



October 21, 2004

THE CHILDREN'S DAY SCHOOL Weekly

Head's Column

Opening Minds

In his recent review in the New York Times of Stephen Greenblatt's *Will in the World*, Colm Toibin says that William Shakespeare's plays and poems "represent everything: a complex world-view, an astonishingly varied sense of character and tone, a command of poetic form and rhetoric and dramatic structure." Educators have often argued about whether or not middle school students should be studying his work, precisely because Shakespeare "represents everything." A teacher I knew once said, "Seventh graders studying Shakespeare are like seventh graders studying calculus."

Well, the CDS seventh grade returned on Monday from Ashland, Oregon's Shakespeare festival where they watched *Henry the VI, Part 1*, *A Comedy of Errors* as well as *A Raisin in the Sun*. Naturally, I was interested in student responses. I asked Samuel, who is new to the school this year, "What was your favorite play?"

"*A Comedy of Errors*."

"Why?"

"It was funny."

"How did you like *A Raisin in the Sun*?"

"Oh, that was great, too. I understood that."

"Did you understand the Shakespeare plays?"

Other students chimed in:

"It was hard to understand the words, sometimes."

"Yeah, if you missed one word, you would miss the next few things."

"Yeah, but you could tell what was happening."

"Yeah, you got used to it."

"*Henry the VI* was too melodramatic."

Nonetheless, several students bought *Henry the VI, Part 2*. In fact many students purchased Shakespeare plays. Some of them read the plays to each other on the long trip home. After the trip Doug asked them if the trip changed their attitude toward Shakespeare. They all said they liked Shakespeare, many said they loved it.

It is reasonable to ask whether one should expose children to material that is too complicated for them, and there is no question that someone with thirteen years of life under their belt will not fully understand Shakespeare. But the students' reaction to the plays shows the potential of children properly taught.

The trip also gave the students a chance to show how competent and mature they can be. Teachers and parents reported that they were very proud of these young people. They rose to the occasion as mature learners. They were given a

Hot Dates

Friday, October 22

10:15-10:30 a.m.

Friday Assembly

Kindergarten presenting

Tuesday, October 26

1:00 p.m.

Middle School Class Observation

Social science with Mr. Andre

Friday, October 29

11:15 a.m.

Halloween Celebration

Noon Dismissal

No Extended Program



Thank You!

- To Geddes Fielder for her donation of books to the library.
- To the first grade class for providing delicious food and drink at the parent education night.
- To the many parents and trustees who made the Annual Fund phonathon a smashing success this week: Susi Alexander, Tina and Kevin Corse, Lisa Eltinge, Marianne Evans, Geddes Fielder, Bill Gaede, Jackie Haslam, Tracy Kirkham, Kit Land, Matt Schwartz, Ann Squires, Mary Beth Towery, Wini von Ehrenburg, Robin Wander and Cindy and David Wilson. Great job!
- To Sam Hunt (builder of the fabulous sandbox), Bill Littmann, Zachary Fisher, Karen Randig, Diana Hunt, Kate Fritz, Richard Bennett and Candy Mabry for helping to build and install the new planter and bench that now graces the exterior of the preschool bungalows. The planter and pots will soon be filled with flowers and trees.
- To Karen Georgiades and Marie Cross for helping out with admission tours during the past week.
- To Marianne Evans and Jonnie Sharp for attending Preschool Preview Night with Aimee and Candy.
- To Brian Richard for assembling the library circulation desk.

guided tour behind the scenes of a Shakespearian play, offering a window into the nitty gritty world of production. The tour guides were very impressed with the students, not only with what their questions revealed about their knowledge and how deeply they thought, but also with the quality of their intellectual enthusiasm.

The simplicity versus complexity debate is based on a false dichotomy. There is clearly much to be gained and very little to be lost by overexposing children to challenging material (within reason). Oversimplifying, or dumbing down does not engage the brain, but presenting complex ideas and stories with preparation and guidance opens the mind.

The minimum expectation of the trip was familiarity. Certainly, the next time they experience Shakespeare it will be more familiar and their capacity for understanding will be richer, as images, scenes or memories of the performance rise to the surface. However, the students

surprised us yet again. They demonstrated they were ready for so much more. The conversations on the trip and back at school has made the teachers and parents involved believe that a door has been opened for them.

How does one measure value in this business? It is a difficult question. In this business it is hard to be sure, but with any luck the students came back to San Francisco with a world view which is more complex, an expanded view of character, a richer sense of tone, and an increased awareness of poetic form, rhetoric and dramatic structure. In the short run we usually have to go with our intuition, which responds to clues such as, "I loved it!"

The Dirt

Antmazing

Last week Ms. Katherine, Josh, the third grade class and I got up close and personal with some ants! We went outside and carefully collected ants into petri dishes and then brought them to the David Minus Science Center. The third graders rotated through stations while looking at the ants under microscopes. What we saw was "antmazing." Some of the highlights included getting a close enough look to realize that we had collected more than one species of ant, being able to see all of the individuals lenses of their compound eyes and noticing what looked like hair covering their legs. Our ability to observe ants in a new way magnified not only our ability to see what an ant looks like but also our interest in learning more about the creatures. Thanks to the David Minus Science Center this kind of learning opportunity is now available to CDS students.

—Misty, Environmental Education Resource Teacher

From the Office

Sibling Applications

Do you have a child who is a sibling of a current CDS student who you would like to enroll at CDS in the fall of 2005? If so, it's time to think about submitting your application! 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 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. However, 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 2005 enrollment, the deadline for submitting a sibling application is Friday, November 12, 2004. Applications are available from Rose at the front desk, and completed applications should be returned to Rose, Lauren or Aimee with a \$50 application fee. After we receive the application, Lauren will schedule a classroom visit for your child. This visit provides an opportunity for our faculty to spend some time with your child so we can make sure CDS can meet his or her needs. Sibling decisions will be mailed with your family's re-enrollment contract on February 11, 2005. 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.

New eScrip Members!

Thank you to all new eScrip Members: Carolyn Allison, Leslie Edelman, Melanie Fife, Cristi Gooch, Deborah Jasso, Stephanie Jukes-Amer, Neema Lama, Tina King, Beth Mazie, Jane Seabrook, James Reynolds, Deborah Schwartz, Elizabeth Seirmarco, Mark Wise and Yulin Saussy.

To All Safeway Club Card Members: Please renew your Safeway Club cards today! Your valuable contributions will stop unless you renew your Safeway Club Cards by November 1, 2004. Have your Safeway Club Card handy and call 1-800-801-4973 or visit www.eScrip.com and click on the "Yes, Renew" icon. Call Cathy Hazlewood at (415) 585-4509 or email pak2You@earthlink.net for help or questions regarding eScrip.

Events

Halloween Celebration

Don't miss our annual Halloween celebration, held on Friday, October 29! All parents are invited to attend the Elementary and Middle School Parade, which promises to be spectacular and scary. The parade begins in the yard at 11:15 a.m. Please check with your child's teacher regarding the schedule for the day. 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. Please note that dismissal will be at noon and there will be no extended program.

CDS Haunted House

Please join the after school students at their spooky haunted house on Thursday, October 28! After school students have been working hard all month to create a ghost filled haunted house in celebration of Halloween.

Observe Middle School Classes

Want to know more about our new middle school? Interested in seeing the middle school students and faculty in action? Aimee Giles has scheduled 4 opportunities for CDS parents to observe our new middle school classes. The schedule is below. Parents of CDS children of ALL ages are invited - please come! RSVP to Aimee if you plan to attend, 861-5432 x22 or aimeeg@cds-sf.org.

- Tuesday, 10/26, 1 p.m. – Social science/studies with Mr. Andre.
- Tuesday, 11/9, 9 a.m. – Language Arts with Mr. Andre (6th grade).
- Tuesday, 11/9, 1 p.m. – Science with Mr. Doug.
- Wednesday, 11/10, 9 a.m. – Math with Mr. Doug (7th grade).

K-7 Tour

Curious to see what's going on in our K-7 classes? After coffee on Friday, November 12, join Rick, Aimee and a few elementary and middle school parents on a CDS parents-only tour of our K-7 classes from 8:45-10:15 a.m. The tour will culminate with our all-school

Go Bulldogs!

Co-ed Volleyball Scores

CDS vs. Katherine Delmar Burke School
KDBMS 25, CDS 13
KDBMS 25, CDS 17

Co-ed Volleyball Calendar

Tuesday, November 2, 3:45 p.m.
San Francisco Christian School
5500 Mission St, Daly City

assembly at 10:15 a.m. This is an excellent opportunity for you to see our terrific K-7 classes in action. No RSVP is necessary – we hope you join us.

Extended Program News

Adult Enrichment Classes

THE SIGN UP DEADLINE HAS BEEN EXTENDED TO MONDAY, OCTOBER 25. This is an exciting new extended program for ADULTS! Classes offered are: Writing Memoirs, Thursdays with Andre Perry; Hatha Yoga, Tuesdays with Carrie Birgbauer; Beginning Spanish, Tuesdays with Consuelo Aparicio-Cercos; Introduction to Painting, Thursdays with Karen Slovak. On-site childcare is available. These classes are open to CDS staff, parents, Notre Dame residents and friends in the community. Please help spread the word and take advantage of this opportunity to meet new people and learn something new and exciting. To sign up, contact Jenna at x15. Classes start October 26.

Sibling Pick Up

If you have sibling students in different classes and would prefer to pick them up at the same time (i.e. when the older child gets out of his or her class), you need to enroll in the after school program. We offer this service at no cost, but do require parents to complete an Extended Program Agreement for the youngest child. This lets the teachers know that your younger child will be staying in their classroom until the older sibling picks him or her up and heads to the “double doors” for pick-up by you. Please note that it is NOT the after school teacher’s responsibility to bring your younger child to the double doors for you. You or your older child needs to come and pick up the younger child and let the after school teacher know what is happening.

The PM Program is Open to All

Thanks to those of you who have helped to spread the word to your friends and neighbors about CDS opening its programs. Please continue to get the word out that we have opened up the vacation camps, enrichment classes, and after school program up to children who

don’t attend CDS during the regular school year. Families interested in receiving more information can call Jenna at (415) 861-5432 x 15.

PTTA Update

Spring Celebration & Auction

The CDS annual dinner and dance event will be held on Saturday, March 19, 2005. The location has been secured and planners are moving forward with all the preparations. The ever-popular quilts are being fashioned now, so watch this space for more Spring Celebration & Auction information as it becomes available.

Why not start considering ideas for items you may wish to donate to the Auction? To start your creativity flowing, here are some items donated by families in previous years:

- Host a themed party, dinner or cocktails at your home.
- Take a group of children/adults hiking, camping, skating or plan your own outdoor activity.
- Provide your home improvement or gardening skills at a CDS family’s home.
- Ask a friend or relative to donate time at their

PTTA Corner

Friday Morning Coffee

Come join other parents for coffee and doughnuts in the yard after Friday drop-off, 8:30-9 a.m. This is your chance to meet other families, have a few minutes of grown-up conversation and grab sustenance and caffeine before you start your day.

In addition, we need volunteers on occasion to help set up and bring doughnuts. Please sign up on the sheet posted on the bulletin board. Nothing gets the kids out of bed in the morning like the knowledge that they will stop off for doughnuts during the drive to school!

PTTA Questions or Ideas?

Contact Marianne Evans, PTTA President, at (415) 648-1731 or goevansgo@yahoo.com.

vacation home.

- Present a gift certificate from your favorite restaurant or store.
- Donate a gift certificate from your child's ballet, gymnastics or swim school.
- Make available services for an attorney, graphic or interior designer, financial planner or contractor.

We'll announce a kick-off meeting date shortly where you'll have the opportunity to participate in this wonderful event. For any preliminary questions, suggestions or ideas please contact Emma Donovan at (415) 437-9833 or Stephanie Scarpulla at (415) 206-1107. With your assistance, we're looking forward to the best event ever!

Hola Familias de CDS

Hola Familias!

This week the Spanish bulletin board on the 2nd floor outside the 1st grade classroom houses a display of middle school work focusing on "The Art of Translation." Please come take a look! They have been working hard on translation as well as studying comprehension, writing and pronunciation.

La frase de la semana:

Que has hecho esta semana? What did you do this week?

— Spanish Department

Upcoming Dates

Sunday, October 31
Daylight Savings Ends

Monday, November 1
Professional Day
No School
No Extended Program

Tuesday, November 2
Election Day

Tuesday, November 9,
Middle School Class Observation
9 a.m.
Language Arts with Mr. Andre
1 p.m.
Science with Mr. Doug

Wednesday, November 10
Middle School Class Observation
9 a.m.
7th Grade Math with Mr. Doug

Friday, November 12
8:45-10:15 a.m.
K-7 Tour

Children's Day School

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