



The CDS Weekly

Catching Up on the Coming Weeks

(415) 861-5432
October 1, 2003

First Day On The Ropes

Cara Keller, CDS 6th grader

When we first drove into the parking lot of the Four Winds Ropes Course, we were all thinking, "What is this place?!" and with good reason. The landscape consisted of tall brown grass, a message board with faded neon sheets of paper, and a huge old barn. We had a few minutes to wait, so some of us went up to the message board. One of the notices said, "BEWARE OF TICKS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!" We immediately pulled up our hoods, stuffed our pant legs into our socks, and put our hands into our pockets.

Then our facilitators came. They introduced themselves as Jen and Kelsey. They were both very friendly. Then, as our first challenge, we had to carry two six-gallon containers of water to our next meeting place. We did, with much grumbling, and then they told us that that was our drinking water. We played a few group games and then split up into our groups. I was in Jen's group. The first challenge was The Net, where we had to cross a ravine using a huge hammock. Most of the time we were just arguing and bickering and trying to get our ideas in, but by the second challenge, the Spiderweb, we had a better sense of teamwork. Then we sat down to a pretty normal lunch. After that, we were each given a mass of metal and strong ribbon rope, called a harness. We put it on, then trudged off to another part of the woods.

We did three more challenges. One was the Cable Walk, where you and your partner depended on each other to get across the cables. The second was where you had to get across a vat of "boiling peanut butter" using a rope swing. The third and last challenge was called the Xylophone. We climbed a tree straight up for 50 feet, then went across a metal cable with ropes and boards across it for 50 feet. Perhaps the most important part was the belay team, holding your rope (or lifeline) at the bottom of the tree, demonstrating true teamwork. Somewhere along the way, someone said something about people not being able to survive without teamwork. I think that is absolutely true.

Over Rated

Sonja Carlson, CDS 6th grader

Many of my friends say that the zip line was the best part of the ropes, I hated it. It's not what it's cracked up to be, it's scary, and one wrong move from your belay team, and you could be a goner. Of course then there's that ever so frightening look down. Being 50 feet in the air and looking down is not the smartest idea. If all of that isn't bad enough, jumping off that high ledge is the worst. When you first jump, you fall down about 10 feet, and then you zoom forward at what feels like 15 mph for about 100 feet.

~ This Week's Hot Dates ~



Friday, October 3rd

10:45 a.m.

All-school assembly, 1st grade presentation

Parents welcome!

Monday, October 6th

Fall Electives Begin

Tuesday, October 7th

4:30 - 5:45 p.m.

PTTA Meeting

Faculty Lounge

Thursday, October 9th

5:00 - 5:30 p.m.

New Family Reception

Faculty Lounge

5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Back-to-School Night

These are adults only events

Extended Program closes at 5:00 p.m.

Thank You!

- ▶ To the Middle School parents for starting off the Faculty Appreciation Breakfasts in September by providing delicious noshes, as always.
- ▶ To Kit Land for helping to host a Preschool Director Tour.
- ▶ To Tina Corse for the art and game activity books for the Extended Program.
- ▶ To Karen Axel Georgiades for 40 beautiful terracotta pots.
- ▶ To all of the families who volunteered to be family farmers this year and attended the training last Saturday. We couldn't have our farm and animals at CDS without your support!
- ▶ To Susi Alexander for the subscription to *Ladybug* magazine for the first grade classroom.
- ▶ To Wini McMichael for the George Winston CD for the first grade classroom.
- ▶ To Nina Robin for donating a BMX bike for our bigger kids to ride.
- ▶ To Darcy Provo, Andrea Fuller and Marion Quinones for helping Rick and Aimee continue to refine our marketing messages.

When my group leader asked us to decide the order that people would go on the zip, everyone wanted to be first. I wanted to be last. I wanted to have time to think about if I was really going to go. I kept changing my mind, eventually I just wanted to ask my team members if anyone wanted to switch with me. I just wanted to get it over with. I didn't ask though, I waited for my turn to come. After waiting for an extremely long time, my turn came. After having my harness checked, I stood and looked at the ladder, and up at the person above me. That was when I told myself that I was going to do this. I put my foot on the ladder and started to climb.

After a few minutes of climbing I reached for the top ledge. I stood up and made the mistake of looking down. I immediately turned away. I wasn't going to let fear stop me. Then I heard "You're clipped in", and I stepped to the edge. I waited a few seconds for my head to stop spinning. Then I jumped off the ledge. I screamed my brains out, and squozed my eyes so tightly that I could see stars. I opened my eyes and I felt like I was flying. Mr. Rob came over and grabbed my foot and pulled me over to a ladder. I unhooked myself, and stepped down. I thought that I would feel great, because I had completed something that everyone thought was fabulous. I was disappointed though, I felt empty, unsuccessful. I didn't feel any different from when I had started. I had worried so much about something that felt like nothing.

Words From Rick *Struggle and Teamwork*

Cara's story is about teamwork, Sonja's is about fear. However, both are also about struggle—a group of city kids who had some anxiety about some challenges, but who overcame those challenges and became stronger, both individually and collectively.

Parents are often ambivalent about presenting their children with struggle. We send children to school to be challenged, but we don't want them to cry. Parents are biologically constituted to try to prevent their children from crying. Or if they cry, to fix it. Yet children need to struggle to get stronger, and the adults in their lives need to support them in their struggle, rather than rescue them. This is one of the big tensions of raising children.

In America today, especially among the more affluent, fear of failure is almost an epidemic and is supported by a strain of pop psychology. "Nothing succeeds like success" is unchallenged folk wisdom. At an affluent independent school in the East Bay, a group of high school students designed and executed a prank at school causing considerable damage on campus. When the administration tried to hold the students accountable for the consequences of their actions, the parents hired lawyers to get their kids out of trouble. One parent said that they didn't want it on their record. Actually, contrary to popular opinion, most colleges and high schools are not looking for unblemished records, but for students who can demonstrate that they are of strong character. A strong character is not a "good boy." A strong character knows how

to struggle, take responsibility, learn from mistakes, make conflict creative and take a bad situation and make something good out of it.

Several years ago in the *New York Times Magazine*, the Dean of Admission at Harvard College was quoted as saying: "We are looking for leaders for the 21st Century." The rest of the article was about how the parents, the candidates and their hired consultants were all behaving like lemmings.

It is natural for parents to try to make life a little easier for their children. At Children's Day School, we are trying to make things a little harder for them in a safe, supportive environment.

A parent told me yesterday that her child was so challenged by writing that she would cry at the keyboard. If the crying means hopelessness, then my wish for her is that she pounds at the keyboard rather than cry. But crying could mean so many things. What we are really after is confidence, not the confidence that we will always be successful, but confidence in ones problem-solving toolbox. The confidence that one-way or another we can find a way to get through this challenge to move onto the next thing. To accomplish that, all of the adults in her life need to be in good communication with each other so that we all can properly support her as she becomes a stronger writer.

So I guess Cara is right. It really is about teamwork, isn't it?

—Rick Ackerly, Head of School

Bungalows or Bust

Our date with the Planning Commission has been postponed. Our new date is November 6th. We are hoping that again we will be able to be first, and that the 5th and 6th grade will be able to attend. We also hope that as many parents and neighbors will also attend. We are still operating according to a scenario that has us occupying the bungalows in early January. As we have seen, however, if something can go wrong it probably will—so we will keep you posted.

Extended Program Update

It is a new month and a whole new set of activity calendars are posted on the bulletin boards by the front door. Program highlights for the month include:

- Drum making and playing
- Building a loom
- A clay and pottery project
- Book and journal making
- Making and flying kites
- Carpentry workshop

There will also be a special presentation by Coyote Point Museum for 3rd-6th graders on Friday, October 10th. In

the workshop, students will learn about threats to wildlife through activities and games that address issues of habitat loss, as well as through meeting live animals that are protected by the Endangered Species Act.

Electives start on Monday, October 6th. The priority deadline for electives registration ended on Wednesday, however last minute sign-ups will be accepted through Friday, October 3rd on a space available basis. Please make sure that you sign out students who have participated in an elective properly at the front desk, checking the column next to their names on the regular sign out sheets marked "Electives." This way you won't be overcharged and we can keep an accurate record of participants. See you in the Extended Program!

—Jenna Stephens, Extended Program Coordinator

Hola Padres!

The 3rd/4th Grade is doing a wonderful job speaking only Espanol. Congratulations! La frase de la semana es:

"Come te llamas?" (What's your name?)

"Me llamo es _____." (My name is _____)

Feliz semana!

—The Spanish Department

Retrieve Lost & Found Items

Has your child's closet seemed disparagingly empty lately? Wondering where their best sweaters, or sun hats or bags have gotten to? There's a strong possibility you'll find these things in our Lost & Found! Everyone should know that the location of the CDS Lost & Found closet is at the end of the hall near the children's bathrooms. But starting Thursday, October 2nd (and every first Thursday of the month) we'll be placing a table on the yard in the afternoon displaying the contents of the closet. Please take a moment on Thursday to peruse the table. Or if you're unable, please make a point of visiting the Lost & Found at your earliest convenience. We'll be making quarterly donations of unclaimed Lost & Found articles to Community Thrift so don't wait!

CDS Book Recommendations

Read any good books lately? The CDS Library Book Fair wants your recommendations! Displayed on our book tables at this year's fair will be "CDS Recommends" cards, with information about great books for parents, teachers, children, friends – in other words, a handy guide for deciding which books will best fit the people on your holiday gift list this year.

We invite everyone in the CDS community (kids, too) to send us your recommendations of really good books – fiction, poetry, essays, cookbooks, history, story books, you name it. Give us upto 3 book titles plus one or two lines about why your choices are special, and you'll see your name and recommendations at A Clean Well Lighted Place for Books at our December 10th Book Fair. Email your CDS Recommends choices to library@cds-sf.org or drop them off at the Library mailbox on the 3rd floor. Deadline is Wednesday, October 8th.

And don't forget: you can ALWAYS make your book purchases count for CDS by mentioning "CDS" as your frequent buyer when shopping at Clean Well Lighted Place. A percentage of all sales goes to CDS. Muchas gracias, CWLPB!

Updates to the School Year Calendar

Attached to The Weekly is an updated School Year Calendar from October until the end of the school year. Please replace this updated version with the calendar we sent you in the summer mailing. To find out about future changes to the School Year Calendar, please visit our website at www.cds-sf.org. Click on the News and Events page, followed by the School Calendar page to pull up the latest info. Also, past versions of the CDS Weekly are always available on our website. Just click on News & Events, then CDS Weekly.

Do You Prefer *The Weekly* by Email?

Help! The computer virus of this last July hit CDS particularly hard, and one of the casualties was our *CDS Weekly* emailing list. If you've received the *CDS Weekly* via email in the past and would like to continue helping us reduce our paper usage, please drop us a quick email at cdsweekly@cds-sf.org and remind us who you are. Also, let us know the name and class of the child your hard copy usually goes home with so we can remove him or her from the classroom distribution list.

CDS Parent-Teacher-Trustee-Administrator Association PTTA Update

The next PTTA meeting will take place on Tuesday, October 7th, from 4:30 - 5:45 p.m. in the faculty lounge on the third floor of school. As always, your child can stay free in the CDS afternoon program if you sign up before 10:00 a.m. the day of the meeting and check the meeting box on the sign-out form. Topics to be addressed at this month's meeting include:

- Update on bungalow classroom installation and the Planning Commission hearing situation
- Presentation from Kit Land, member of the CDS Board of Trustees and chair of the Development Committee, regarding CDS fundraising goals, Annual Fund and parent phonathon scheduled for October 21 and 22
- Presentation from Debra Levin or Sue Barnett regarding the state of the library and the need for volunteer assistance
- Upcoming opportunities for CDS parents to visit CDS elementary classrooms, see CDS students present their work and learn more about the school in general
- What would the "Fab 5" say: staff lounge furniture to be upgraded soon!

- Communicating academic excellence -- follow up from September meeting

Please let me know if there are other items that should be added to this agenda. Thank you for your thoughts, suggestions and continued participation. Marion Quinones at 701-1957 or MQuinones@fbm.com.
—Marion Quinones, PTTA president

Friday Morning Coffee

Suffering from separation anxiety...from fellow adults?! Try to schedule a few free minutes into your Friday morning to join other parents for hot coffee and grown up conversation outside in the yard after drop off, 8:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. starting this

Upcoming on the CDS Calendar



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Friday, October 10th

8:45 - 10:00 a.m.

Community Breakfast

Faculty Lounge

How to Submit to *The CDS Weekly*.

Submissions are to be received **no later than Wednesday at 8:00 am**. Please email them to cdsweekly@cds-sf.org