Dear Science Club Sponsors,

This has been a very busy year for the Primary School Science Club, started by the Oak Ridge/Knoxville sections of the American Nuclear Society (ANS) and Women in Nuclear (WIN). The Science Club stated as a pilot project at the Farragut Primary School, in Farragut, TN, in January of 2006. With your support, the Club was able to expand in the 2006-2007 school year to several new schools: Bearden Elementary, Dyllis Elementary, Sacred Heart Catholic School, and the Knoxville Adaptive Education Center.

The Club’s primary activity is to supply the Club members with a science kit each month, comprised of hands-on science activities at an age-appropriate level. This year's topics included crystals, atoms and molecules, chemistry, electricity, ecology, and the solar system. This year Science Club supplied 370 kits each month to members, at a cost of ~$2/kit (excluding print costs). Club costs were paid by sponsor donations and membership fees. Each participating school received a $200 donation to the school library science section.

In addition to the Club’s primary activity of passing out science kits once a month, the Club branched out to host a “Family Science Night.” The Family Science Night was held at Farragut Primary School (FPS) in Farragut, Tennessee on a Friday evening, and was hosted by the FPS PTA and the FPS Science Club. Sixteen University of Tennessee (UT) College of Engineering students from the student chapters of: ANS, SWE, Tau Beta Pi and others donated their time to spend the evening with kindergarten through second-grade children doing science experiments related to chemistry.

The experiments included extracting DNA from Fruit, chromatography, acid/base reactions, exploring densities of materials, and learning about what makes soda pop fizzy. Over 100 FPS students attended the event, joined by their parents and siblings, totaling over 300 people. No fee was charged, with the cost being paid by the science club and the PTA. It was a great success and a good time was had by all. Many of the FPS parents commented on the excellent example the UT students were providing for the younger children.
Based on the success of Science Night, the Club was able to perform a similar “Day of Science” at the Dyllis Elementary School. Unlike Science Night, this event was performed during the school day, at the request of the school administration. ANS, WIN, and Oak Ridge National Laboratory staff members provided the volunteer support for this activity, spending several hours of the school day at Dyllis, allowing over 200 kindergarten through 5th grade students to perform science experiments for a school afternoon.

Day of Science at Dyllis Elementary School

This outreach opportunity has also had a positive effect for our volunteers. Every month, lunchtime and evening gatherings are used to assemble kits and plan activities. Science club volunteers have spent hundreds of hours over the past year coming up with fun ideas for the kids and assembling kits. It has provided a means to give back to our community in a very positive way. The UT students were also very excited about the project, most sending messages right after Science Night asking “when can we do this again?”

WIN members also presented the club idea at the Anderson County Early Childhood Education Conference. This conference is a continuing education opportunity for education professionals, where education credit is granted. The principles, administration, and samples of science club activities were presented to ~30 early childhood education professionals. This is the second year WIN has presented the Club at this conference, and each time the Club presentation has received superlative reviews from the class participants. Participation to present at this event is by invitation and WIN has been invited back for next year.
The Science Club continues to grow and stabilize. As word spreads, additional schools are requesting information on how to start clubs and how to host a science day or night. This past year, Science Club, as a fledgling program, enjoyed generous support from you, our sponsors. The Science Club uses any and all types of donations—materials, services or monetary support. This past school year we were able to waive the $25 member fee for 80 disadvantaged students, who otherwise would not be able to participate. These children come from a Title I school (Dyllis) where most of the children are on a lunch assistance program.

Dyllis Elementary School is one of the success stories for this school year. Dyllis is a small rural school at the east end of Roane County. This year Dyllis had a total number of 216 students, over half of which were eligible to participate in the K-2 Science Club and 44 of those eligible students participated for the entire year. While the success of the club in such a depressed area was uncertain, it turned out to surprise everyone (including the school administration) and became a wonderful success.

Your continued support for this project would be greatly appreciated. It is our firm belief that aggressively promoting science as a fun hands-on activity is crucial to fulfilling the need for a new generation of scientists and engineers. Please continue to help us to provide this program with any support that you can—materials, services or donations. We will continue to work very hard to put your sponsorship to good use and provide the Club to as many children as we can.

If you have any questions or comments regarding the club, please do not hesitate to contact either Katherin Goluoglu or Julie Ezold.

Your support is greatly appreciated, and we hope you will be able to help us in this next school year.

Thank you,

Primary School Science Club

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Each participating school is represented by a school champion. If you would like more information about a particular section of the club, please contact the school champion directly.

School Champions:

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