tutoring will begin in mid-October.

The afternoon tutors were energetic in their plans for the coming year. They plan to have meetings with small groups of parents, in which they can meet the parents, share with them their expectations for the children, and find out what the parents expect and hope for their children from the Tutoring Program. The tutors would like to tell the parents about the Home Read-a-thon to make the parents aware of their role in helping the children read the books and having them return the books. The tutors would also like the parents to tell them about special medical problems the children have.

For the Home Read-a-thon, tutors suggested that students sign library books out on a sheet in the folders instead of using the sign-out book. Tutors then could keep track of the books and remind the students to bring them back.

Tutors discussed the importance of an orientation packet for new tutors. They also wanted a message board to which tutors could refer every session.

For the Parents' Nights, the tutors suggested that the children say their poems, and thus sit, according to grades so that when the children turn to face the parents to sing the songs, the smaller first graders will be in front and the taller fourth graders will be in back. The tutors also suggested that we slow down the pace of the children to allow more time to take pictures.

We need to take more advantage of the computer lab--with its math programs, typing programs and the Internet. Students should be scheduled regularly to use the computers, but tutors may also use computer time as a reward for their students. We are looking for a tutor who can be in the computer lab during the last part of each session to help tutors who aren't familiar with computers.

The afternoon tutors feel that story time, where a tutor reads a story aloud to several children, is important. This could either be in small groups or as the total group. Having more story times would help the children's vocabulary.

We did conflict resolution only in the fall, so several tutors had not been in the sessions. Perhaps CR sessions could be in the spring as well as the fall.

**EVENING TUTORS' IDEAS FOR FALL** The Monday evening tutors would like their students to take better advantage of the Internet next year. They would like their students to be scheduled frequently for the Internet, and then to yield the time if their students have too much homework.

The tutors would like their students to evaluate Websites. Tutors would also like their students to learn to use spreadsheets.

The tutors suggested the students write an article on a Website of their choice. Some tutors can help the students take pictures from the Website and incorporate them into an article. Perhaps we could display the articles instead of printing them in a magazine, because of all the pictures.

For conflict resolution, the tutors would like us to continue to work in small groups (4-5 students) and to separate the boys and girls. They also want the scenarios to be realistic.

The tutors feel it is important to help the students with their homework. Next year we will stress that they bring 1-2 school textbooks, in addition to working on the assignments in the tutoring folders.

**SATURDAY TUTORS' IDEAS FOR FALL** The Saturday tutors will have a planning session at the end of June to plan for the coming year.

### **FUNDING AWARD RECEIVED**

The Epworth Tutoring Program was recipient of a Lend-a-Hand award from the Chicago Bar Foundation. The CBF honored the Epworth Tutoring Program for helping children with their academic and life skills. The CBF also appreciated the loyalty of the tutors and the mentoring the tutors do with the students.

The award was presented at the Tutor/ Mentor Connection Conference at the Holiday Inn Chicago Mart in May 2001.

**501 (c) 3** is the tax status of not-for-profit organizations. Some foundations would like to fund the work of the Tutoring Program, but they require that the Tutoring Program have its own 501 (c) 3 number apart from that of Epworth Church; so members of Epworth Church are working to create a new organization, Epworth Community Programs, to govern the Tutoring Program.

### **STORIES OF 1ST-4TH GRADE STUDENTS**

Reading was a chore for **6-year old Denzell** in September. He labored over stories with three-word sentences. In late fall he started reading longer books, still with big print and many pictures. One of his favorites was "The Bicycle Race." In May he picked up "The Magic Pot," a long picture book with fine print. He was

so anxious to read the book and find out what was going to happen that he didn't want to do his homework. His tutor Elaine tried to get him to do his homework, but he kept reading to find out what was going to happen in "The Magic Pot." He finished the book during the sessions, and his tutor reflected, "What was I doing! Trying to get him to put aside reading a long picture book in order to do a 5-minute homework assignment?! Denzell was doing just what he should have been doing!" After Denzell read "The Magic Pot" other students started reading it.

Tutor Amy is proud of **third grader LilRita**. In September LilRita was shy, and clinging. She always had to be near her tutor. She couldn't do her homework by herself because she couldn't concentrate and she didn't have the skills.

LilRita particularly enjoyed working on the chalkboard. Amy wrote math problems on the board and LilRita wrote the answers. During the year LilRita got better and better in math. She did the problems faster and faster. By May she was saying, "More! More problems! Give me harder problems! Write faster!" She loved doing math problems on the chalkboard.

One day in May LilRita ran up to Amy as she came to the tutoring sessions and she said, "I have a surprise for you!" Amy said, "What it is?" LilRita said, "I did all my homework in school today!" She was so proud. She had done all her homework on her own! By May she wasn't shy or clinging any more. She was self-confident; she didn't get distracted while doing her homework, and she had the skills to be able to figure out the work.

Amy tried to focus on social skills as well as academic skills in working with LilRita. She stressed responsibility in doing her homework, in returning library books, and in coming to tutoring session on time. One day LilRita saw Amy's rings and questioned, "Where did you get those rings?" Amy replied, "I earned them. My company gave them to me for doing a good job." Amy wanted her to see that people have to work for things.

Susan worked with two **second graders, Danielle and Patrick**. Danielle did things quickly. Once she corrected Susan's spelling of "tomorrow." She found it easy to generalize ideas and apply them to other things. She also was aware of people's behavior. Once when Patrick was fooling around and acting crazy, Danielle said, "Do you act like that at home?"

Patrick couldn't wait for the cookie time toward the end of every session. Usually Susan didn't take the

cookies offered her, but once she took the two Oreos and set them on the table. Patrick eyed the cookies. "Can I have your cookies? You never eat your cookies." Susan said, "Yes, you're right. But this time I want the cookies." Then Patrick said, "I'll give you a \$100 for your cookies" (This was for two Oreos.) Susan said, "No, I think I'll eat them." Patrick kept trying, but Susan stood firm. At the end of the session Patrick put his tutoring folder away (usually he didn't), and on his way out he hugged her. It was like he couldn't get by with anything, and he could trust her. Susan glowed with appreciation for Patrick.

This note was found on a tutoring table: "you are the best turth. thank you for helping me"

**Third grader Fernando** had a hard time memorizing the multiplication tables. Two other students in our tutoring program who were in his same class at school had passed many tests on the tables, but Fernando couldn't do it. One day tutor Elaine worked with Fernando and concentrated on the times tables. She worked and she worked. She told him, "Keep saying these to yourself when you get home and as you're going to sleep tonight." At the end of the session Fernando left, and Elaine saw him marching out of the door of the tutoring center chanting, "9 x 6 is 54. 9 x 6 is 54. 9 x 6 is 54." Elaine felt the day was worth while.

**Third grader Melissa** was just learning English. One day she refused to read or write. Finally her tutor Leona pulled some stickers out of her purse and asked Melissa to pick one she liked. She picked a beautiful, big fish. Leona had her write about it. This is what Melissa wrote: "Today we looked at stickers. My favorite was the giant fish. It was blue and yellow and red. The fish is pretty. From: Melissa"

In September **second grader Chris** could barely read. He could not do math. He could barely write. He got angry very easily. Twice he put on his coat and walked out of the tutoring session (only two other students have done that in 16 years). Frequently he hid under a table, sometimes crawling from one table to another, always underneath. Occasionally, he would do his work under a table.

Homework was hard for him. Usually he had to copy five words four times each, write a

sentence using each word, and do two sides of a page of math. At the beginning of the year, he stated every day that he did not have any homework. Gradually he began to do it, bit by bit.

During the year we helped him read our first three readers. The third reader had three books. The third book, "The Magic Hat," caught Chris' attention. He enjoyed reading it! He wanted to read instead of doing his homework. After he read "The Magic Hat" he could read his reader from school. We had taught him to read!

In September Chris' writing was hard and forced, as if he were just learning how to write. In February he refused to write something for our *Sunshine* magazine. The next day he started telling his tutor about something that happened in class at school. The tutor said, "Why don't you write about that for *Sunshine*?" He took out his journal and wrote about the event: "A Zoo Class?" In March he started talking about leprechauns and wrote two pages (with pictures) in his journal about a leprechaun. Another day he came to tutoring, took out his journal, and began writing. When he had finished writing, he said, "My uncle is in jail, and I'm writing about it." The journals are for students to write about anything, but also a place for them to write about things on their minds. Very few students use them that way. Here was Chris, who could barely write in September, using the journal as a journal. His tutor gave him a small notebook which he could use as a journal over the summer, when he was living with his sister.

In Chris' folder at the end of the year, there were two journals from the beginning of the year which were totally filled with tic-tac-toe games. In one he had written part of his name, but it was misspelled. By February he was writing long, interesting stories with pictures. Chris came a long way during the year!

## **STORIES OF 5TH-8TH GRADERS**

**Sixth grader Gelisa** did poorly in math her first year in the Tutoring Program, 1999-2000. This year she concentrated on math in tutoring on Monday nights. Her tutor Lorraine helped her with our math worksheets and her school math. When she took the Iowa test, we found she rose two grade levels in math during the year.

**Eighth grader Candice** also had to catch up in math if she was to graduate. Her tutor Eric helped her a lot. When the results of the Iowa tests came out, she was jubilant. "I passed!" she told us.

**Sixth grader Augusta** has been in the program for six years, never working up to his potential. This year he began to try.