

A publication of Sedona Charter School  
K-8 Tuition-free Montessori School

Writing: SCS Staff and GC members  
Photos: SCS Staff and parents  
Design & Editing: Jane Cathcart



New Athletic Director  
Lucy the Lab  
Adopt The Garden  
Exploring Our Great State  
Early Release Wednesdays  
Carnegie Hall Here We Come!

academic excellence ... personal growth ... small school environment

# Roadrunner report

## music notes >>>

### Swings & Strings

Don't forget about our goal to re-install the playground in its new location and outfit our Performing Arts Classroom! Our Swings & Strings fundraiser is only days away and our volunteers are busier than ever finalizing all the last minute details.

You won't want to miss spending Friday afternoon, May 3rd from 3-5:30 pm on our campus. There will be a \$1000 golf ball drop grand prize, a miniature putt-putt golf course, face painting, bounce house, carnival games, raffle prizes, silent auction, excellent food and more.

Swings & Strings promises wholesome fun for all ages, so invite your family and friends to participate. Brings your wallets, bring your appetites and be ready for an afternoon of fun supporting Sedona Charter School.

Some of the items available to bid on in our silent auction include a dinner for two at Enchantment Resort, a Firehouse Birthday Party, free Red Rock Balloon Adventures, a western wine basket, a two-night stay at the Baby Quail



Inn, seasonal wreaths, four passes to Desert Botanical Gardens, Jeep tours and more.

## Carnegie Hall Here We Come!

Being from a small, rural school, SCS orchestra students are sometimes limited in their larger musical experiences, as is the case for many young musicians around our area. That is why, from time to time, we join forces with other music directors in order to give our students the important opportunity to experience the sound of playing in a larger ensemble; to build relationships and friendships that bridge our smaller communities together; to help inspire one another to become better musicians through a sense of teamwork, comradery and leadership; and to use our talent to fulfil our responsibility as musicians to help educate and elevate our communities with quality musical experiences.

In May of 2016, SCS students participated in one such collaboration at our annual Evening with Strings concert, performing a riveting version of *Danse Bacchanale*. A recording of this performance was posted on You-Tube, and recently viewed by an administrator of the New York Invitational Music Festival, who recommended that we apply for such a group to perform at Carnegie Hall.

It was with this spirit of collaboration in mind that orchestra directors, Kristina Beachell and Courtney Yeates, applied to

bring an orchestra comprised of the most dedicated SCS, SCS alumni, NAU Jr. Academy and area high school orchestra students to the New York Invitational Music Festival at Carnegie Hall in New York City.

**We are honored to announce that we were accepted and will be moving forward to bring a group of about 30-40 of our best and most committed students to perform in the famed Stern Auditorium/Perelman Stage at Carnegie Hall in March of 2020!**



In the coming days, we will be sharing more detailed information

with you so everyone knows what to expect and the level of financial and personal commitment it will take to prepare for this once in a lifetime opportunity. Kristina will be scheduling an informational meeting for parents in the very near future, so be on the lookout for details in an upcoming email.

In the meantime, we have another collaborative concert featuring our students, SRRHS orchestra students as well as SCS alumni on Wednesday evening, May 15, 2019 at 6:30 pm in the Performing Arts Center at Sedona Red Rock High School. It is important that students be practicing music at home and preparing diligently for our spring Evening with Strings concert. We'll see you there!

## lower elementary >>>

# Exploring Our Great State

We have had a wonderful year in Lower Elementary and are looking forward to finishing the year strong! At the end of April our third years finished up their AZ Merit testing. They were nervous but took the testing one day at a time and feel that they did well. While AZ Merit was taking place, the younger students visited our local Fire Department and learned about the equipment firefighters use and their vehicles. The first and second years also walked to the Amitabha Stupa and Peace Park to learn more about Asian customs. We have been studying Asia, and it was fun for the kids to see a Buddhist shrine like the ones in more than ten Asian countries.

Our third years participated in their annual rite of passage field trip to the Grand Canyon



at the end of April. After preparing and learning about the canyon in the classroom, they were delighted to see it firsthand. Each one had a



different favorite part of our trip as we hiked the Bright Angel Trail, examined fossils along the rim, and spotted the abundant and

varied wildlife who call the canyon home. Of course, one highlight of our trip is always traveling by train from Williams to the Grand Canyon, enjoying the Wild West actors and experiencing (for many) their first train ride ever. They are so pleased to say they hiked into one of the Seven Natural Wonders of the world found right in our backyard!

We look forward to our Spring Evening with Strings concert on Wednesday evening May 15 at 6:30 pm and our end of year celebration on Thursday evening May 23 at 5:30 pm. All our students prepare for and participate in these



two events and work very hard to put on a good show for you! Please plan to attend both and witness the fruit of their labors as they make music together. At our end of year ceremony, you will be presented with singing, dancing, and of course our third year's speeches.

In addition, we anticipate a few more field trips before the year ends! In early May our third years anticipate touring the Clemenceau Museum for a trip through the human digestive system. Then our whole class will be going to Red Rock State Park for a lesson on our riparian zone here in Sedona.

We are looking forward to all the exciting adventures our students will be having in May and expect to finish our year well. Onward!

## montessori >>>

### Did You Know? Spelling Matters

Nothing can make you lose credibility more quickly or seem uneducated than a spelling mistake. Spelling is a high-level cognitive skill. Children learn to spell by investigating how words work and recognizing unique structures and patterns of words.

While some spelling mistakes are harmless and funny, most are not. Poor spelling or the accidental typo not only makes us look bad, it can create confusion, a loss of clarity and meaning, and in extreme cases may cost millions in missed opportunities. In today's society, no one is immune and technology is tending to make bad spelling commonplace.

At SCS we have some of the best spellers in the county. We want to congratulate Lazor Lanson for taking fourth place at the 73rd annual Yavapai County Spelling Bee. Thirty-six spellers qualified for the county competition; effectively making it a tournament of champions featuring students from district schools, charter schools, private schools and the home-school community.

Lazor was presented a plaque and check by County Superintendent Tim Carter.



## upper elementary >>>

### Lucy the Lab

The purpose of Title 1 - Improving the Academic Achievement of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) *signed into law on December 10, 2015, replacing No Child Left Behind* is to "provide all children significant opportunity to receive a fair, equitable, and high-quality education, and to close educational achievement gaps."

At Sedona Charter School, we are fortunate to be part of a Title 1 program offering one on one help with Reading and Math to students in need. Reading is fundamental, but for some children learning the skills can be overwhelming. There are many innovative programs and several helpful dogs leading children to greater literacy across the nation. Yes, you read that right – DOGS! Dogs are lending their ears, and children who need extra help with reading and personal communication couldn't be happier.

Studies have shown that animals are ideal reading companions because they help increase relaxation, listen attentively, do not judge, laugh or criticize. As dogs are far less intimidating than peers, children are free to read aloud at their own speed. These registered therapy animals have been trained and tested for health, safety,



appropriate skills and temperament. When a therapy dog is listening to a child read, the environment is changed. The child's dread is replaced by eager anticipation and the learning process begins. Each handler is a skilled facilitator in reading practice.

The UE classroom is happy to introduce Nancy Martin and her 10-year old Lab mix, Lucy. They both completed therapy dog certification through Therapy Pets

Unlimited about two years ago. Lucy had to complete the basic obedience tasks such as sit, stay, down and leave it. She also had to let children and grownups approach and pet her without growling or snapping. Nancy said that Lucy's personality is such that she passed these requirements easily.

Nancy contacted Sedona Charter School about the possibility of Lucy working in a classroom, and we jumped at the opportunity! Lucy teamed up with Bob Wentsch, Title 1 Facilitator for Upper Elementary, and it has been a successful partnership for participating kids. There has been noticeable improvement in reading communication skills, self-esteem, confidence and social interaction.

As far as our students are concerned, reading is about the dog, not about the child. No pressure, no embarrassment and no humiliation. Most importantly, Lucy has made reading fun and students anticipate reading to Lucy because she is a great listener!

# Adopt The Garden

*A letter from our Middle School students*

Dear Parents,

Our school's campus is beautiful! One of the wonderful features is our garden, which is getting more and more beautiful by the day. We have recently planted squash, carrots, lima beans, Hopi black pinto beans, runner beans, rosemary, corn, string beans, cilantro, artichoke, lemon basil, strawberries, watermelon, spinach, romaine, and more in the garden.

Students in all classrooms have benefited from our school's garden. They have

contributed to our school and the greater community. Some of the benefits include spending quality time with family and friends, seeing the garden grow, eating healthy produce and experiencing first-hand care

of the plants. Gardening also helps with stress-relief, mental health and immune regulation. As you see, gardening helps us be all-around healthy kids!

Currently, students from all three classrooms are helping in the garden. It has been fun, but it will get even better when the



plants flourish. Unfortunately, many of our vegetables will be ripe in the summer when a lot of us won't be around. We need your help to keep the plants alive and thriving.

How you can help: **ADOPT THE GARDEN FOR A WEEK.** For contributing, you will get to take home the pesticide-free, GMO-free, organic produce that is available when you are gardening. You will also earn volunteer hours for helping us out this summer.

What would you need to do? Simply water the garden daily, weed the four beds, and treat it with loving care by avoiding stepping on the plants and closing the gates after each visit (our neighborhood javelinas really like our beds). Please email Laurie at [laurie.altringer@sedonacharterschool.com](mailto:laurie.altringer@sedonacharterschool.com) if you can help us out! Thanks!

Sincerely,

*Sonia,  
Omar,  
and Gigi*



## Letter from the President



Hello everybody,

Summer is fast approaching, and parents are looking for creative ways to keep their students learning and moving. Here are just a few of Sedona's local offerings to keep young minds engaged over summer break. Our community pool, Sunset Park and Sedona Public Library are some of the venues open all summer.

Sedona Community Pool: \$2/child, \$3/adult. 30 day passes available. Swim lessons available. Call 928-282-0112 for any pool questions.

Sunset Park's splash pad is free and open 10am-5pm throughout the summer. Every Wednesday in July the city puts up a slip-n-slide from 11am-1pm.

Sedona Public Library hosts a variety of free summer activities including a kid's chess program and summer reading program.

Arizona Science Center is hosting a camp at Posse Ground Park June 24-28.

- Grades 1-3 meet 9-12 pm.
- Grades 4-6 meet 1-4 pm.

The cost of the camp is \$175. Call (928) 282-7098 to register.

Sedona Humane Society will host several Kids & Kritters camps from 10am-2pm for children ages 7-12. Call 928-282-4679 to register or receive more information.

- June 3-7
- June 17-21
- June 24-28.

Cost: \$300/session. Kids may sign up for multiple sessions.

Lowell Observatory in Flagstaff will host science camps from 9am -3pm for grades 1-6. Cost is \$250/child with topics: The Solar System – 1-2 grade; Galaxies – 3-4 grade; and Life on Other Worlds – 5-6 grade.

- June 17-21
- June 24-28
- July 15-19
- July 22-26

Contact Kelly Ferguson at 928-233-3280 with any questions.

On behalf of the Governing Council, I would like to wish you all a great summer. We'll see you all back again at Back To School Night in August.

Respectfully yours,

Steven Paley, President  
Sedona Charter School Governing Council.



## ask the editor >>>

### Q: Is Teacher Appreciation Week just another "Hallmark" holiday?



A: No, not at all. This isn't a week to guilt you into showing gratitude, it's a week to remind everyone to do so! Let's face it, we all get busy, and we're all grateful for one another; but often we forget to say something or show it. Our teachers and staff work long days and often weekends to be sure your children have the best education available in Sedona. While we know you all appreciate and love our teachers, sometimes it's just nice to hear those sentiments. So May 6-10 is the week to make your voices heard! Let our teachers know that you notice and that you care. The joy of giving back is indescribable, so allow your children to experience that at a young age! Everyone loves to get an unexpected note or gift that says "I noticed what you did." Whether it's a home-made card, a hand-written note from a student, a gift card for a local store or restaurant, that special candy bar or just a flower, make sure you and your children plan ahead and go the extra mile to say thanks. Check your inbox and take home packets for the Teacher Appreciation Week Flyer.



## staff >>>

**Lower Elementary:** Katarina Houser, Amy Tedrick, Amy Alexander, KC O'Connor, Deborah Williams, Dolores Biermann, Stephanie Schmid  
**Upper Elementary:** Suzi Ashley, Maija Alanen, Lisa Mercer, Mackenzie Pace, Jacquie Randall  
**Middle School:** Lauren Rondeau, Laurie Altringer, Ana Hansen  
**Orchestral Strings:** Kristina Beachell  
**Drama:** Lauren Hendler  
**Administration:** Alice Madar, Jannette Villalobos-Gil, Stephanie Knight  
**Title I:** Bob Wentsch  
**Special Education:** Lucy Schwill, Cynthia Tyler



contact us at 928-204-6464  
[www.sedonacharterschool.com](http://www.sedonacharterschool.com)

165 Kachina Drive  
Sedona, AZ 86336

**our mission...** *Our Montessori school challenges each child to achieve excellence through an individualized program, which includes a schoolwide musical strings program. We inspire a passion for learning, instill a sense of personal responsibility, and cultivate a respect for the environment and involvement in the community.*

## around campus >>>

# Early Release Wednesdays

Beginning in August, SCS students will have every Wednesday afternoon free to plan activities with family and friends. Weekly early release Wednesdays began in our district and neighboring schools in 2018 and have become an integral part of instructional planning and teacher training, not only in the Verde Valley but across the state.

The tightly structured school day has always presented a challenge for teachers to plan and work together on a regular basis. This is particularly true of the Montessori model as our teachers are with students nearly the entire day with the exception of a short time for specials.

With this new schedule, teachers will now have common work time with colleagues to join forces in planning, analyzing and improving the way we present curriculum. In addition, teachers will have more time to share ideas and resources across classrooms, resulting in a greater emphasis on how students learn. The results of these discussions will benefit both students and teachers and is a wonderful investment in the success of students at SCS!

Just as you want your medical doctor to stay up-to-date on new developments and techniques in the field of medicine, you want your children benefiting from teachers collaborating with one another, because instruction is more effective with planning. Yes, teachers plan at home, but trying to plan effectively from home when your co-teachers are not present just isn't the same.

Because our expectations of students and teachers continues to grow and change, staff will use this time to:

- Learn new strategies to teach students with increasingly diverse learning needs
- Review student data to evaluate the effectiveness of instruction and adjust teaching to improve outcomes for students
- Implement new curriculum designed to prepare students for a more complex world
- Master and incorporate new technology into the learning environment
- Plan and document student progress and activities

While we know that you support giving our teachers more time for professional development and collaborative planning, we recognize the impact this will have for some families due to the limited options for childcare on Wednesday afternoons. We realize that more after school supervision options must be developed, and our teachers will be working with the Sedona community over the summer to present additional childcare options for families in need. In addition to our school sports program being in full swing every Wednesday afternoon, the Sedona Library offers exciting after school opportunities and Precious Stones has room for 30 students ages 5-12.

**Early Release Day!**

## looking ahead >>>

June/July 2019

*Summer Updates*

*Ask A Teacher*

*Around Campus*

*2019 Staff Introductions*

## sports news >>>

# New Athletic Director

We are pleased to announce that Tim Smith will once again be part of our Sedona Charter School team next year. Tim filled the gap for us in Upper Elementary for part of 2018 and was a student favorite. We are happy to have him back in Sedona.



Tim will our new Athletic Director, working hard to organize better sports opportunities for small schools in the Verde Valley and all our students. He holds his Master's Degree in Education from Western State Colorado University and Bachelor's from the University of Arizona. Prior to U of A, Tim attended Virginia Military Institute where he was a Division I running back. He has worked with students of varying ages and has extensive experience in math, science, different languages (French, Spanish and Turkmen) and special education.

Tim has lived all over the world teaching in Nicaragua, working in Guadeloupe and volunteering in India and Turkmenistan. He has teaching experience including teaching high school for a year at a juvenile detention center and brings his cultural knowledge of living abroad to the classroom. He is a great asset to our team, and we look forward to our best sports year ever with Tim at the helm!



**Sedona Charter School**

**MAY 2019**

*Keeping parents informed*



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p><b>Looking Ahead:</b> June 4—Report Cards Available June 18—Governing Council Meeting</p>			<p><b>Early Release Day!</b></p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3 pm</p> <p><b>SWINGS &amp; STRINGS</b></p>	<p>4</p>
<p>5</p> <p><b>CONCO DE MAYO</b></p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7</p> <p><b>Teacher Appreciation Week</b></p>	<p>8</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>11</p>
<p>12</p> <p><b>Happy Mother's Day</b></p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p> <p>9-12 Strings Rehearsal</p>	<p>15</p> <p>6:30 pm Strings Concert</p>	<p>16</p> <p>4 pm—UE Play</p>	<p>17</p>	<p>18</p>
<p>19</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p> <p>3:45 pm GOVERNING COUNCIL MTC.</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23</p> <p>5:30 pm—LE Year End Program</p> <p><b>End of Year CELEBRATION!</b></p>	<p>24</p> <p>9:30 am—8th Grade Graduation</p> <p><b>EARLY DISMISSAL</b></p> <p>11:00 am - UE Year End Program</p> <p><b>SCHOOL'S OUT!</b></p>	<p>25</p> <p><b>Summer Vacation</b></p>
<p>26</p>	<p>27</p> <p><b>Memorial Day</b></p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p>	
			<p><b>U E Field Trips</b></p>	<p><b>Staff Week</b></p>		