



March 22, 2007

THE CHILDREN'S DAY SCHOOL Weekly

Words from Rick

Notes from Southern California

This week's article is guest written by Kirk Bell and Melanie Liu, middle school teachers.

The sixth grade class recently returned from six days and five nights in southern California. We camped at Joshua Tree National Park and studied its geologic formations, flora and fauna. We studied the environmental issues of the Salton Sea Basin. We then continued to Los Angeles, spent a day at the Museum of Tolerance learning about the Holocaust and ended the trip with a half-day architectural tour of downtown Los Angeles.

Following are trip highlights and some student quotes about each day.

Monday: An 11-hour drive

"The only thing that helps a long drive is good humor."

Students showed perseverance, eagerness and even humor in setting up tents and cooking dinner in the dark, in spite of the fact that they had just survived an 11-hour drive in 95 degree heat. They were willing to camp in tents despite fears of scorpions, tarantulas, snakes and coyotes and, after a few nights, came out of the experience with self-confidence.

Tuesday: Joshua Tree National Park tour

"*Yucca brevifolia* (Joshua Trees) are the weirdest plants I've ever seen!"

"Amazing geological formations and deformed cholla cacti."

"Lots of things to see in so little time!"

"Those crazy people in swimsuits climbing the rock formations without ropes were probably just mirages."

"Stars beyond your wildest dreams!"

Students in one van made up new geology-based lyrics to the song, *Celebration!* – lyrics that included the various landforms seen throughout Joshua Tree National Park that day (i.e. exfoliation domes, alluvial fans, bajadas and inselbergs). The trip was a wonderful culmination of two months of geology in the classroom.

Wednesday: Salton Sea

"Awesome view from Bat Cave Buttes."

"The caves reeked of ammonia."

"Licking salt off a rock; the perfect day!"

"Honestly, the Salton Sea isn't all that bad; it's just that the beach is made of ground fish bones and the water looks like toxic waste that makes people want to heave."

Students exhibited playfulness mixed with seriousness in learning about dinoflagellate ooze in the water and the beach composed of barnacle shells and

Hot Dates

Friday, March 23
8:30 a.m.

Friday assembly
Kindergarten presenting

Friday, March 23
4:30-6 p.m.

Open Finance Committee meeting
Faculty lounge

Monday, March 26

Spring enrichment classes begin

Wednesday, March 28
6 p.m.

Movie Night
Diversity and Justice Committee
screening of
"Making Whiteness Visible"
Library

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



Thank You!

- To everyone who has brought coffee and/or donuts to Friday morning coffee in the past several months: Nasrin Naraghi, Alycia Freeman, Michael Silver, Sara O'Malley, Marion Quinones and the Board of Trustees, Laura Pliska, Marianne Evans, Bill Veiga, Pat Rose, Nerius Mercado, Bill Glenn and Suzanne Jachinowski.
- To Ynze Bijl and Tanja Beck for chaperoning the sixth grade trip to southern California. Their presence was beyond awesome; they made the trip extra-amazing!

the bones of dead *Tilapia*, a saltwater fish.

Thursday: Museum of Tolerance

"To be someone who could have been mistaken for skeletons; surviving that takes hope."

"The museum left a print in my mind that I will never, ever forget."

"Unfortunately, history does repeat itself."

Students were responsible and efficient in taking down tents and patience without whining in spite of a 4:30 a.m. wake-up and 5:30 a.m. departure for a five-hour drive to Los Angeles, 75 miles of which was freeway gridlock. Even after the long morning commute, they were respectful, engaged and even highly articulate participants at the Museum of Tolerance. The docent called this class the most aware group of middle school, high school or college students he has ever had the pleasure of working with.

Friday: Architecture Tour and stroll the Third Street Promenade in Santa Monica

"The architecture in Los Angeles is ancient and new at the same time."

"The Disney Concert Hall is one of the coolest buildings I've ever seen."

"Oh my aching feet! But now I actually know something about architecture!"

"I actually like Post-Modern design!"

"The street magician: 'What is under this cup?' A little girl: 'A lemon! A lemon!' The street magician: 'Shut up kid, it's a kiwi!'"

Students exhibited excitement and enthusiasm during the downtown L.A. architecture tour. Frank Gehry's Disney Concert Hall was the clear favorite; students were able to articulate the differences between Art Deco, Modern and Post-Modern architecture.

Saturday: Drive back to SF

"Ten hours in a car with the same six people can be surprisingly fun."

Throughout the trip, students showed:

- Flexibility with changing situations
- Playful curiosity about what was being learned
- Solid understanding and a high level of inquiry about every aspect of the trip
- Responsible conduct in public
- Appreciation and respect for others' needs and eccentricities

The trip was so successful that we would have enjoyed a second week with these students.

From the Director of Diversity

Hear it from Us

Last Wednesday, CDS hosted an annual event organized by COLAGE (Children of Lesbians and Gays Everywhere) called "Hear it From Us" in which four teenage panelists candidly, thoughtfully and with great humor and confidence, answered a wide range of questions from the audience of about 60 parents and educators. It was amazing! One of the questions raised was about the difficulties of having gay, lesbian or transgender parents. All of the panelists replied that they loved their families and that difficulties arose not so much with their parents but with the people in the world who say hurtful things or judge them. In response to a question about gay marriage, one young man remarked, quoting a favorite TV show, "Why not let gays get married? They can be miserable with the rest of us!" One panelist spoke about how her parents didn't want to get married, and even if they did, they would never be able to decide if they would wear two tuxes, or a dress and a tux. One young woman spoke about how she knew that being part of a family that was different and discriminated against had made her strong, resourceful, brave and outspoken and how grateful she was for that. Another panelist agreed that being part of a family that was viewed as "different" made him much more comfortable with relating to other people who were different, in particular, a friend from school with cerebral palsy. It was a great night and we look forward to more opportunities for CDS to connect with the community in meaningful ways.

School Wish List

- The Extended Program is looking for temporary or long term donations of any type of skateboarding gear including elbow and knee pads, wrist guards, skateboards, trucks, wheels and helmets. If you have any of these items and would be willing to loan them to the Extended Program for the week of April 9-13, please contact Michael (michaelg@cds-sf.org) or Charlie (charlies@cds-sf.org), or drop any items by the school.

Movie Night

On Wednesday, March 28, the Diversity and Justice Committee is presenting the first in a series of films about racial justice in our communities. "Making Whiteness Visible," directed and produced by local film-maker Shakti Butler, will be showing at 6 p.m. in the library. Please contact Ryan Gordon directly for childcare at ryang@cds-sf.org. For more information about the film, please contact Charlie Stephens at charlies@cds-sf.org.

Transforming St. Joseph's Hall

Update

Geotechnical engineers will be here on Friday morning and early afternoon to take three boring samples of soil near St. Joseph's Hall. The soil analysis will be used by structural engineers with Tipping Mar & Associates to better assess structural upgrades for the building. In between taking soil samples, the engineers will speak to students in the sixth and eighth grades about their work. There will be some disruption to the swings area during morning recess times and pounding noises when the samples are taken, and two trucks will be parked on the play yard for part of the day. All work areas will be cordoned off from students for their safety. Once the structural engineers' analysis is complete, we will update the community on their recommendations.

Events

Fiesta 2007

The Fiesta community celebration is coming up – next Saturday night!

Be sure to check out the online catalog at <http://www.galaxygoo.org/Members/Fiesta>. Everyday it is growing with more great stuff—check back daily. To get started, click on "Need to Register" and provide the information requested. The special CDS key is "Poppy." Don't forget to click the "over 18" box.

Auction items are organized into categories, so finding must-have items is easy. Looking for new items that have been added since your last visit? Take a peek at the "What's New?" link. How are you going to keep track of all this? Next to each item is a button for adding it to your personal wish list. You can add and remove items from your wish list to your heart's content. Print it out to take along on the big night.

If you have any questions about the catalog, please e-mail Robin McClarren at robinmcc@speakeasy.net.

Instant Wine Cellar Raffle

Raffle ticket sales are underway at school. Be sure to buy your raffle ticket for the INSTANT WINE CELLAR - there will be 100 tickets sold for \$100 each. The odds are fabulous! Crafted with generosity by the CDS community, this 5 case (and growing) wine cellar is valued at almost \$5,000. Some of the cellar's notable labels include a 1996 Chateau Pichon Longueville Comtesse de Lalande, a 2001 Joseph Phellps - Insignia, a 1995 Silver Oak - Napa Valley and so much more. In addition, the winner will receive a one hour phone consultation by Ronn Wiegand, Master of Wine, Master Sommelier (<http://www.ronnwiegand.com/about.php>).

Featured Donation of the Week

Glen Ellen Pool Party Get Away

How would you like to spend a summer day away from the bay (and fog) in the summertime? Come to beautiful Glen Ellen, California and get away. This auction item is an all day experience in the fantastic Sonoma Valley Wine Country. We offer a fully catered lunch and dinner while you're basking in the sun at the pool, picnicking in the vines, taking a wine tasting tour or throwing horseshoes at (oh, I mean with) your favorite CDS parent in the horseshoe pit. Come one, come all, and experience this magical vista. We can entertain up to 10 people. Four couples or three families with children. *Donated by Patti Cazzato.*

Napa Valley Hot Air Balloon Flight for Two

You and someone very lucky will experience Napa Valley from above. Your adventure concludes with a festive breakfast (served by your intrepid pilot) and a Napa sparkling wine toast. No bungee jumping from the hot air balloon, even if you really, really want to.

Donated by Elizabeth & Jay Seirmarco.

Fiesta Central

Fiesta Central is the one-stop drop-off spot where you can purchase raffle tickets, event tickets, sponsor a teacher or sign your child up for FREE childcare. Fiesta volunteers will continue to be outside at morning drop-off this week to help wrap up all your last minute Fiesta needs.

Volunteers

It's not too late to volunteer on the night of the event. If you're interested, please contact Leslie Edelman at (415) 271-4732 or Robin McClarren at (415) 241-0669.

Childcare

The deadline to sign up for free childcare is Friday, March 23. Childcare is available from 6 p.m. to 12:30 a.m. This service is provided for any CDS student (grades pre-8), and for siblings who do not attend CDS in grades K-8. We cannot accommodate preschool children who do not attend CDS. Please bring PJ's and a sleeping bag. Pizza and snacks will be provided.

Extended Program News

Spring Enrichment Classes

Spring enrichment classes begin Monday, March 26. Registration is closed; if you have any questions, contact Charlie Stephens at charlies@cds-sf.org.

April Vacation Camp

April Vacation Camp packets have been sent out. If you did not receive a packet, please pick one up at the front desk. The themes are Farm and Garden and Skateboarding and Urban Art, depending on age group. The camp will run 8 a.m.-6 p.m., April 9-13 and the cost is \$50/day. The final day to register is Friday, March 30.

Upcoming Dates

Saturday, March 31

6:30 p.m. – midnight

Fiesta 2007

St. Mary's Cathedral

1111 Gough Street

Friday, April 6

Cesar Chavez celebration

Monday, April 9 – Friday, April 13

Spring vacation

No school

Extended program available

Tuesday, April 17

Parent Education Night

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

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