



∞ The CDS Weekly ∞

Catching Up on the Coming Weeks

(415) 861-5432
April 8, 2004

Words From Rick

The David Minus Science Center

On the Beach just north of the windmill at Golden Gate Park in July of 2002, members of the CDS community stood together with the family and friends of Justin, Erin and Hae Lim Minus to mourn the loss of David Minus, the children's father. Since then, members of the family and I have been discussing and working toward a fitting memorial. The family wanted to do something that would memorialize David and at the same time would be of important value to the school. They decided on The David Minus Science Center.

The first challenge, of course, was to find space for the center. Now that all the roadblocks to the new preschool facility have been cleared (the money raised, the buildings completed and site preparation beginning over the spring vacation), we have the space and can focus on getting the science center open by September. It is a \$125,000 project. Thanks to the leadership of Paul Minus, Erin and Justin's grandfather, we have already raised almost \$50,000 from 19 members of the Minus clan and extended family. We will begin a small campaign to continue raising this money in May, giving the community an opportunity to support the Minus family and to buy science equipment to be used by all the classes.

CDS students are scientists, and as much as possible their study comes from the world around them. As you know the garden, farm and yard are the realm from which many science lessons come. Morgan's column "The Dirt" reports on many wonderful discoveries. More recently, the surrounding neighborhood has become the locus of research for the 2nd grade, and over the next few years we will be expanding into the city and the Bay Area. Our science curriculum (which the faculty has been focusing on this year) envisions increasing involvement in research that also has a positive impact on the environment.

Much of the study can take place in the classrooms and in the library, but the school needs a science center. In addition to the outdoor space, we need a controlled space—an attractive, well-lit place devoted to science. We need a place where projects and experiments in progress can be left out and displayed. As students get older, they will need more sophisticated equipment, chemicals and biological agents, and we'll need a safe place to use and store them. The projects will also simply need more space. For instance, a science room would certainly have been useful this year during the middle school electricity projects. At the height of the project with electric contraptions everywhere, we literally had trouble getting into the room. We need a safe and easily maintained space for demonstrations.

∞ This Week's Hot Dates ∞



Friday, April 9th

9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

Library Volunteer Training
Library

Friday, April 9th

Last day to sign up for Spring Break Camp
(There are a few openings left!)

Monday, April 12th – Friday, April 16th

Spring Break

No School

Spring Break Camp Available

Monday, April 19th – Friday, April 23rd

Week of the Young Child

Thursday, April 22nd

Earth Day

Thank You!

- ▶ To Geoff Hinman for donating sports equipment to the yard!

Several parents, grandparents and trustees enthusiastic about this project, have already made significant gifts toward our new goal and have volunteered to help raise money. CDS parent Patricia Buse, with a PhD from Berkeley, eight publications and a marketable patent to her credit, has volunteered to lead the effort. We have started to meet regularly, and you will be hearing more from this group as the spring progresses.

The Dirt

Tess Takes a Guess

I was working in the garden with a few 1st graders last Friday. They have an option during free choice time to come out to the garden and work on their plot or help with other projects around the farm. They decided to use garden forks to turn a cover crop of Oregon ryegrass into the soil. Four Teddy Bears came over to investigate. The 1st graders began to teach the preschoolers how to carefully use these new tools. The preschoolers returned to their digging and Alice, one of the Teddy Bears, turned over a huge mass of fibrous roots.

Tess, another Teddy Bear, asked, "What is that?"

I replied, "Take a guess."

Tess said, "They're roots."

"You're right. They are the roots from the grass that was growing here."

She paused for a minute and then added, "I think guessing is better than learning."

I asked, "What do you mean? What's the difference between guessing and learning?"

She said, "Guessing gives me a chance to think of my own ideas. The teacher isn't telling me all the answers. Learning is when the teacher tells you everything."

This remarkable conversation caused me to think back to the PTTA meeting last week. A frequently mentioned core value was respect for the individual and his or her ideas. Teachers encourage students to share ideas and often incorporate the investigation of student generated questions and topics into curriculum. I know as parents and teachers we see this organic evolution of ideas as crucial to a CDS education. It was truly amazing to me that a five year old already understands the value in this, too.

—Morgan Taggart, Environmental Education Specialist

Extended Program News

Spring Break Camp is NEXT WEEK!

There are still a few openings left for both preschool and elementary camps. Please sign up by Friday if you'd like your child to attend. Contact Jenna directly at extension 15.

Boys & Girls Club

Please make sure if you pick up your child directly from the Boys and Girls Club, you first let the teacher know you are taking your child from the club, and sign out at CDS.

PM Program Spring Community Service Project

Each Tuesday in April, the pm elementary program will be focused on projects and activities related to urban wildlife and community service. This work will culminate in May when we work with the organization, "Literacy for Environmental Justice," restoring wetlands and habitat at the beautiful Heron's Head Wildlife area on the bay. We will need volunteers for driving and assisting! If you are interested, please call Jenna at extension 15.

Sign-Up Reminder

If you want your child to stay in the after-school program for any reason, **you must sign up** at the front desk or contact Martha by 10:00 a.m. of the morning you need care. If you are volunteering for the school or attending a CDS meeting, you will not be charged for the time your child is in the pm program, **but you still need to sign up!** Simply check the box marked "meeting" when you sign out to avoid charges. We need to have an accurate count of students in the after-school program for safety and teacher's sanity!

—Jenna Stephens, Extended Program Coordinator

Farm and Garden Doubleheader on April 24th

Family Farmer Training

Do you dream of getting up at the crack of dawn on a Saturday to come to school and feed some bleating sheep and clucking hens? Make that dream a reality and come to the family farmer training at CDS on April 24th at 9:00 a.m. The training will provide you with all of the information, skills and confidence you'll need to care for the farm and garden on the weekends. At the end of the training you'll sign up for the dates you want from May through September. Everyone is welcome to attend. Please call me if you have any questions about the training or the responsibilities of a family farmer. Hope to see you there!

Spring Workday

Bring work gloves, garden tools and your kids to help spruce up the farm and garden for the Country Fair. The workday will start at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, April 24th. There are a few different projects we will be working on including repairing the digging bed, adding a new coat of paint to the benches, cleaning the outside of the barn and coop, and painting the tool shed. So come on out, enjoy the sunshine, and spend some time getting down and dirty with other CDS families.

Our Hearts Go Out...

The CDS community received the sad news this week that Emily Van Allen's father, Kevin, passed away. Having suffered from cancer, Emily's dad finally succumbed with his family near him. We send our heartfelt compassion and sympathy to Emily, her mother Susan, and her family during this difficult time. Condolences can be sent to the Van Allen family at: 544 Forest Avenue, Orono, ME 04473.

BoosterSeats

Please don't forget the importance of car booster seats for your children who've outgrown their front facing car seat. Traffic crashes are the leading cause of death for children 5 to 14 years of age. This sobering fact is linked in part to the nonuse or improper use of child safety seats. When children out-grow forward-facing child safety seats, they need to be restrained in belt-positioning booster seats. This usually occurs when children are about 4 years old and weigh approximately 40 pounds. To ensure children's safety, they should remain in booster seats until they are at least 8 years old, unless they are 4'9" tall. For more information please visit the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration website at:
<http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/childps/>

Fire Safety At Home

Kate Moses visited our office Wednesday morning, her face cast in sadness. The night before, her family had been awakened by a fire in the neighboring apartment building. Tragically, some of the apartment's residents did not

survive the fire. Kate asks us all to please take this opportunity to check the batteries in our home's fire alarms, to familiarize our kids with escape routes and to formulate a family disaster plan. Check *The Weekly* in coming weeks for more fire safety tips.

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

The Country Fair is Coming!

Have you ever licked the dasher? Are you curious about sheep shearing or wondering how our yearlings will react to their first experience of the shears? Will your relatives believe you when you describe marveling at newly shorn sheep in the City while simultaneously enjoying barbecued oysters?

These are only a few of the pleasures promised by the CDS Country Fair.

From 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on May 1st, we gather in the CDS yard to have fun, enjoy our children and friends and celebrate the creativity and bounty flowing from our classrooms and the farm and garden.

Admission is free. We've planned lots of activities to entertain and amuse—the famous CDS barbeque is a real bargain, and the bake sale features treats from our own kitchens.

Knitters and spinners have been busy all winter producing more unique creations featuring hand-spun wool from our own sheep. Our children are brewing concoctions for the country market: delicious herbal vinegars, lip balms, bath salts and more. The market also features farm-fresh Eatwell produce and home-made granola. This year, we'll be introducing a brand new selection of CDS logo items.

In the spirit of the Fair, everyone is called upon to give some time to make it all happen on May 1st. In fact, some of the best ways to enjoy the Fair are judging a three-legged race or cup-cake walk, mixing papier mache goop, overseeing the creations at the art and jewelry workshop, experiencing the tactile pleasures of washing freshly-shorn wool, flipping garden burgers on a six foot barbeque grill, or monitoring cash flow at the bake sale and country market.

Building on the successes of last year, we have assigned each class to specific activities. After spring break, we'll be asking families to sign-up for one or more ½ hour shifts on the day of the Fair. Here's the list:

5th/6th Grade: Country Market

3rd/4th Grade: Old Fashioned Races and Games

2nd Grade: Bake Sale

1st Grade: Hand-cranked Ice Cream and Wool Washing

Jen's Kindergarten: Papier-mache Piñatas and Ticket Sales
(food, drink, and raffle tickets)

Emily's Kindergarten: Art table and face painting

Leaping Lizards: Set up and Clean up

Starfish: Barbeque

Teddy Bears: Old fashioned races and games

Family Farmers: Monitoring access to the farm

Contact Sally Nielson at sn@hausrath.com to get involved.

Friday Morning Coffee

Schedule a few minutes in 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 (415) 701-1957 or MQuinones@fbm.com.

Library Corner

The Library Reopens!

Just 10 days until the library is open to students! To get the space ready, a final workday will be held tomorrow, along with a computer training for volunteers (details below).

Although teachers have been able to check out books for the classroom for several months, students have had to wait patiently while all the books were being catalogued and the computerized circulation system was put into place. When they come in for their first visit after spring break, they'll find many beautiful new books along with their old favorites.

A few changes in policy and setup that will help keep our collection circulating:

- Each student will be allowed to check out *one book* per week. Books must be returned the following week (or can be renewed up to two times).
- Each student has been assigned an identifying barcode number (but students don't need to know their barcode, nor will they have library cards.)
- When a book is one week overdue, a reminder notice will be sent home.
- Overdue books that have not been returned for one month will be considered lost, and a \$20 fine will be charged. This covers the cost of the book, tax, shipping, processing, etc.
- Students will be asked to take responsibility and act appropriately in the library – quiet voices, handling books gently, taking care of the borrowed books at home, and returning them on time. Although teachers will be supervising their classes in the library and talking to students about the new policies, it would be helpful if the same discussion takes place at home. The library schedule is below – you can expect to find a CDS library book in your child's backpack that day!

Mondays: 9:00 a.m.-10:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m.-1:45 p.m. (2nd, 5th/6th)

Tuesdays: 9:00 a.m.-10:00 a.m. (Kindergarten I)

Wednesdays: 10:30 a.m. -11:30 a.m. (Kindergarten II)

Fridays: 9:00 a.m. -11:45 a.m., 1:45 p.m. -2:30 p.m. (Preschool;1st)

Volunteers are needed to fill one-hour shifts. All volunteers need to first sign up for training (this is a requirement of working in the library) by contacting suebarnett@yahoo.com. A training will be held tomorrow, Friday, April 9th, starting at 9:00 a.m., along with the workday. General volunteering questions and requests for shifts should be directed to Robin Wander: robinwander@hotmail.com.

Birthday Book Club

If your child has a birthday coming up, start checking the mailbox! The library has recently launched the Birthday Book Club, which gives parents and grandparents an opportunity to donate a book to the school library in honor of a student's birthday. Children have already begun receiving brightly colored birthday cards from Mr. Rick, along with a note to parents explaining how to participate.

All parents have to do is mail a \$20 check to the school with your child's name on it; a volunteer will bring the student into the library to choose a book out of the special birthday treasure chest, which is filled with dozens of new gems. After the child has chosen, a birthday bookplate with the child's name will be attached to the book, which will then become part of the library collection and enjoyed by generations of CDS students. Grandparents will also receive a postcard explaining the program and inviting them to participate.

—Sue Barnett & Debra Levin, Library Committee Co-Chairs

Do You Prefer *The Weekly* by Email?

Help us reduce our paper usage by receiving the *Weekly* via email. Please email us at 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



Saturday, April 24th

Spring Work Day

Saturday, May 1st

11:00 am – 2:00 pm

Country Fair

Thursday & Friday, May 13th & 14th

Parent/Teacher Conferences

No School

No Extended Program

Monday – Friday, May 17th – 21st

ERB Testing Week

(3rd – 6th grades)

Wednesday, May 26th

Step-Up Day

Friday, May 28th

Spring Electives End

Saturday, May 29th

11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Middle School Picnic

Monday, May 31st

Memorial Day Observed

No School or Extended Program

How to Submit to *The CDS Weekly*.

Submissions are to be received **no later than 8:00 am Wednesday**. Please email them to [cgsweekly@cgs-sf.org](mailto:cdsweekly@cds-sf.org)

