



∞ The CDS Weekly ∞

Catching Up on the Coming Weeks

(415) 861-5432
December 11, 2003

Words From Rick

*Nature, Frivolity, Facts, Collaboration, Discipline,
and the Playful Pursuit of Knowledge*

It's just a little thing. It took me only seconds at an assembly in September to say, "A hawk has joined our community." Somebody said they thought it was a Redtail hawk and that it lived in the big bay laurel tree. The next week Terrance, a new sixth grader, stopped me to say he'd found the nest and indeed, it was high in the bay laurel tree. The following week he told me that Morgan said it was a Cooper's hawk, not a Redtail hawk, and that she had a picture of it. Several weeks later after a number of friendly interactions with Terrance, I asked him to show me the nest. We went outside the gate together and with careful persistence he made my eyes follow a big branch to a great height, hanging over the place where the new deck on the preschool campus will be. There I saw a brown cluster of leaves that Terrance—quite correctly—had identified as the hawk's nest. Later, when the tree people came to trim the trees in preparation for the new preschool classrooms, I showed them the hawk's nest so that they would not disturb it. The next day, Terrance and I high-fived each other over scoring one for Mother Nature.

As I said, it was just a little thing—a kind of a Where's Waldo game I played with the students. However, I've heard that students of all ages have been on the lookout for hawks this fall. Two weeks ago a group of students saw what they thought was a hawk chasing a black bird high above a palm tree. They were cheering for the bird to save itself until a teacher questioned their hypothesis — at which point they noticed the situation was reversed, the black bird was a crow swooping to intimidate the hawk. That night, on the way home from a finance committee meeting, a trustee and the business manager spotted an owl gliding above the trees in the CDS yard.

It's just a little thing, but it is of such little things that great things are made. I have no idea where it will lead with Terrance or the other students. Noticing a phenomenon is one thing; making something out of it is another.

Producing something new is relatively easy. Producing something new that is of value requires hard work, a toolbox of skills, and usually collaboration with others. It is usually an iterative process of trial, error, feedback, new thinking and retrieval. It requires a fearlessness that results from spiritual disciplines like patience, respectfulness, concentration and centeredness. Each attempt at creating something is about learning—about strengthening the mind by linking different parts of the brain together until the mind is an intricate web of linkages capable of creating yet another new something.

∞ This Week's Hot Dates ∞



Wednesday, December 17th

Last day to sign up for Winter Break Camp

Thursday, December 18th

5:00 p.m.

2004-05 Sliding Scale Tuition Applications Due
in the Business Office

6:30 p.m.

Faculty Holiday Party
Bay View Boat Club

Friday, December 19th

10:45 a.m.

(doors open at 10:30 a.m.)

Winter Performance

Boys' and Girls' Club (17th and Guerrero)

Noon Dismissal (No Extended Program)

Monday, December 22nd – Friday, December 26th

Winter Break; No School

(No Camp Available This Week)

Thank You!

- ▶ Thanks to Suzanne and Joe Jachinowski for hosting a very elegant Leaping Lizards Parent and Teacher cocktail party.
- ▶ To Kevin Corse for donating wood to the afterschool program's carpentry project.
- ▶ To John Kraus for taking a photo of Rick Ackerly for the CDS *Quarterly*

It is this disciplined attempt to create something new and of value that is going on in the classrooms. When CDS teachers talk about "project based learning" this is what they are talking about. This fall our students have been getting deeply into things like bread, bats, bones, and brains. They have been creating graphs, stories, songs, maps, essays, pictures and works of art. The origin of any of this productive activity is interest, and for children, exposure to primary data, unmediated by adult reductionism is critical for generating interest. On this beautiful acre, in the middle of this historic part of the city, we have a treasure-trove of primary data unparalleled at any other school in the city.

Because I do not have the pleasure of being the teacher of

a class of students, the interest I generated by calling the school's attention to our hawk(s), may never reach the status of a "project," and therefore may not result in the multidimensional, disciplined process of creating something new. As I said, it was just a little thing. If I am honest with myself, all I was trying to do was to get in on the act. There is so much exciting learning going on around me, it is contagious, and I just wanted to have some fun, too.

Extended Program News

CDS Opens Extended Program to Outside Students

The PM Program is now open to all; as many of you may already know, we are opening up the Break Week camps, Elective/Enrichment Classes, and PM Program to children who don't attend CDS. Please help us by spreading the word to neighbors and friends. Families interested in receiving more information can call Jenna at x15.

Upcoming 1st/2nd Grade Field trip

This Friday, December 12th, the first and second grade PM classes will be going to the Harvey Milk Library near 16th and Market streets. Students who have their permission slips in will be leaving school at 3:15 p.m. and returning by 5:00 p.m. If any parents are interested in helping with this trip, please contact Jenna at x15.

Fall Electives

Fall electives are over. Thanks to all who participated! The make up week was last week. There is one exception to this: The movie making and Toy Story electives will be having an end-of-term film viewing this Thursday, December 11th in the Teddy Bear room. Everyone is welcome.

Winter Electives

Get ready for Winter Electives/Enrichment Classes. Registration packets will be sent home this week! If you haven't received a packet by Friday, December 12th, please ask for one at the front desk.

Winter Break Camps

There is plenty of room left in both the preschool and elementary/middle school winter break camps. The camps run December 29th through January 2nd. The camps are also open to non-CDS families, so spread the word to friends and neighbors! There will be lots of extra cooking, art, theater, and science activities, plus time to play and relax with good friends and fun teachers.

The Afternoons are Now Very Dark

If your child stays past 5:00 p.m. and has a flashlight, please have her/him bring it in! Preschool and elementary teachers have some fun after-dark activity ideas that flashlights will be useful for.

—Jenna Stephens, Extended Program Coordinator

Welcome Ann Squires to the Board of Trustees

Ann Squires has joined the CDS Board of Trustees. Having worked alongside Rick as the Director of Advancement at St. Paul's Episcopal School, Ann now runs her own consulting company and brings worlds of experience to our board. Welcome Ann!

Flu Update

As many of you may have heard in the news, we are experiencing an early influenza season this year that is more severe than in the past several years. There are already outbreaks in Northern California, including schools in Oakland.

What is the flu?

The flu is a respiratory (airway) virus that is marked by a rapid onset of fatigue, muscle aches, fever up to 104 degrees, headache, and dry cough. Sufferers may also have a sore throat and runny nose. Colds, which are also caused by viruses, can be difficult to distinguish from the flu but usually have a slower onset, less severe symptoms, and lower or no fever.

How can you prevent the flu?

- Get vaccinated. Even though this year's vaccine has missed the mark somewhat, the strain of flu that we are seeing, type A (H3N2), is similar to the strains the current vaccine is targeting and there is some cross protection.
- If your child has a fever, absolutely do not send them to school!
- Wash your hands frequently, and make sure your children do too.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends the following individuals get vaccinated:

- Persons 50 years and older
- Residents of nursing homes and other long-term care facilities that house persons of any age who have long-term illnesses
- Adults and children 6 months of age and older who have chronic heart or lung conditions, including asthma
- Adults and children 6 months of age and older who need regular medical care or had to be in a hospital because of metabolic diseases (like diabetes), chronic kidney disease, or weakened immune system (including immune system problems caused by medicine or by infection with HIV)
- Children and teenagers (6 months to 18 years of age) who are on long-term aspirin therapy and therefore could develop Reyes Syndrome after influenza
- Women who will be more than 3 months pregnant during the influenza season

- Children 6 to 23 months and their caregivers

In addition, the CDC recommends vaccination of the following groups to reduce the risk of spreading influenza to persons at high risk for complications:

- Doctors, nurses, and other employees in hospitals and doctors' offices, including emergency response workers
- Employees of nursing homes and long-term care facilities who have contact with patients or residents
- Employees of assisted-living and other residences for people in high-risk groups
- People who provide home care to those in high-risk groups and household members (including children) of people in high-risk groups

The primary contraindication to influenza vaccination is an allergy to eggs. For more information about influenza, visit the CDC's website at www.cdc.gov.

—Madeline Daley, RN, MS & Kindergarten parent

Parking in Notre Dame Plaza Spots... Just *Don't* Do It

We have had several instances and numerous complaints from the residents of Notre Dame Plaza that members of the CDS community have been parking in their spots. This also applies during morning drop-off; you should never block Notre Dame parking spots.

Be forewarned: Effective immediately, Notre Dame Plaza will begin towing all unauthorized vehicles that are discovered in Notre Dame parking spots.

—Laurance DeVries, Business Manager

Holiday Performance Volunteers Needed

We are looking for parent volunteers to help us move sets and costumes to The Boys' and Girls' Club at 8:00 a.m. on Thursday, December 18th and to return the sets and costumes to CDS on Friday, December 19th directly after the performance. Do you have a van or truck, and can you help? Please contact Ms. Elizabeth or Ms. Karen in the Art room.

—Elizabeth McClellan & Karen Slovak, Art teachers, x18

Visit the CDS Middle School

There is one more opportunity to visit our Middle School! A CDS parent who attended our CDS-parents-only tour a few weeks ago relayed to me how impressed she was with the middle school students and faculty. This visit confirmed for her that CDS' middle school really is as great as she had hoped. If you'd like to see the CDS Middle School students and faculty in action, come sit in on a science lesson with Mr. Doug at 1:45 p.m., on Tuesday, December 16th. Parents of CDS children of ALL ages are invited. RSVP to me if you plan to attend (415-861-5432 x22).

—Aimee Giles, Director of Admission

CDS Parent-Teacher-Trustee- Administrator Association: PTTA Update

Friday Morning Coffee

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

PTTA Questions or Ideas?

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

Do You Prefer *The Weekly* by Email?

Help us reduce our paper usage by receiving the *Weekly* via email. Please email us at [cgsweekly@cds-sf.org](mailto:cdsweekly@cds-sf.org) and give us your email address. 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. Thanks!

Upcoming on the CDS Calendar



Wednesday, December 17th

Last day to sign up for Winter Break Camp

Thursday, December 18th

5:00 p.m.

2004-05 Sliding Scale Tuition Applications Due in the Business Office

6:30 p.m.

Faculty Holiday Party
Bay View Boat Club

Friday, December 19th

10:45 a.m.

(doors open at 10:30)

Winter Performance

Boys' and Girls' Club (17th and Guerrero)

Noon Dismissal (No Extended Program)

Monday, December 22nd – Friday, December 26th

Winter Break; No School

(No Camp Available This Week)

Monday, December 29th – Friday, January 2nd

Winter Break; No School

(Winter Break Camp offered except for January 1st)

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 cgsweekly@cds-sf.org.

