



∞ The CDS Weekly ∞

Catching Up on the Coming Weeks

(415) 861-5432
October 16, 2003

Words From Rick *Delight in Your Children*

According to the ancient Greeks, each person has a *klarakter*, the imprint that the gods put on your soul at birth. The Romans had a similar notion which they called *genius*—the spirit of a person, place or human institution. I like to think of every living organism as having a genius—the thing that we are becoming, our calling in the world. I am not sure about the chickens, but it is obvious that Corrie, our beloved sheep who died last year, had a genius, which he fulfilled. It is a useful way to look at children. It is also a useful way to look at a group when it becomes so well established that it takes on a life of its own.

Most of the articles I write in the *Weekly* are in search of that genius. My State of the School address (soon to be on the website) and the lead article in our first Quarterly are attempts to capture this uncapturable. Every day at CDS, as each of us pursues our own unique genius, we collectively live out the CDS genius. When Christopher Ross said, “Somebody’s got to turn off that phone. We’re tryin’ to learn in here!” he was doing both. When Cara and Sonja each tried to express their own struggles from the 5th and 6th grade retreat, they were doing both, each in their own unique and delightful way.

As the work of Parker Palmer, Thomas Moore, Lee Bolman, David Whyte and others point out, there are many names for it: Character, Genius, Spirit, Soul. A great science and mathematics teacher I know calls it “The Teacher Within”. For those who are interested, a good book to read on the topic is *The Soul’s Code* by James Hillman.

I am not saying it is TRUE that each of us has a genius. I am not saying I BELIEVE that each of us has a genius. What I will say is that my experience as a father and an educator has taught me that if adults in a child’s life act as if their child has a genius, and act as if they believe in it, things will always turn out well. That is to say, optimal education will occur.

Acting as if education is leading the child’s genius out into the world to function effectively and gracefully within it requires a different set of disciplines. We have to hear and see with our hearts—as when we listen to poetry, myths or music. Seeing a child on a journey guided by the soul can remind us of everything we need to do. It can remind us of the realities of the research and the wisdom about learning, which can liberate us from our habits and our fear. As I have watched hero after hero enter the world and struggle to find their way gracefully within it, I have discovered that there is much in the process of raising children that could mitigate our own fear if we chose to see it. It also can guide us to the kind of stance vis-à-vis our children that will produce the best results.

∞ This Week’s Hot Dates ∞



Friday, October 17th
10:45 a.m.

All-school assembly, Kindergarten II (Jen’s class)
presentation
Parents welcome!

Tuesday, October 21st & Wednesday, October 22nd
6:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Annual Fund Phonathon
CDS Office, Third Floor

Friday, October 24th

Yes, school IS open
(But the Extended Program is closed because
of the Faculty Ranch Retreat)

Friday, October 31st

Halloween; Noon Dismissal
No Assembly

11:20 a.m.: Elementary/Middle School
Halloween Parade

12:00 p.m.: Drive-through dismissal for
Preschool and Kindergarten

12:15 p.m.: Drive-through dismissal for
Elementary and Middle School
(grades 1-6)
Parents welcome!

Thank You!

- ▶ To Nadya Bratt for preparing the lovely food for the Community Breakfast.
- ▶ To Amanda and Brian Richard for donating two Franklin Electronic Spellers for the first grade.
- ▶ To Nicola Valentino for arranging with a friend in Santa Cruz to donate the fabric and make a cover for the sofa in the first grade classroom.
- ▶ To Jo Biel for helping Aimee lead a preschool tour on October 9th, and making follow-up calls.
- ▶ To Laura Moon, Susi Alexander and Steve Donovan for making our follow-up calls.
- ▶ To Dan Keller for hosting the CDS website for many years and providing ENDLESS hours of cheerful technical support and webmaster services - all for free!
- ▶ To Richard Ross for researching and identifying a new website host, and for coordinating the move at the last minute.

Here is what I have learned about this genius, this teacher, this wisdom within:

- ◆ It tells us what we need to learn and what we need to do.
- ◆ It is not contemptuous of others, or of community, or the environment, but passionate about finding its way within that environment and making a difference in it.
- ◆ It is the primary determining force inside each individual and operates independently of the *eg*, the *id* or *superego*.
- ◆ It is more powerful in the development of the child than environmental influences.
- ◆ It is very resistant to manipulation and distraction.
- ◆ It is a difficult, complex, painful, messy, unpredictable process, full of mistakes and successes, disasters and triumphs.
- ◆ It is often ignored or overridden, much to the detriment of the optimal development of human potential. Genius is, nonetheless, nearly indestructible.

If we delight in our children, we are acting as if we have faith in them. If we have faith in them, we can “play position” better. Knowing that their position is covered, we can play our own position and not interfere with, but support their work. It frees us up to play the adult role properly, which is:

- a) to define ourselves clearly and be clear about our own personal requirements,
- b) to help our children see the requirements of the environment,
- c) to support them in their struggle with the challenges of that environment rather than rescue them from this necessary and salutary character-building process, and
- d) to make sure they are held accountable for their responsibilities and take responsibility for their decisions.

I know it would be presumptuous of me to define the CDS genius, but I do believe it has something to do with creating the optimal conditions for bringing out the genius in our children.

—Rick Ackerly, Head of School

This Week's Submissions

Currently we are experiencing some technical difficulties. CDS faculty and staff have been unable to send/receive emails from outside CDS. We are working on the problem and will have it resolved by the end of the week. If you sent something by email to be submitted in this issue of the *Weekly*, our apologies if it did not make it. Please re-try for next week's issue. Thanks for your patience.

South Side Driveway Closed to Foot Traffic

If you walk your child through the CDS parking lot in the mornings or afternoons, please use the north driveway, closest to 16th Street. This driveway is accommodated with a yellow safety strip and sidewalk. And, unlike the south driveway, there are no Notre Dame residents living directly at street level that can be disturbed by our comings and goings. In an effort to

address the concerns of our neighbors and the safety of our students and families, we ask that you please adhere to this request.

October 24th

On Friday, October 24th, school will be open. However, **there will be no extended care available**, as the faculty will be leaving town for the Faculty Ranch Retreat. Please make a note of this.

Reminder About Halloween At CDS!

Halloween is gearing up to be a blast this year. All parents are invited to attend the Elementary and Middle School Parade, which will begin in the yard at 11:20 a.m. The regular Friday all-school assembly has been cancelled. If you plan to come for the parade, we encourage you to consider public transportation or leave yourself plenty of time to park on the street. As usual, there is no parking in the CDS parking lot.

After the parade, parents will be invited to follow their kids back to their classrooms for photos and celebration. Like normal, before leaving CDS, **ALL parents must sign their children out with their teachers**. New this year for noon dismissal days, to provide an easy pick-up process for parents who are not coming to the parade, we will also be offering our standard drive-through pick-up at the double-doors (**please note - this is a new procedure for noon dismissal at CDS**). In an attempt to allay a massive traffic jam at noon, drive through pick-up will be staggered. Preschool and kindergarten children, who have not already left, will be available for pick-up at the double-doors at 12:00. Elementary and middle school students in grades 1-6 will be available for pick-up at the double-doors at 12:15. Happy Halloween!

Hola Padres!

This week we finished with 1st grade's craft project “El carro de Guatemala” commemorating The Spanish Heritage Month. The 2nd graders are reviewing family names (Mama, Papa, Hermano/a, Abuelo/a, ...), the 3rd and 4th graders are still learning about Yo soy..., Yo vivo..., Yo como....

5th and 6th graders are currently studying difficult grammar. Twice a week they are relaxing by doing a fun activity such as singing and dancing, reading Spanish stories or researching Spanish culture on the Internet.

La frase de la semana es:

Mi familia es: Mi papa (my dad), mi mama (my mom), mis hermanos/as (my brothers/sisters), mis abuelos/as (my grandfathers/ my grandmothers).

Next week we will learn about uncles, aunts and cousins. Please review what was learned in Spanish with your kids. It is a fun and interesting way to remind them of what we are learning in class. Gracias, gracias, graciasssssssss.

Hasta la semana que viene! (See you next week!)

—The Spanish Department

K-6 Tours and Open Houses

Rick, Aimee and some current elementary and middle school parents will be hosting several events for CDS parents who would like to learn more about our K-6 classrooms. A K-6 tour for CDS parents only will be held on October 24th from 8:45-10:55 a.m. This tour is an opportunity for you to see our K-6 classes in action. An all-school evening Open House will take place on November 6th and January 13th, from 7:00-8:30 p.m. for prospective and CDS families. These events will give you an opportunity to talk with our K-6 teachers and parents. Please RSVP to Aimee (861-5432 x22) if you plan to attend the tour or Open House.

Siblings at CDS

Do you have a child who is the sibling of a CDS student that you would like to enroll at CDS in the fall of 2004? If so, it's time to think about submitting your applications! As you know, CDS gives preference to sibling applications and we expect to admit siblings and keep families together. We also view each child as a unique, distinct individual and we are committed to meeting the needs of each child individually. For this reason, we cannot guarantee that a sibling will be admitted automatically to CDS. But siblings will usually be admitted unless unusual circumstances dictate that a sibling's needs cannot be met here.

The mechanics of the sibling application process are as follows: for Fall 2004 enrollment, the deadline for submitting a sibling application **for priority enrollment** is November 7, 2003. Applications are available from Martha at the front desk, and completed applications should be returned to Martha or Aimee with a \$50 application fee. After Aimee receives the application, she will schedule a classroom visit and parent interview for you and your child. This visit provides an opportunity for our preschool faculty to meet your child, and for all of us to discuss and make sure that CDS can meet the needs of this child. Sibling decisions will be mailed with your family's re-enrollment contract on February 6, 2004. We realize that uncertainties about the status of a sibling's application create uncertainties for the whole family. By giving strong preference to sibling applications, we hope to minimize these difficulties while maintaining some flexibility in our admissions policy.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call Aimee Giles, Director of Admission, at 861-5432 x22

Parents Are Calling!

All CDS families will be receiving a letter about the Annual Fund in the next day or two. The letter explains why we have an annual fund drive at CDS and tells you what the needs are for this year. Between 6:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 21st and Wednesday, Oct. 22nd, members of the Board and the Development Committee will be calling every family to get your commitment for this year's annual fund. Since funding

from outside sources is dependent on the level of parent participation, we hope everyone will contribute at a level that is comfortable for them.

Please remember that your commitment is a pledge to be paid before June 30, 2004. It does not need to be paid immediately, and you can make payments monthly, quarterly, or in any way that works in your budget. Also, cash, check, F.A.C.T.S, VISA or MasterCard, can make payments. The parent who calls you will be able to help you work out the details.

Please do your part to help us reach our goal of 100% parent participation by making a pledge when you're asked.

—Beth Ditlefsen, Development Director

Fall Garden Workday

Everyone is invited to a workday in the CDS garden on Sunday, October 19th, 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. There are a variety of projects that you can help with from weeding, pruning and transplanting to taking down the greenhouse. Come and join us for a great fall day in the garden! Questions? Please contact me at x21.

—Morgan Taggart, Environmental Education Resource Teacher

Community Thrift

Community Thrift, where we donate items and receive a kickback in return, has a request of our community. Please only donate those items in CDS' name that you deem worthy of purchasing yourself. In order for Community Thrift to keep us on their roster and receive a portion back for our donations, \$400 worth of our donations must sell in their store. Many items donated in the past have been more trash than good. If you would like to donate something, you can leave it by the bin across from the outdoor stairs/fire escape at CDS. If you have questions if something is considered a donation or "trash", contact Linda Glover (Teddy Bear parent) at: 255-6885. Let's help keep CDS on Community Thrift's roster and get some money back for our community from our donations!

The CDS Quilt Group

We are still looking for an old or new quilter from the Teddy Bear and Leaping Lizard classes to put together a quilt for the school auction this year. We have help and sewing machines available. If you can sew a straight line, then you are the perfect person to make a quilt. It is easy to learn and there is lots of help available. Contact Tina Corse at 824-6290.

Holiday Wrap and Greens

*Only Two More Weeks to Place Your Orders!!
All Profits Go To Staff Holiday Bonuses!!*

Wondering how you are going to wrap your gifts this holiday season or for the rest of the year? Then stock up on Sally Foster gift-wrap and never think about it again. Have gift-wrap already? Then brighten your home with greens or buy a wreath for a friend or sell some to your family, co-workers and neighbors. All proceeds from wrap and green orders go toward holiday bonuses for all CDS faculty and staff.

There is a box by Martha's desk to drop off your completed orders. **The due date for all orders is October 31, 2003.**

Out-of-town families can also order wrap by visiting www.SallyFoster.com. They must list our city, state, our school name and account # 357069. If possible, please do your shopping with a check, as email orders take up to four months for us to receive payment.

Look for the wrap display at school for larger sample pieces. You may talk to Tina Corse during morning drop-off about wrap. All checks need to be made out to CDS and included in your wrap and/or green orders to school.

Call with any questions to:

Wrap: Tina Corse 824-6290; tjcorse@comcast.net

Greens: Emma Donovan 861-4283; ed@globeconsultants.com

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

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

PTTA Questions or Ideas?

Contact Marion Quinones at 701-1957 or
MQuinones@fbm.com.

Upcoming on the CDS Calendar



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10:45 a.m.

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Monday, November 3rd

Professional Day; No School
(No Extended Program)

Thursday, November 6th

7:00 – 8:30 p.m.

Admission Open House (All grades)

Friday, November 7th

5:00 p.m.

CDS Sibling Applications Due

How to Submit to *The CDS Weekly*.
Submissions are to be received **no later than Wednesday
at 8:00 a.m.** Please email them to cdsweekly@cds-sf.org.