

April Update

In this (long-winded) update:

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6. What we need: cupboards, a pedestal, sponsors and table captains for fall breakfast
7. Our remodel
8. Baseball

First and foremost:

**1.** Where to be on April 10:

John Marshall Alternative School at 6:30 PM

This is the last year for this school and the third and last year we'll be publishing the compelling writing of these students. Why you should go:

- You will have a chance to purchase a book and have it signed by the authors. It is possible some of these young authors will be famous someday. This is a golden opportunity for you to be able to say 20 years from now: I saw him/her when...
- A full gymnasium will make the students feel good. They deserve to feel good.
- If you pay attention to the event and what the students are saying, you will have new insights into our world.
- Most people (including myself) are in a bit of a rut, you know, doing the same things over and over. This reading is probably something different from your usual routine. Break out!
- Cupcakes!

John Moe is coming from Minneapolis to speak. Certainly many of you could come from West Seattle and Magnolia to listen. You'll be glad you did.

Next up:

**2.** Spring workshops are well underway. Check out our website to see what is being offered: [www.826seattle.org](http://www.826seattle.org)

The phone rings often with parents wondering when our summer workshops will start and what they will be. There is even a family planning its vacation to Seattle based on our 826 Seattle workshop calendar. However, because our workshops are taught by volunteers, we probably won't have our complete calendar ready to launch until early May. Because our summer workshops are always super full (do you think the high quality and the free-of-charge has anything to do with that?), we think it is fine to appeal to those folks who don't get their summer plans set up months in advance.

**3.** By the way: We now have our first student taking the bus up a few times a week from Rainier Beach for homework help. David is a senior at Rainier Beach High School and lives in the Central District. One of the reasons we love our location is that students from all over the city can reach us via bus without transfers, since we are on two of the best bus lines in town: the #5 (comes from downtown and travels past our front door and up to 160th) and the #48 (starts in Rainier Beach and travels all the way to Golden Gardens).

Does this suggest our first satellite writing lab should be in Rainier Beach, one of the first locations we looked at? Maybe so...

Moving right along (*keep going, keep going, it's worth it*):

**4.** Some of you missed our Pluto Protest and maybe even some wonder: Why even have a Pluto Protest?

Well, a few years ago the International Astronomical Union had the nerve to declare that Pluto, long considered our ninth planet, simply wasn't a planet After All. This was, in fact, shocking and heartbreaking to many people who feel strongly that Pluto is a planet, no matter what the IAU says. Hence, Justin felt it his duty as store manager (and uber-fan of Pluto) to organize a protest. Let's just say that this protest was a big event. We had musicians contact us from New York and offer us songs about Pluto. We had press coverage. We even had a counter protest that showed up from people we didn't know who don't think Pluto is a planet! You might want to check out the YouTube footage marking this event:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nBnGqbrdd9U>

Now, in case there are one or two of you who might be wondering what a Pluto Protest has to do with our writing lab:

Well, our Greenwood Space Travel Supply Co. not only brings in a (small) revenue stream to support the work in our writing center, it also attracts adult space travelers who learn about our work and then become new volunteers. Also kids often show up to replenish their space travel supplies and then stay to learn how to write better. Any quality space travel supply company needs to be current with space issues, as well as respectful of our history in space. In fact, readers should probably know that once a month we hold a monthly in-store event, a series called "Greenwood Space Travel Supply Co. and 826 Seattle Celebrate Great Moments in Astrophysics." Mark your calendars for the next such event on Saturday, April 12, when we will honor the anniversary of the flight of Yuri Gagarin, the first human in space. Yuri was Russian, so we are spending the day honoring all things Russian, including Slavic foods and an all-day reading of the Russian classic *War and Peace*. To keep it lighthearted, there will be a contest asking folks to predict how many pages of *War and Peace* we can read aloud between the hours of 10AM and 6PM. Toffer has volunteered to do most of the reading. As a very literate, recent English-major graduate, he is a pretty fast reader.

**4.** Life goes on at 826 Seattle. Norma is back (hallelujah) to work, although we're not sure Baby Anna Derya is as thrilled by this new reality as those of us at 826 Seattle. *Strong women role models, Anna Derya!* we tell her. *Your father Tolga is taking care of you this month! Tender, sweet male role models, Anna Derya!*

With Norma back we are getting ready now for Maternity Leave #2: Alex. Alex possesses magical abilities with Quickbooks. She can add and subtract in her head. I ask her numbers questions often, question like: If an assistant spends 5.5 days in one month scheduling field trips and then helps out on two of those field trips, what percentage of the assistant's salary goes to programming and what percentage to administration? And, just like that, Alex knows. For the record: We'll be operating in the dark from June 30–September 1. We simply won't be sure of salary percentages, or have anyone on-site who can add in his or her head. Don't even ask.

**5.** Things we are looking for: still some cupboards for our kitchen if anyone is having a remodel out there. We're looking for a book pedestal that can hold the space log we're inviting store visitors to write in. Money. We're always looking for money if you have some random cash lying around taking up space in your home.

Another need: table captains and underwriters for our fall breakfast. If you or your company would like to help sponsor our breakfast contact us. If you are a person with friends who care

about literacy and would consider about a hundred dollar donation (or more) and you'd like to host a table, contact us! Get your book club to take on filling a table! The breakfast is Sept. 12 and Tim Egan (New York Times journalist and National Book Award winner) will be our keynote speaker. Even if you wish to consider, contact us for more details.

**6.** Also, phase two of our remodel where Jared and Sage enclosed the store and the window area with translucent space-like materials is complete and just about as cool as we imagined. If you come by for a visit, you will immediately be planning ways to create your own wall of translucent acrylic, and we know just the people to help you create your dream wall.

And finally:

**7.** All should know that 826 Seattle, thanks to Toffer's efforts, has scored a spot on the (very competitive) Queen Anne Softball League. Yes, a team of highly trained (and not-so-trained) athletes selected (at random) from our volunteer pool will proudly represent 826 Seattle on the community fields this summer. Our team will match baseball prowess with teams sporting names such as The Meat, Headhunters, and The Hitmen. We thought long and hard before selecting an appropriate team name that would reflect our literary prowess, our sense of irony, our general lighthearted demeanor, our connection to the writerly world, and our undying joie de vivre...

If you have time this summer, you might want to check out our 826 Seattle team, The Oscar Wildes, as they match skills with The Meat and The Hitmen. Those other teams might know how to steal bases and even be able to slide, but we will have our 826 Seattle secret weapon: a team of sharp tongues.

You'll recognize us on the field: Every team member will have The Oscar Wildes T-shirt with the telltale number on the back: 826.

That's it for April. I'm sure I've forgotten something important. Any questions? Come to John Marshall next week and ask me!

Teri