



November 3, 2005

THE CHILDREN'S DAY SCHOOL Weekly

Words from Rick

A Different Way of Being in the World

The classes of 2008 and 2009 have become much more competent in the 18 months since many of them first visited my woods in Mendocino County. During our trip up to those same woods last week, not only were they more or less able to pitch their tents, make meals and take care of their clothes and equipment, but they were dramatically better at teamwork. Our expedition (as Pooh would have called it) was divided into eating and sleeping teams. Each group shared a tent, made their own fireplace and by the third meal was (with a little help) able to make their own fires.

I was impressed by the children's attraction to aesthetics in nature. Several were fascinated by the "carvings" in their walking sticks. When selecting a dead branch of a redwood tree, they noticed that the surface of the entire stick was a complex, mysterious pattern of grooves carved into the outer layers of wood. They seemed more interested in marveling at the markings than listening to my explanation of what made them.

When we arrived at the creek halfway through our first hike, they were drawn to a deep, clear pool surrounded by the deep green of ferns and moss and the myriad grey of the stones. We all stood in wonder because the colors grey and green were blanketed by thousands of yellow, orange and brown maple leaves arranged across everything in infinitely complex, interlocking patterns. Back up on the ridge where we camped the kids poured themselves into drawing, painting and writing what they observed and experienced under the guidance of Elizabeth and Melanie.

Going into this experience I half expected there would be a tension between what we wanted the kids to do and what they wanted to do; that fear was not realized. They exhibited a natural desire to take care of their environment and their team mates. Before we left I challenged them to be different in the woods than they are on the playground—to experience themselves in a new way in relationship to their new environment. It seemed to me that they did just that.

On our last day, after a night of rain, sixteen kids took a walk with Kirk and me. I asked them to see if we could be silent for a half-hour and spend our energies focusing on what there was to see and hear in nature. They surprised us; there was only one whisper in 35 minutes. After a ten minute talk, standing on the hillside reporting on observations and asking questions, we were off again. This time there were 40 minutes of silence among all 18 of us, all the way back to the top of the ridge. It was a remarkable experience.

There is research on the importance for children of an intimate relationship with the natural world. *Children and Nature*, edited by Peter H Kahn, Jr. and

Hot Dates

Friday, November 4
10-10:15 a.m.

Friday assembly
Kindergarten presenting

Tuesday, November 8

4:30-5:45 p.m.
PTTA meeting
David Minus Science Center



Thank You!

- To Jenny Lefcourt, Nerius Mercado, Elizabeth Seirmarco, Ann Van Gelder and Marianne Evans for being excellent guides on admission tours.
- To Katherine Whitney and Kate Flynn Becker for all of their help at the fourth grade Pioneer Celebration. And a general shout out to all parents who sent in supplies to help make the celebration a great event.
- To Tina Corse and Susie Carlson for organizing sales of gift wrap and holiday greens and to all families and friends for purchasing gift wrap and greens. All orders must be submitted to the front desk by tomorrow!
- To all of the families who donated wood and tools to the new CDS woodshop.

Stephen R. Kellert, is a book I have in my office. This research seems to support what our instincts tell us, which is that having a close, interactive relationship with nature is a critical component of a child's physical, emotional, intellectual and moral development. Our experience in the woods with these wonderful classes confirmed my prejudices in this regard. Perhaps they were prepared by their years of experience in the bucolic setting of our school in the middle of the city.

One of the most interesting and gratifying experiences for me is that I only had to suggest to them once that we have relationships with the madrone, the manzanita, the moss, the owl, the rabbits, the fox and the deer, and they got it. They were kind to each other, too. They seemed to need very little reminding or explanation. To say more would have been preaching to the choir.

The Dirt

Finding Caterpillars

For the last month I have been noticing that something is eating the broccoli plants that the fourth grade is growing; what was munching them had remained a mystery to me until last week. Marina, who has proven to be a good observer on a number of occasions, finally figured it out. As soon as I mentioned the problem to Noah, Marina, Sasha, Kate and Jory they all instantly bent down and started looking—an approach I hadn't taken to figure it out. Instead, I would hurriedly breeze past and look from

a distance on my way to my next daily chore or class. In less than a second Marina found the first caterpillar. Before long, they were all finding the small green caterpillars. We had a wonderful time searching for the caterpillars and upon Noah's suggestion, we relocated them to a new home in the garden. The biggest gift that our students give me again and again is the constant reminder that taking the time to really look at and notice the world around you is worth losing a few minutes of a busy day.

From the Office

New Mission Statement

Please note that the new CDS mission statement, along with an update from Matt Schwartz, chair of the Strategic Planning Steering Committee, is attached to today's *Weekly*.

Sibling Applications

Sibling application materials have been mailed to all families who notified the Office of Admission of their interest in applying for sibling admission. If you would like a sibling application, please contact Diane Larrabee, Admission Assistant, at 861-5432, x337 dianel@cds-sf.org. Sibling application packets also are available at the reception desk. The deadline for sibling applications is November 18, 2005.

Faculty Art Wall

Come check out faculty and staff artwork! The faculty art wall is located on the third floor, adjacent to the art space. Each month, a faculty member will display their work. This month, second grade teacher John Hooker has installed several of his sculptural works. Stop by monthly and check out faculty and staff artistic endeavors.

Mugshots Make-Up Day

Mugshots will be here on Tuesday, November 15 at 9 a.m. for a student picture make-up day. This service is free for those that missed the picture days in October. If students would like to have a re-shoot taken at this time, there is a \$10 sitting fee that is paid in advance and non-refundable. Proofs should arrive this week and parents will have one week to decide if they wish to purchase pictures. Parents can return forms to school or order pictures online (www.mugshotsphotography.com).

School Wish List

Mural Paint

We are accepting donations of latex house paint (interior or exterior) to finish the bungalow mural. We especially need varying shades of brown and green paint. Please call Charlie at 861-5432 x315 before dropping off paint. Thank you.

Art Department

The art department needs your old magazines, such as National Geographic, for collage projects. Please drop them off in the third floor art area. Thank you.

Lost & Found

Lost and found items will once again be on display during drop off and pick up on Thursday and Friday, November 10 and 11. All unclaimed items will be taken to Community Thrift at the end of the day on Friday.

Speech Therapist

Barbara Rockman, a speech therapist who has worked with CDS in the past, will be here on Tuesday, November 15 and Friday, November 18 from 9-11:30 a.m. to provide speech and language assessment to students in preschool through second grade. A permission slip and sign-up form to participate will go home in student backpacks next week. The screening cost is \$35 and results will be sent home and to the school.

From the Classrooms

Mermaids & Werewolves

The middle school selectives class, "Mermaids and Werewolves," has just completed a project of magical beasts, aliens and beautiful creatures, many of which are on display in the west stairwell. Come see magnificent masks and read stellar descriptions of their creative work.

Events

Grandparents & Special Friends Day

Invitations will soon be in the mail to Grandparents and Special Friends Day, which will be held this year on the morning of Wednesday, November 23. We will send invitations to all grandparents and special friends for

whom we have addresses; if your family has moved, or if you'd like to add someone to the invite list, or if you don't know whether we have your parents' contact information in our database, please contact Marion Quinones at 861-5432 x323 or marionq@cds-sf.org. This event will include classroom visits, a greeting from Rick, mingling with other CDS grandparents and special friends and an all-school assembly to finish off the morning.

Fiesta Meeting Cancelled

Please note that the Fiesta 2006 planning meeting scheduled for this afternoon has been cancelled. A meeting will be held in the next few weeks, details tbd.

Extended Program News

Enrichment Classes

All enrichment classes run for seven weeks, but due to school closures and holidays, some will run longer than others. In the November 17 *Weekly* there will be a list of class end dates and/or any scheduled make-up days. If you have questions, please call Charlie at 861-5432 x315.

Library Corner

Support the CDS Library...Twice!

Library Book Fair

"My library was dukedom large enough." William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, Act I, Scene 2.

The second annual Library Book Fair will be held this year on November 16, 17 and 18 (Wednesday-Friday). The Fair will take place in the library from 8 a.m.-6 p.m. on each of those days. Come and see all the wonderful

Go Bulldogs!

Co-ed Volleyball Scores

November 1, CDS vs. KDBS

Game 1: KDBS 25, CDS 21

Game 2: KDBS 25, CDS 16

November 2, CDS vs. SF Christian

Game 1: CDS 25, SFC 21

Game 2: SFC 25, CDS 19

Game 3: CDS 15, SFC 12

Thanks to all who came to the first-ever Bulldog home game!!

science, history, biography, folk tales, poetry, fiction and other types of books that you can purchase for the library.

Holiday Book Fair

The ever-popular, not-to-be-missed Holiday Book Fair will take place on the evening of Thursday, December 1 at Books Inc. on Market Street, near 16th Street. Parents, teachers, grandparents and friends are invited to the bookstore to eat, drink, mingle, shop and celebrate the holiday season together. Books, Inc. will donate a portion of all purchases to the CDS library acquisition fund.

Thank you for your help building a bigger and broader library collection.

PTTA Update

Math and Science

All parents, faculty and staff are welcome and encouraged to join us for the November PTTA meeting where Doug Garfinkel, Head of Middle School and middle school math/science teacher, will be delivering a presentation on the topic, "Using math and science to make sense of the world around us—Math/science teaching in the middle school." Please bring a pen and paper (really!) and join us in the David Minus Science Center on Tuesday November 8, from 4:30–5:45 p.m. for this informative discussion. Childcare is provided; sign up at the front desk before 10 a.m.

Wraps and Greens

Envelopes containing information for the sale of Sally Foster Gift Wrap and Sherwood Forrest Greens were sent home with all students last week. If you did not receive one, there are extra copies at the reception desk. Order envelopes, with payment, may be turned in at drop-off, pick-up, or at the reception desk. All checks must be made payable to Children's Day School. The sale must end tomorrow, Friday, November 4 to guarantee delivery the first week of December.

Please support our incredible staff and teachers by participating in this fundraiser. Half of every dollar purchased will go directly to their holiday bonuses. Shop now and scratch these details from your holiday "to-do" list. Please direct any questions to:

Wraps: Tina Corse 824-6290 or tjcorse@comcast.net.

Greens: Susie Carlson 552-2804, or johnacar1@pacbell.net.

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. 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!

PTTA Questions or Ideas?

- Marianne Evans, PTTA 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 PTTA Events

- General PTTA Meeting: Tuesday, November 8, 4:30–5:45 p.m. David Minus Science Center. Guest speaker: Doug Garfinkel, Head of Middle School and middle school math/science teacher discusses, “Using math and science to make sense of the world around us—Math/science teaching in the middle school.” Everyone is invited.
- Community Building Committee Meeting: Monday, November 21, 5–6 p.m. For information about the Community Building Committee please contact Laura Pliska (415-641-5116, laura@sfbabyworks.com).

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

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

Upcoming Dates

Tuesday, November 15
9 a.m.
Make-up picture day

November 16–November 18
Library Book Fair

Friday, November 18
Sibling applications due

Monday, November 21
5–6 p.m.
Community Building Committee meeting

Wednesday, November 23
Grandparents & Special Friends Day
Noon dismissal
No extended program

Thursday, Nov. 24 & Friday, Nov. 25
Thanksgiving break
No school
No extended program

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