



May 18, 2006

THE CHILDREN'S DAY SCHOOL Weekly

Words from Rick

What "Strong Academics" Looks Like

This spring the seventh graders compared bullfrog and human anatomies. In preparing for their papers, they did a full dissection of the bullfrog and took measurements of both the bullfrogs and themselves. They also did online and library research. They did a great job pulling together observation, research and their own logical conjectures.

Here is how Henry described the 3-chambered bullfrog heart versus the 4-chambered human heart: "...both oxygenated and deoxygenated blood flow together through the single ventricle. Although it appears that this would waste the entire process of separating the bloods, it does not. The ventricle keeps the two bloods fairly separate by being divided into two narrow chambers. [In the human heart] both the oxygenated and deoxygenated blood have, as it were, a room and a waiting room so that at no point in the process do the two bloods have to run together...having our blood very fully oxygenated is much more important to us than it is to a frog. A frog rarely has to do much but sit still...much more oxygen is required for more stressful [human] activities."

Here is a brief quote from Jessica, writing about bullfrog skin and bones: "The bullfrog has very tough and loose skin and it also has veins on the inside of its skin. The skin, as well as the lungs, plays a vital role for the bullfrog because it helps it to breathe and stay alive. When dissecting the bullfrog in class, I noticed that the bullfrogs bones were very strong, especially its arm bones. These strong bones help [frogs] do many things. Their hind leg bones help them to jump and their other bones help the frog protect itself. The human skin is...very strong, soft, waterproof and self-repairing."

If only you all could read all of the seventh grade reports. Notice that the students seem to be learning biology, but notice also the quality of their writing, the depth of their thinking, and the intellectual as well as the academic content. The introduction of humor in many of these reports reflects not only their cleverness, but also their enthusiasm for learning. Doug Garfinkel has found a way to engage their genius as he teaches them what they need to know.

When the elementary school began here ten years ago, there was confidence in the quality of the social environment, but there was doubt about the quality of the academics. How could a school that is so young turn out a challenging academic program? Won't it take a long time for the CDS program to measure up to more established schools? That was the prejudice, and from time to time I hear that the prejudice still lingers today.

When I came here four years ago, and I saw what had already been created in six short years, I knew that this prejudice was a fear that we could put to rest.

Hot Dates

Friday, May 19
10-10:15 a.m.

Friday assembly
Fifth grade presenting

Friday, May 19
7 p.m.

CDS middle school students'
Twelfth Night
Dolores Street Church

Saturday, May 20
2 p.m.

CDS middle school students'
Twelfth Night
Dolores Street Church

Sunday, May 21
10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Seventh and eighth grade car wash
CDS parking lot

Monday, May 22
9-10 a.m.

Step-Up Day

Dates now posted on CDS website!
www.cds-sf.org/news/calendar.html



Thank You!

- To Amanda Newstetter for facilitating the parent discussion about talking to kids about sex and the sex education curriculum at CDS.
- To Ray Baxter and Linda Glover for taking unclaimed lost and found items to Community Thrift.
- To Betsy Cordes for designing our excellent first-ever graduation invitations.
- To Sally Nielsen for her work as Family Farmer Coordinator.

Sure enough, the results are in. The standardized tests the students are taking this week (ERBs) will continue to show what they show every year; i.e. that our academics stack up quite well against other independent schools in the Bay Area. The test results, however, do not reveal all that is important. All you have to do to recognize what is important is to read the work the seventh graders did when they compared frogs to humans.

Events

Twelfth Night

Some are born great, some achieve greatness, some have greatness thrown upon them... come see what's so great about our play! Twelfth Night: A Tale of Greatness, our Shakespeare drama selective production, will be performed by middle school students at Dolores Park Church (Dolores and 18th Streets) this Friday, May 19, at 7 p.m. and Saturday, May 20, at 2 p.m. Donations only. All are invited, and we'd love to have you.

The Dirt

Summer Family Farmers Needed

Did the Country Fair get you pumped for some garden time? Are the newly shorn sheep and rambunctious chickens calling your name? If so, you might want to consider becoming a family farmer for the summer! To become a family farmer, you just need to attend one training, which will be held this Sunday, May 21 at 9 a.m. in the farm and garden. The training will last approximately one hour and will provide you with all of the information you'll need to care for the animals and the garden. To RSVP for a training slot, please call Misty at 861-5432 x321. If you were trained last September or

January and want to take care of the animals this summer, simply RSVP and show up at 9:45 a.m. to pick dates; you don't need to attend the training. You only need to commit to two weekends and/or holidays during the next four months and in return you will have the chance to bury your fingers in JoJo's warm, soft wool and collect fresh eggs for Sunday morning breakfast.

Thank you Sally Nielsen

Sally Nielsen served for many years as the Family Farmer Coordinator. She has supported the farm through many transitions, of both new farm animals and new farm teachers. She has been available to help out in the event of animal emergencies and has provided lots of loving care to JoJo, Lucky and the hens. Sally's devotion to the farm and garden has been a true gift to the school. Thank you Sally for your contribution to CDS and the help you have provided over the last two years; it is greatly appreciated.

From the Office

Step-Up Day

This year's Step-Up Day will take place on Monday, May 22 from 9-10 a.m. Kindergarten through sixth grade students will visit the class they will be entering next year (preschoolers and seventh and eighth graders will not participate). During Step-Up Day, students will be introduced to next year's classroom and learn about expectations for the upcoming grade level. Newly admitted students will also be invited to attend.

Kid Chow Survey

Are you interested in having Kid Chow – our organic brown bag lunch program – continue next fall? In an effort to serve you and your children better, and to evaluate Kid Chow's return to CDS next fall, Kid Chow has created a quick online survey to get your feedback. It's quick! Please complete it by Monday, May 22 so Kid Chow can assess CDS's continued participation in their lunch program. Thank you.
<http://www.kidchow.com/survey.asp?surveyID=25>.

Class Photos

Class photos have arrived! Teachers have copies and will distribute them to students. For any questions, concerns or future orders, please contact Mugshots Photography directly at www.mugshotsphotography.com or orders@mugshots.com.

High School Placement

Seventh grade families will have the opportunity to meet with Doug Garfinkel and Rebecca Kroll to discuss beginning the high school placement process during the last week of school. Watch for an e-mail from Rebecca to set up your meeting time.

From the Classrooms

Chasing Vermeer

Please note the attached essay, "Chasing Vermeer," written by fourth grade teachers, Paula Symonds and Amanda Perla. Their essay was recently published in the Spring 2006 edition of the California Association of Independent Schools Faculty Newsletter and highlights the engaged learning, research, writing and discussion that surrounded fourth grade story time with the book, *Chasing Vermeer*.

Middle School Car Wash

On Sunday, May 21 the seventh and eighth graders will hold a car wash in the shared CDS/NDP parking lot from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. A regular wash is \$10 and a wash and wax is \$15 with a free cookie. There will also be a bake sale; all proceeds go to pay for the middle school dance that took place April 14 as well as future middle school events. Please come by and support the middle school students—don't forget to bring your dirty cars and/or donated baked goods!

Earth Friendly Fridays

Last week, on our inaugural Earth Friendly Friday, 16 out of 22 families and at least five participating teachers came to school in earth friendly ways: 3 walked, 6 took Muni, 2 carpooled, 2 rode BART, 1 rode a bike, and 2 scooted.

For the next four Fridays, the Tadpoles will be coming to school in earth friendly ways. We would love it if other members of the CDS community joined us! Come report to the Tadpole classroom this Friday for lemonade if you chose an earth friendly way of getting to school. The Tadpole class looks forward to your participation in Earth Friendly Fridays.

2005-06 Yearbooks

The yearbooks are here! Please see the attached note about acquiring your very own 2005-06 yearbook.

Upcoming Dates

Sunday, May 29 – Saturday, June 3

Eighth grade trip to New Mexico

Monday, May 29

Memorial Day observed

No school

No extended program

Thursday, June 8

1-3 p.m.

Eighth grade graduation

CDS yard

Friday, June 9

Last day of school (full day)

Extended program available to 6 p.m.

Dates now posted on CDS website!
www.cds-sf.org/news/calendar.html

Children's Day School

333 Dolores Street

San Francisco, CA 94110

415-861-5432 (ph)

415-861-5419 (fax)

www.cds-sf.org

Editor: Mary DeNardo, maryd@cds-sf.org

Submissions due Wednesdays, 8 a.m.

Contact Mary to receive the Weekly via e-mail