



September 8, 2005

THE CHILDREN'S DAY SCHOOL Weekly

Words from Rick

What It's All About

The sharp ring of what my cell phone charmingly calls "Pachelbel" drills its metallic tones into my brain. Even though I am awake at 5:50 a.m. listening to the first bird wake up in the cold August fog, it still takes me forever to realize that the noise is pointed at me. In fact, I seem to know that it is violating the sleep of my roommate at our annual staff and faculty retreat, before I realize that I am criminally responsible for it. My shame mounts as I leave the room and turn off the call at the same time.

Who can this be?! When the menu of missed calls says "Brooke," my eldest daughter who lives on the East coast, I am incredulous and punch a nearly random sequence of keys to discover the truth. Then a beep and liquid crystal display indicate that I just received a voice mail message. Good. At least it was not some phantom random misdial from the virtual reality of our modern age.

This is what my intelligent, responsible, infinitely thoughtful daughter-professor-wife-mother has to say, "Dad it's 5:50 in the morning your time so I am glad I didn't wake you..." (Well, to be honest you didn't.) "I just dropped your granddaughter off at kindergarten for her second day and I want you to know what an amazing feeling it is. I am sending this person, who finally has no more baby in her, off into the world on her own. I just wanted to mark the moment."

Well, Brooke, I guess I forgive you. Whether Doug Garfinkel will forgive me is a different matter. School opens for us with the arrival of hundreds of excited children and their parents onto our bucolic acre, where 150 years ago someone decided to make a school. I appreciate my daughter's reminder of what the moment is really all about.

Over five years of love (feeding, talking, waking up in the middle of the night, nursing back to health, resolving conflict, noting the benchmarks of development) are now being tested as little people are released into the complex social and physical environment we call kindergarten to begin the mastery of the world on their own. The feeling must be akin to the first test flight of a new spaceship.

It's important that we all (teachers and parents alike) remember what the first day of school is really all about. We adults, of course, think it is about the beginning of their academic career. But we forget. Let's remember what it is to us, and then we will be reminded of what it is to the children: the chance to find friends and develop relationships.

Hot Dates

Friday, September 9
10-10:15 a.m.
Friday assembly
Eighth grade presenting

Tuesday, September 13
4:30-5:45 p.m.
PTTA meeting
Faculty lounge

Saturday, September 17
12-3 p.m.
Welcome Picnic
19th Avenue playground
(Mother's playground)
Golden Gate Park



Thank You!

- To all of the family farmers who lovingly cared for the sheep and chickens during the summer: Nadya Bratt and Tonantzin Alcantar, Nina Robin and Natasha Kaplan, Laura Fontana and Teddy Northrup, Kimberly Hamilton-Lam and Katherine Lam, Dave, Melanie, Jonah and Sascha Wise, Robin Wander and Brian and Heather Weiss, Elizabeth and Sophia Seirmarco, Marion, Laurel and Sarah Quinones, Merrill Buice and Caroline Hubbard.
- To Edwina Paschal for donating toy trucks to the preschool classrooms and for helping out in the admission office.
- To all the parents volunteers who helped clean up and beautify the school and yard before the first day of classes on Parent-Teacher Work Day.
- To Betsy Cordes for designing the 2005-06 CDS wall calendars, and to All City Printing for donating their printing services. Pick one up at the front desk if you haven't already!

These two visions of school need not be in conflict, if we all see it the children's way. They want to learn to read and write, too, of course—but all in good time, Mom. (Every time I ask a rising first grader what they are looking forward to in first grade, they say, "Homework.") At opening assembly on Friday I asked the students what they noticed that was new this year. Someone said, "The Papa Artie Bower." Others said new trees, new teachers, new classmates, new lockers. Teija Corse said, "We are all new."

I was, as they say, "all over that." I jumped up on the sandbox and said, "That's right. We are all new. I am going to make a declaration: I am new. Raise your hand if you are new." Most of the hands went up. "This is a school where you get to be yourselves, and if you want to be new, you get to be new: make new art, write something new, learn something new, make new friends. That's what we do here."

Kids, make a deal with your parents: "Okay you guys, I will learn to read and write and solve problems mathematically and any other way you think is good, if you will recognize that I have my interests, I need my friends and I need to do stuff in my own way in my own time. Most of all, I need to be trusted. I will even let you remind me about important stuff, as long as you don't

start acting like this is more important to you than it is to me. You may not realize this, but I really appreciate you telling me what you and the world want; just don't start taking it personally, because it's my life not yours. You know, you guys, I want to learn even more than you want me to."

The Dirt

Family Farmer Training

Do you dream of fresh eggs for Sunday morning breakfast? Are you drawn to the cluck of the chickens and the sounds of the sheep baa-ing? If yes, we need you to be a CDS family farmer. Family farmers commit to feeding the animals just two weekends or holidays over the course of the next four months. In return, you'll have the chance to bury your fingers in JoJo and Lucky's warm, soft wool, collect fresh eggs, and keep the animals and nasturtiums company.

The fall family farmer training will be held on Sunday, September 18 in the CDS 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. Please RSVP to sign up for a training at 9 or 10 a.m. We have space for ten families (a maximum of five during each time slot). If the training fills up you will be given priority in January at the next family farmer training. We will be scheduling dates for the next four months so bring your calendars. If you were trained in May and want to help take care of the animals just show up at 11 a.m. to choose dates; you don't need to attend the training.

To sign up as a family farmer, please call Misty at x321 and leave your name, phone number and the time slot you prefer. Thanks in advance for your help.

Containers Needed

If you have one gallon milk or orange juice containers at home, please bring them to school and give them to Misty Cummings, environmental education and resource teacher. She needs approximately 20 of them for class projects.

From the Office

New Phone Extensions

We have a new phone system. We'll send out a list of new phone extensions with next week's *Weekly*. In the meantime, administrative extensions are the same, with a

3 added to the number. For example, to reach Mary, *CDS Weekly* editor, you will now dial 320, as opposed to 20. Also, when you call our main number, you can hear a directory of names to help you locate any teacher or administrator.

School Photos

Mugshots will be here to take individual and class photos on Tuesday, October 18. This is a new date so be sure to note it on your calendars. As always, don't forget the plastic comb!

Admission Volunteers Needed

Share your enthusiasm for Children's Day School by helping with the admission tours (which take place between October and January on Tuesday and Thursday mornings) and/or the Open Houses (scheduled for November 16, 2005, and January 10, 2006 in the evening). Spanish speakers are especially needed at our all-school tour in Spanish on December 6. You can help with one event or several, depending on your schedule.

We'll even provide training for the tours. A training session is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, September 20, from 4:30-6 p.m. at the school. Childcare is available.

If your time is limited but you'd still like to help, we also need one-time volunteers to help staple and stuff admission materials.

If you are interested in helping, please call or e-mail Diane Larrabee, Admission Assistant, at (415) 861-5432 x337 or dianel@cds-sf.org.

Events

Welcome Picnic

Come out to the CDS Welcome Picnic on Saturday, September 17 from 12-3 in Golden Gate Park. All families, faculty and staff are invited. This is a great opportunity to get to know new families and reconnect with familiar faces. Details will be provided in the next *Weekly* and/or through your classroom liaisons.

Class Quilts

It's only September but it's already quilting time! Each year CDS holds a spring fundraiser (this year: Fiesta 2006 on April 1) and the most popular items for sale are always the class-designed and parent-made quilts. This year, volunteers are needed to work on class quilts, specifically Leaping Lizard, Tadpole, Kindergarten, 1st,

2nd, 4th and 6th grade quilts. If you are interested in volunteering or have questions about the class quilts, please contact Tina Corse at 415-824-6290.

Extended Program News

Who's Charlie?

The Extended Program Director, Jenna Stephens, is now going by the name Charlie Stephens.

After School Program

The after school program is off to a great start. A monthly calendar of activities and events is posted by the front doors and teachers also have copies available for families to take home. Thank you for participating.

Call for Volunteers

We are looking for several parents who are available on Wednesdays from 3:15-4:30 p.m. to help with after school classes. Parents will be reading stories, leading activities or supervising free-play for preschool through 4th grade classes while teachers attend weekly faculty meetings. Please contact Charlie at (415) 861-5432 x315 or charlies@cds-sf.org as soon as possible.

Boys and Girls Club

CDS students in the after school program will begin their weekly trips to the Boys and Girls club beginning the week of September 7, 2005. Here is the schedule:

- Kindergarten students in the after school program will attend special, structured classes once or twice each month. Parents will be notified at least a week in advance and will be required to sign a permission slip.
- 1st-4th graders will go to the Boys and Girls Club each Wednesday from 3:15-4:45 p.m. After school teachers will walk them over at 3:15 p.m. and they will return to CDS by 4:45 p.m. We will not require permission slips for students in these grades. Please let us know if you don't want your child to attend. Otherwise we will assume you would like your child to participate.
- 5th-8th graders will go to the Boys and Girls Club each Monday from 4:40-5:30 p.m. when study hall ends. As with the elementary students, we will not require permission slips for students in these grades. Please let us know if you don't want your child to attend. Otherwise we will assume you would like your child to participate.

Enrichment Classes

Registration packets will be sent home the week of September 19. Classes will begin on Tuesday, October 11. There are a wide range of exciting, new classes offered this term! If you haven't received a packet by September 21, please pick one up at the front desk.

Morning Program

Before-school care is available every day in the library from 7:30-8 a.m. If you would like to sign your child up for this program, please fill out an extended program agreement contract and turn it in to Charlie. Care is charged to your account at an hourly rate of \$10.00 in 15 minute increments. You must sign in with the morning program teacher, Brittany, in the library with your name and the time of drop-off each morning.

Music Program

A full after school music program will be offered as part of fall enrichment classes. These classes will be free and sign up is on a first-come, first-serve basis. Be on the lookout for more information sent home in backpacks in the enrichment class packet the week of September 19.

PTTA Update

Welcome Back

Welcome back! I hope you had an enjoyable summer and that the school year is beginning well.

The first PTTA meeting of the 2005-06 school year will be Tuesday, September 13 from 4:30-5:45 p.m. in the faculty lounge. Everyone is invited. Remember that 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.

The agenda for this meeting is as follows:

- Introductions
- What is the PTTA?
- How (and why) do I volunteer?
- Testimonials from volunteers
- Words from Rick
- Plans for the year

Upcoming PTTA Events

- Community Building Committee Meeting: Thursday, September 8, from 5-6 p.m. in the CDS library. At this meeting we will finish up planning for the Welcome Picnic, reflect on what's working (and not working) in our efforts to welcome people to and back to school, set up outreach groups, discuss the purpose and function of these groups and anything else members would like to discuss. If you are not able to make this meeting, but would like to be contacted about future meetings, please contact Laura Pliska at 415-297-9258 or laura@sfbabyworks.com.
- All School Welcome Picnic: Saturday, September 17, from 12-3 p.m. at the Mother's playground (19th Avenue playground) in Golden Gate Park. Please come welcome all CDS newcomers and CDS veterans.
- General PTTA Meeting: Tuesday, October 11, from 4:30-5:45 p.m. in the faculty lounge. Topics include school finances and the annual fund.

Again, all parents are welcome at PTTA meetings. If at any time you have questions or ideas, please contact Ray Baxter at 415-902-0765 or ray@warmroom.com.

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. 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.

Upcoming Dates

Thursday, September 22

5:30-6:30 p.m.

New Parent Reception
Library

6:30-8:30 p.m.

Back-to-School Night
Yard and classrooms

Monday, October 10

No school

Extended program available

Tuesday, October 11

Fall enrichment classes begin

Children's Day School

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Submissions due Wednesdays, 8 a.m.

Contact Mary to receive the *Weekly* via email