



October 6, 2005

THE CHILDREN'S DAY SCHOOL Weekly

Words from Rick

Preparing For Life

As some of you know, my mother died last week. I returned to my desk on Friday to find a stack of handmade cards expressing sympathy from students. Each one was heart-healing in its own way. Some made me smile, some made me laugh out loud, and they all made me cry (which is a good thing).

“Dear Mr. Rick, I am sorry that your mom died. I cried for two days when my goldfish died. You must really be sad. So I made a happy picture to make you feel better.”

“Dear Mr. Rick, I am reeeeeaaaally sorry your mom died on Monday. I hope she died of good old age and not of sickness.” (...and yes she did die of very good old age.)

“To Rick, I’m so sorry that your mother died. You must be really sad and I know how sad you are I think because my dad died when I was 6.”

One of the cards has a purple, pop-out heart with eyes that are crying in the middle. On one side there is a smiley, blue tear drop with left hand raised, and on the other is a smiley, orange flame with right hand raised.

Two days before my mother died, I spent the night in her room listening to her breathing. Her heart and lungs seemed to be the only parts of her body still alive. She sounded exactly like she was at the end of a long marathon and breathing hard as she approached the finish line, trying to finish up strong. Two days later her breath came peacefully, as if she were lying on the cool grass resting from her long race. As the sun set on that day she died.

My brothers, sister and I were together. Just as in the kids’ cards, the sadness and laughter alternated like breathing out and breathing in. That’s the way her life was also. In her dozen scrap books there were hundreds of smiling faces, dozens of relatives and friends, many weddings and births. But we know also about many heartbreaks, break-ups, disappointments and deaths she suffered. There was both rain and rainbows; but there was no pot of gold at the end, just quiet breathing and gratitude that she had finally crossed to safety.

When I connect this experience with the welfare of the children and with our work here at school, I see evermore clearly that our job is to teach the disciplines of embracing it *all*. Of course it is natural for us to try to maximize life and minimize death, to maximize success and minimize failure, to maximize happy and minimize sad, to maximize easy and minimize hard. Paradoxically though, if we are trying to prepare our kids for a long, happy and successful life in the real world, we need to prepare them for struggle, conflict, failure, sadness, pain and death. We do this not so much by talking about it

Hot Dates

Friday, October 7
10-10:15 a.m.

Friday assembly
Fourth grade presenting

Friday, October 7
8:45-10 a.m.

Grandparent Breakfast
Library

Thurs., October 6 & Fri., October 7

Lost and found pick-up
Entrance gate

Monday, October 10

No school
Extended program available

Tuesday, October 11

4:30-5:45 p.m.
PTTA meeting
Faculty lounge

Tuesday, October 11

Fall enrichment classes begin



Thank You!

- To Bill Veiga and Kate and Rich Torres for providing wonderful coffee and donuts at Friday morning coffee last week.
- To Ann Van Gelder and Karen Randig for being super admission tour guides on October 4.

(the cards I received showed me that kids understand and accept death each in their own way), but by being *with* our children as they experience those 'negative' experiences we wish them never to have.

Thank you for the little things you have done to help me mourn. And thank you all for keeping the CDS community strong so that I could be away confidently and without anxiety at my mother's side.

The Dirt

Spider Season?

Come look for spider webs and spiders in the garden! I'm not sure if there really is a high spider population in the garden this year or if I am turning into a better observer, but I have been appreciating a variety of spiders and webs during the last week. My favorite web is just inside the garden. It's an orb web and is connected to the arch, apple tree and rosemary plant. It's really fun to walk through the garden with a spray bottle, spraying the plants as you look for webs because the water sticks to the webs and you can see them more easily.

From the Office

Annual Fund Phonathon

The fourth annual CDS phonathon will be held this year from 6-9 p.m. on the evenings of Tuesday, October 18 and Wednesday, October 19. Parent and Trustee volunteers will be calling parents to ask them to give to the CDS Annual Fund, which supports CDS families, teachers, programs and plans. The generosity of parents, Trustees and other friends has allowed us to plan for the future with confidence and optimism, and gifts of any size are appreciated. All parents will soon receive a letter in the mail from Annual Fund co-chairs Cindy and David Wilson. With their letter, new parents will also receive a booklet written by the National Association of Independent Schools regarding volunteering and fundraising at independent schools (returning families received this booklet last year). Please read these materials and be prepared to support CDS. Thank you!

Support the Women's Collective

Attached to today's *Weekly* is a wonderful interview with Ady Castro, one of the CDS janitors who works with the Women's Collective of the Day Labor Program, through La Raza Centro Legal. Mike Gast, our After School Coordinator and third grade extended program teacher, spoke with Ady about her experiences coming to the Bay Area from Mexico and the services that the Women's Collective offers. Please take some time to read the interview and information about the Collective; the Collective is a great resource for all sorts of household needs!

Grandparent Breakfast

Local grandparents are invited to join us for breakfast in the library tomorrow from 8:45-10 a.m. Grandparents will have an opportunity to visit school, take a tour and enjoy a casual snack with Rick, members of the Board and other grandparents and find out about volunteer opportunities at CDS. Grandparents are also welcome at our Friday assembly, beginning at 10 a.m. in the yard. Please note: we will still hold our annual Grandparents and Special Friends Day on Wednesday, November 23 for grandparents near *and* far, a longer event featuring more classroom time with the kids, breakfast and mingling.

Therapist Referrals

Has your child worked with a therapist (psychological or occupational), a learning specialist or a tutor that they really liked and found effective? We're putting together a list of resources for CDS families and would love to include your recommendations. Please e-mail the person's name and contact information to Kendra at kendrak@cds-sf.org by Friday, October 28.

Go Bulldogs!

Co-ed Volleyball Scores

October 5, CDS vs. Creative Arts

Game 1: CDS 25, CA 20

Game 2: CA 25, CDS 21

Game 3: CA 15, CDS 13

Co-ed Volleyball Calendar

Tuesday, October 11, 4 p.m.

Katherine Delmar Burke School, 7070 California St.

The Bulldogs love your support—come out and scream and shout!

School Photos

Please note that school pictures will take place on Tuesday and Wednesday, October 18 and 19. You will be notified (closer to the date) as to what day your child's photo will be taken.

Lost & Found

Come and claim your belongings! All items in the lost and found bin will be on display during drop-off and pick-up today and tomorrow! At the end of the day tomorrow, all unclaimed items will be taken to Community Thrift.

Extended Program News

Social Justice Camp

On Monday, October 10 school will be closed. We will be offering a full-day (8 a.m.-6 p.m.) camp for students in preschool-8th grade. Registration forms were sent home in backpacks last week. If you didn't receive one, please pick up a copy at the front desk. The registration deadline has been extended to Friday, October 7 at noon.

Enrichment Classes

The due date for registration forms was yesterday! Schedules for classes will be posted on the after school bulletin board on Friday. If you signed up for a class and didn't receive confirmation, please assume that your child got into the classes he/she wanted. If you'd like to double check or confirm enrollment, please call or email Charlie at 861-5432 x315.

After School Program

Please let the receptionist know before 10 a.m. if you would like to make a change or addition to your child's after school schedule on any given day. If you call to sign up your child after 10 a.m. the rate for drop-in care will be \$12.50 per hour, as stated in the Extended Program Agreement and in the Parent Handbook. Also, when signing out, if you do not see your name printed in the alphabetical roster, it means that we do not have an Extended Program Agreement on file for your child. We need this in order for your child to stay in the after school program. Extra agreements are available at the front desk and can be turned in to Charlie via the receptionist.

Boys & Girls Club

Kindergarten-8th grade students will go to the Boys & Girls Club on specific days throughout the month. Please refer to the after school study hall calendars that the after school teachers have available.

School Wish List

Music Program

Kyoko Kimura, our new middle school music teacher, is in need of instrument donations for the new after school music lessons:

- Violins
- Woodwind instruments (flute, clarinet and sax)
- Small electronic keyboards

If you have a used instrument you would be willing to share with a CDS student, please contact Kyoko at 861-5432 x379.

Woodshop

CDS is working on developing a new woodshop for students to build construction skills. If you have any of the following materials gathering dust in your basement, garage or closet, we would be happy to put them to good use:

- Used tools in good shape (screwdrivers, hammers, saws, electric drills)
- Old hardware (nuts, bolts, nails and screws)
- Wood scraps (three feet long or smaller)
- 5 gallon plastic buckets

Please deliver donations to the front desk. If you have any questions, ask Mr. John, at 861-5432 x373.

PTTA Update

PTTA Meeting

Everyone is invited to join us at the next PTТА meeting on Tuesday, October 11 from 4:30-5:45 p.m. in the faculty lounge. CDS Trustee and Finance Committee chair Bill Gaede will be joining us to talk about the finances of the school and CDS Trustee and Development Committee chair Kit Land will talk about the Annual Fund. This will be the third year Bill and Kit have joined us for the October PTТА meeting. We have found their presentations to be very helpful as we gear up for the October 18-19 phonathon and are very happy they will be joining us again this year.

Upcoming PTТА Events

- General PTТА meeting: Tuesday, October 11, 4:30–5:45 p.m. in the faculty lounge. Topics include school finances and the annual fund. Everyone is invited.
- Community Building Committee meeting: Monday, Oct 24, 5–6 p.m. For information about the Community Building Committee please contact Laura Pliska at 415-641-5116 or laura@sfbabyworks.com.
- Wraps & Greens sale: Purchase high quality holiday wrappings and green through CDS. Almost half of every dollar spent goes to holiday bonuses for faculty and staff. Information will go home with students in late October.
- Faculty Holiday Party: around December 15, venue TBD. The PTТА throws the faculty and staff an annual holiday party. We are currently in need of a venue. If you have any leads, please contact a PTТА officer.

All parents are welcome at PTТА meetings. CDS is committed to parent participation and provides free childcare while parents are in meetings; simply sign up at the front desk before 10 a.m. the day of the meeting.

If you have any comments, questions about the PTТА updates or items you would like included on the PTТА calendar, contact Ray Baxter at (415) 902-0765, or ray@warmroom.com.

PTТА 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. To volunteer, contact Michael Silver at 415-518-1803 or michael.silver@barclaysglobal.com or sign up on the sheet posted in the first floor entryway. 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!

PTТА Questions or Ideas?

- Marianne Evans, PTТА President, (415) 648-1731 or goevansgo@yahoo.com
- Amanda Richard, VP, Classroom Liaison Coordinator, (415) 695-0657 or amanda.richard@sbcglobal.net
- Laura Pliska, VP, Community Building Coordinator, (415) 641-5116 or laura@sfbabyworks.com
- Ray Baxter, VP, Secretary, (415) 902-0765 or ray@warmroom.com
- Michael Silver, VP, Parent Volunteer Coordinator, (415) 597-2413 or michael.silver@barclaysglobal.com

Upcoming Dates

Tuesday, October 18 & Wednesday, October 19
Annual Fund Phonathon

Tuesday, October 18 & Wednesday, October 19
Picture Day

Thursday, October 20
7-9 p.m.
Parent education night

Monday, October 31
Professional development day
No school
No extended program

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, cdsweekly@cds-sf.org

Submissions due Wednesdays, 8 a.m.

Contact Mary to receive the *Weekly* via email