



Stafford Junction
Where Lives Connect

THE JUNCTION JOURNAL

A Newsletter of Stafford Junction, Inc.

The Directors Corner

By: Carrie Evans – Executive Director

My Memom (grandmother) had a saying that I never quite understood until I had kids of my own, and by kids, I mean the Stafford Junction Kids.

"It's better to eat a peanut butter and jelly sandwich with a friend than a perfectly grilled steak on your own."
Memom Burslem

Since I've grown up a bit, I understand a lot more of who she was and what she meant, but for now, it seems appropriate to just take some time to think about a good old PB&J and some good solid friends.

This past summer, Stafford Junction learned that many of our kids, after leaving summer camp, had no substantive meal until they returned to us the next day. Imagine, in the world that you and I live in, going to bed hungry, with that gnawing feeling in your gut that no matter how you toss and turn it just doesn't go away. And then waking up as it grumbles and screams for something... anything to eat.

Imagine not knowing where your next meal is coming from.

Imagine looking into your pantry and seeing nothing but empty boxes and stale or moldy bread.

All of the sudden my Memom's jelly soaked PB&J is looking pretty good!

These aren't stories from a third world country or the Appalachian Mountains, they are stories here in Stafford, and they are the kids that just can't sit still next to your son or daughter in school because they are, simply put, hungry.

If you don't think it affects you, then you've lost touch with the world around you. Look again. It isn't a political agenda, it isn't a lapse in funding, it's the simple fact that we've enjoyed our steaks far too long and forgotten what joy a PB&J sandwich can bring.

So join us! Some days all we'll have is PB&J and some days we'll have a banquet fit for a king. Most importantly when you enter our doors here at Stafford Junction, you must remember this. We don't have Board Room etiquette in this place, we have **Grace for the Table**. That means we are always thankful and there is always room for more.

The Stafford Rotary Club has committed to serving 50,000 meals in the next three years. Stafford Junction is honored to be a part of this effort. The staff here makes fun of me because I'm constantly giving away food, they laugh as they say "Carrie, you sure do like to feed people." I guess it's my Memom coming out in me years later, and I'd like to think she'd be proud.

Join us! Ask me how... I'd love to share our story and invite you to the Stafford Junction Table.

This summer SJ gave out 421 TIDE – ME – OVER food pack – thank you for making that happen.

YOU Can Make an Impact NOW

Please prayerfully consider giving today. **Giving is easy—pay on-line at**
www.staffordjunction.org or simply mail your check to

PO Box 5405, Fredericksburg, VA 22403.

We also have NAP Tax Credits available on a first come basis – Call Carrie Evans 540-368-0081

Ebonee Davis / Summer Junction and Brain Builders Program Manager

Summer Junction

The 2016 Summer Junction program was a marvelous Success. 232 kids got to enjoy this summer various activities! We had over 100 students enrolled in our onsite day camp and we had loads of fun! Our students participated in: outdoor field trips, sports, health workshops, crafts, hands – on S.T.E.M projects and so much more!

Stafford Junction would like to give a special round of applause to all of our teachers of the wonderful workshops and activities this summer. Those workshops and activities included: Eco Systems & Habitats (Judy Deffenbaugh), Health Rocks (Virginia Cooperative Extension), Poodle reading book club (Carol & Billy Shelton), Healthy Weights for Healthy Kids (Virginia Cooperative Extension), Music & Movement (Sara Milliken), S.T.E.M Thursdays (Christina Clark), Kids on the Block (Rappahannock Kids on the Block), Fascinating History (Michelle Hamilton), Character Building (Rappahannock Area community Service Board), L.E.A.P (Virginia Cooperative Extension), Reading with Mr. Avaughn (Avaughn Powell) and The One Man Band (Peter McCory).

SUMMER JUNCTION SUCCESS STORIES



Lunchtime for our Kindergarten readiness

“My success story with one of the children occurred during the eco week. I was helping at the poodle station, and one of the kids called me over and asked me if they were saying a word correctly and the word was 'biodegradable.' The child only got one syllable wrong on their first try with no help, I was overjoyed that a 1st grader was able to almost correctly pronounce such a big word all by themselves!”

-Maddie, Summer Junction 2016 volunteer

group

“When I first started volunteering I noticed that a lot of the kids didn't eat their lunch, or at least the healthy parts. They would only eat the chips and leave all the rest. So I started doing something called the big alligator bite that really seems to work. During lunch I'll go over to a kid that's not eating and hold out an imaginary sandwich. We'll have a competition of who can take the biggest alligator bite out of their sandwich. Now I no longer have to worry about the kids getting the proper nutrition and protein they need, as long as I remember to 'pack' my imaginary sandwich each day.”

McKenna C., Summer Junction 2016 volunteer



ECO week nature scavenger hunt



“I like STEM Thursday because now I know that I will grow to be Robotic Engineer. I will design a robot to do all the chores around the house for my mom and do all my homework!”

-Luis G., Summer Junction 2016 participant

** STEM Thursdays where students explored science, technology, engineering and mathematics **



John (one of our summer interns) helping a rising first grader read to Kindergarteners

Our summer reading program has gone to the dogs!

Special THANKS to Marla Mae, Rita Rae, Asa Jae and Coco Cola the 4 poodles who came to help our kids read. And of course don't forget their drivers Carol & Willie Shelton.



Rita was exhausted after a long day of reading

"The kids read **2,598** pages this summer. The original goal was 500 pages, which they exceeded the first week."

-John D., Summer Junction 2016 intern

Good Bye Summer Junction and Hello Brain Builders!

****Are you smarter than a Brain Builder?***

Last issues Riddles were:

1. I'm tall when I'm young and I'm short when I'm old. What am I?
Answer: Candle
2. What goes up when rain comes down?
Answer: Umbrella
3. Throw away the outside and cook the inside, then eat the outside and throw away the inside. What is it?
Answer: Corn
4. In a one-story pink house, there was a pink person, a pink cat, a pink fish, a pink computer, a pink chair, a pink table, a pink telephone, a pink shower— everything was pink! What color were the stairs?
Answer: There were no stairs!

*These riddles were correctly answered (first) by Kendrick Revis' family. Unfortunately, we did not receive their picture in time for this season's issue!

Brain Builders has started back up again! Our 8 schools are back in the swing of things and that means, we need you. 2016 – 2017 Brain Builders runs from September 26th, 2016– April 13th, 2017.

Items that we could use include:

- ** School Supplies
- ** Coats, gloves and hats
- ** Non – perishable food/ snack items
- ** Volunteers
- ** Meals for after school during Brain Builders

New Riddles!

1. If I have it, I don't share it. If I share it, I don't have it. What is it?
2. What travels around the world but stays in one spot?
3. What can you catch but not throw?
4. What is as light as a feather, but even the world's strongest man couldn't hold it for more than a minute?

Let your brain soar as you try to solve these 4 fun riddles! The first family to unravel all 4 will be featured in our Spring issue, get to choose 2 out of the 4 next riddles, as well as, receive a small token of appreciation from Stafford Junction! The answers will be revealed in the next issue so stay tuned & good Luck!

Can you guess how many backpacks & supplies Stafford Junction gave out this past month? Well if you guessed **266** you would be correct!



But like old Mother Hubbard – our cupboards are bare! We will be needing to re-stock our kids with supplies during their winter break in December. The TOP ITEMS we need are: Pens, Glue Sticks, Highlighters, Colored Pencils and Notebook paper.

So the next time you are at the store keep us in mind and pick up an extra pack of any of these items. We thank you and I know the kids, parents and teachers thank you as well.

A HUGE Heartfelt thank you for all those who donated this year to help us fill these backpacks

If you, your group or work would like to help us restock let me know – Lhamilton@StaffordJunction.org

Olga Escobar - Healthy Living Pays and Life Skills Workshop

In an effort to engage parents of children participating in our *Hugs and Brain Builders* programs, we created *Healthy Living Pays and Life Skills Workshops*. These 2 programs are dedicated to promoting a **holistic, healthier lifestyle among Stafford Junction families.**

Healthy Living Pays:

By offering alternatives like the *Stafford Junction Walking Club* and free *YMCA* memberships, we assist participating families by promoting physical activities. We also promote healthier diets by encouraging families to purchase their groceries at the local Fresh Market.

As certified application counselor (CAC) we screen individuals and families for eligibility for Federal Health Insurance, assisting them during the enrolment process. We also assist those who do not qualify for Federal Health Insurance by referring to free/low cost Local Clinics.

We currently have 284 involved in the HLP program.



Life Skills Workshops are a series of classes and hands-on activities that help to enhance educational, professional and healthy living skills. We are committed to provide financial lessons, parenting lessons and healthy cooking classes, among other exciting activities. Currently 32 individuals are enjoying the benefits of this program.

Healthy cooking lessons with Mary Belman from the Virginia Cooperative Extension

We are always looking for community leaders with skills to share Call and volunteer!

Stafford Junction has a new look for its website – go check it out and tell us what you think!!

Thank You Karen Charney Web Designer for her magic touch.

www.StaffordJunction.org

Greg Minor – Never a dull moment for the Stafford Junction kids.

Making S'mores at Motts Run Reservoir



Tubing at the quarry with the Friends of the Rappahannock



Summer Junction - Summer Fun

Learning first aid at the Rappahannock EMS Council

Summer programs included: Summer Junction Day Camp, Badges for Baseball, Riverside Theatre Camp, Teen Cuisine, Friends of the Rappahannock, Vacation Bible School and variety of other field trips!



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Contact us – we want to hear from you.

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