

Studio 26 Volunteer Update March 2005

Dear Studio 26 Volunteers and Soon-to-Be Volunteers,

Am I overdue sending this update: YES!

Is it because I've been swamped: Yes!

Is this a good thing? YES!

As a result of being swamped, will I keep this short? Yes (by my standards)!

Things you should know:

NEW NAME: We are no longer Studio 26, but now officially 826 Seattle. Yes, we have joined the ranks of New York City (826NYC) and Los Angeles (826LA) and, of course, the mothership, 826 Valencia in San Francisco. You'll recall that 826 Valencia is our model program, started by author and McSweeney's Publishing founder Dave Eggers. All together we make up 826 National. 826 Chicago and 826 Michigan are also in the works.

As an official chapter of 826 National, we will all have similar programming, do some fundraising together (with the clout of 826 Valencia behind us), have retreats together, and send lots of emails to each other – asking for and lending advice. I am very happy about this. Nationally, we can help kids all across the country gain the essential skills of writing.

NEW WEB SITE (SORT OF): Check out the new web site which is the old web site with the new name: 826seattle.org. Also, note that the new contact email for you folks is volunteer@826seattle.org.

NEW EVENTS: Events are happening. We've had our first house party and raised \$6,000! Pearl Jam has made a generous donation, as well as many other less famous individuals (see "Our Supporters" section on the new web site). Our grants writing group (mostly volunteers and board members) is writing grants like crazy, our board's Events Committee is planning some big ones, and I'm out shaking a lot of hands and asking for help. Keep your eyes posted for our book sale...coming up....and our rent party....coming up.

BIGGEST SHOCKER: We've totally changed neighborhood. I know, I know...that Stranger article said I was determined to get a space in Columbia City. Well, guess what: I gave up! Here's why: the Rainier Valley is going through a huge transition. With the new light rail system going through it, all developer eyes are on that community. This means rents are expensive, and much of the community, simply put, appears not to want more social service programs.

Now, in our case, because we will have a cool retail store with a versatile space traveler theme (the product opportunities are endless), they may be making a big mistake. Plus, the center will not only help the youth on the community, but also bring tons of people in to spend money. (*teri: too many*)

mixed messages in this, so I simplified; but I would actually delete the whole paragraph – you don't want to burn any bridges).

Oh well. In the meantime I did a bunch more research and....cut to the chase, we are moving to Greenwood. Yup...I'm negotiating a space at about 87th and Greenwood Avenue North. Many people don't know this, but there is a large immigrant population north of 85th, a higher level of low-income residents than in the Columbia City area, and Ingraham High School has a larger non-English speaking population than any of the high schools in the Rainier Valley. What's exciting to me, we will be breaking new territory by basing our operations in the north end. Tons of great social service/art programs operate from Capitol Hill and the Rainier Valley, and they do a good job of serving those communities. We're heading north, to unchartered territory, and they want us.

OUR STORE: 826 Valencia has a pirate supply store. 826 NYC has a super hero supply store. 826 Seattle will have a space traveler supply store. What would YOU need if you were traveling into space? (visas for other planets, canisters of fresh air, Velcro, Tang, a guide to the stars, cords to tie things up, hair paste to keep your hair down in anti-gravity, space travel leggo sets to pass the time, etc.) We have an ace store group — a team of volunteer professional designers, architects and retail folks — making magic out of this idea.

BUT WE'D LOVE YOUR PRODUCT IDEAS. Send your ideas to info@826seattle.org! The person who submits the most original idea that we can actually execute and sell wins an 826 Seattle t-shirt, in his or her styles. Remember the theme: space travel supplies. The winner will be announced at our Rent Party.

This is enough for now. Here's what I want you to think about (besides product ideas):

THE BOOK SALE: We'll send a date when we know it. If you have books you would like to donate, please email donations@826seattle.org (Also, take your hand off your computer mouse for one second and clap your hands for volunteer **Brian Barr**, who had the idea and is working hard to organize!)

There are a ton of people working on this project now. If you want to change your status in any way on our volunteer list (be taken off, tell us about a new skill, reinforce that you really want to help), or if you know other people who might like to volunteer, you can reach us: volunteer@826seattle.org.

RENT PARTY: We'll send the rent party date just as soon as we have it.

Thanks so much for staying through the winter with us,

Teri

