



October 26, 2006

# THE CHILDREN'S DAY SCHOOL Weekly

## Words from Rick

### Courage

Denis brought tears to the eyes of many when he stepped onto the sandbox and said goodbye to the school community at Friday assembly three weeks ago. People were sorry to see Denis leave, but the thing that brought tears to our eyes was his courage. He looked uncomfortable as well as sad, and no one, not even his mother, would have marked him as a public speaker.

When he entered the school at the end of third grade a year and a half ago, it was not obvious that he had a propensity for courageous social action. In fact, people might have labeled him as shy. By the beginning of fifth grade, however, faced with the thought of his departure, one of his teachers told me that the class would miss his quiet leadership; another said she would miss having his voice in class. And now he gives a goodbye speech worthy of an academy awards ceremony—well, one of the better ones.

Helping people find their voice does seem to be at the core of the genius of CDS. But it wouldn't happen if the opportunity to speak up was only offered at assemblies. I believe that we are successful because making sure each member of the school community has standing is at the core of our culture. What happens at announcements: "Stand up and wait till everyone is listening," is a theme that runs through our lives here. We have a wonderful way of giving kids the courage to be themselves. It seems to be imbedded in our unspoken definition of fairness. Fair doesn't mean equal; fair means each person has an equal right to airtime.

This culture of courage is also a result of an educational focus that grows out of preschool and continues the rest of the way to high school. We focus on the activity of each student's brain. What matters in mathematics is creative problem solving with numbers—how did you reach your answer? Reading is each person finding his or her own meaning and discussing it with others. Writing is learning the conventions of written communication in the course of expressing yourself, rather than in some meaningless vacuum. Kids naturally want to learn stuff—immigration, clash of cultures, how frogs are different from humans, the physical and social ecology of Hunter's Point—they'll learn so much more if there is a "so what?", and if we care what they make of it. In the CDS approach what the student makes of it is always important.

Last week a parent summoned up the courage to come and talk to me about his feeling that several efforts on his part to contribute to the school community had been rebuffed. He said that it took courage to come talk to me. He said he felt suddenly back in seventh grade and in the principal's office. He commented that there can be a power differential between the head of school and a parent. I agreed.

### Hot Dates

Thursday, October 26  
7-8:30 p.m.

Parent meeting with  
Jensen & Macy  
Home of Tracy Kirkham  
& Joe Cooper  
25 Burnett Avenue

Friday, October 27  
Professional development day

No school  
No extended program

Sunday, October 29  
Daylight savings time ends

Tuesday, October 31  
1:30 p.m.  
Halloween Parade  
(Grades K-8)  
Extended program available

Dates now posted on CDS website!  
[www.cds-sf.org/news/calendar.html](http://www.cds-sf.org/news/calendar.html)



## Thank You!

- To Sara O'Malley and Richard Hylton for writing the Annual Fund letter that was sent to all families!
- To all Annual Fund class captains for your generous and good-spirited assistance with the phonathon and annual fund campaign: Jim Reynolds, Andrew Henry, David Steinberg, Dave Klaus, Anne Funsten, Nina Robin, Susi Alexander, Kim Tennis, Wini von Ehrenburg and Jackie Haslam.
- To Karen Axel, Marianne Evans, Ann Van Gelder, Jon Gilmour, Kristin Henry, Paul Moreno, Roger Nys, Amanda Richard, Louis Schump and Katherine Whitney for their excellent help with this week's admission tours.

His feelings of being less important than other members of the school community stabbed me in the heart. I couldn't even fix his problem in any tangible way—the damage had already been done. I am just so glad that he acted like one of our students at assembly, willing to stand up and wait till everyone was listening. I wonder how common this feeling is among parents. Are the students more courageous than the parents?

At the core of our work relating to diversity and social justice are issues of power. Differences between people would be only moderately challenging and even delightful were it not for the fact that, in our society, affluent, white English speakers have an edge when it comes to power. In a school where our mission is to empower each person to give full voice to their thoughts and feelings, we need to do more than level the playing field. We have to be especially attentive and active to anything that might get in the way of each person feeling his or her full power.

CDS is a school that turns out young people who know who they are, have a sense of their peculiar set of strengths and weaknesses and know how to apply themselves to the world in creative ways. This is fundamentally because we are committed to being a training ground for people to stand up and speak up—the place where each person takes responsibility for his or her feelings and thoughts, and practices the courage to do something about it. But our mission is compromised if not everyone is so empowered.

Well, everyone, let's listen. We have to listen for each person's feeling of empowerment or lack thereof and do something about it. In a community of seven hundred people or so, we surely have problems of this sort every

day. What are the mathematical probabilities that someone will feel offended by the clumsiness of someone else? Someone doesn't say hi to you, someone ignores you, someone interrupts you, someone tells you you're wrong, someone calls you a name. I would put it at about several hundred offenses a day. This school simply has to be the place where everyone develops the courage to stand up and wait till everyone is listening. The platinum rule—which the middle schoolers use so well—makes it the law of the land that if someone wants to speak up, others have to listen. At CDS taking care of each other is everyone's responsibility all the time.

When the word got out that Denis was again back with us there was rejoicing throughout the CDS land. The joy in my heart came not only from the fact that Denis was back but that this apparently shy person acquired the composure and the courage to speak his heart to a group of 300 people.

## From the Director of Diversity

### Book Club

The first Book Club book of the year (for parents and faculty) is Howard Zinn and Anthony Arnove's new book, *Voices of a People's History of the United States*, which features the work of individuals such as Fannie Lou Hamer, Mother Jones, Malcolm X, Emma Goldman, Frederick Douglass and more, across five hundred years of U.S. history. Our first Book Club meeting will be the last week in November. We'll meet to distribute copies of sections of the book and discuss our ideas. The actual date will be confirmed in next week's *Weekly*. Please join us!

Prior to that, on Thursday, November 9 at 7:30 p.m. at the Berkeley Community Theater, is the Bay Area premiere of Zinn's book with the authors and others—including Steve Earle, Danny Glover, Sandra Oh, Marisa Tomei, John Trudell and Alice Walker. Tickets benefit two organizations: MECA's humanitarian aid to children in Palestine, Lebanon and Iraq, and Speak Out which inspires young people across the U.S. to work for social justice. It would be great to have a CDS contingent at this event. Tickets are \$25; however, CDS is willing to make up any difference between the official ticket price and what individuals can afford. Please direct any questions and RSVP to Josh Connor ([joshc@cds-sf.org](mailto:joshc@cds-sf.org)) by Tuesday, October 31.

## School Wish List

- The extended program office is looking for an easy chair or small loveseat. It doesn't have to be in great condition; if you're getting rid of one, call Charlie at 861-5432 x315.

## Movie Night

Please join us for a movie and discussion night (open to parents, faculty and middle school students), complete with popcorn in the cozy CDS library on Thursday, December 7 at 7 p.m.

The first movie of the year will be "Tutu and Franklin: A Journey towards Peace." This film begins with the historic first encounter between Nobel Peace Prize winner Archbishop Desmond Tutu and renowned historical and Presidential Medal of Freedom recipient Dr. John Hope Franklin on Goree Island, the infamous former slave port off the coast of Senegal. Joined by an international interracial group of 21 high school students, together they engage in a series of unusually candid conversations on race and reconciliation. Through witnessing these conversations we can explore the insights of these elders and youth as they examine questions about race, themselves and the world. Discussion will follow. Please RSVP to Charlie at [charlies@cds-sf.org](mailto:charlies@cds-sf.org) by Friday, December 1.

## LGBTQ Brunch

On Sunday, December 3 at 11 a.m., the LGBTQ affinity group will hold a potluck brunch for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer-identified families to socialize together with their children. A parent has graciously offered her home for this exciting event. If you are interested in attending, please e-mail Charlie Stephens [charlies@cds-sf.org](mailto:charlies@cds-sf.org) to RSVP and for more information.

## POCIS Event

The first annual POCIS (People of Color in Independent Schools) event for parents of students of color titled "People Like Us": Social Class in America, will be held on Saturday, November 4 from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Bay School of San Francisco (35 Keyes Way). Childcare and lunch will be provided. Please RSVP by Friday, October 27 (tomorrow!) to Moneeka Settles at [msettles@bayschoolsf.org](mailto:msettles@bayschoolsf.org).

## Affinity Groups

- *Faculty/Parents of Color*: On Tuesday, November 7 at 7 p.m. in the staff lounge, CDS will be holding its first affinity group for faculty and parents of color. The primary focus for the first meeting is for interested parents and faculty of color to discuss ideas about the CDS community, issues relating to diversity and how to support children of color here at CDS. We'll plan on deciding if the group should proceed as a Faculty/Parents of Color group, or expand to include all ethnicities interested in creating a supportive, diverse, multi-cultural school. Refreshments will be provided. Please spread the word about this new group for community members. E-mail Eric Subido [erics@cds-sf.org](mailto:erics@cds-sf.org) or Charlie Stephens [charlies@cds-sf.org](mailto:charlies@cds-sf.org) to find out more and RSVP.
- *LGBTQ affinity group meeting*: On Tuesday, October 24 the first LGBTQ affinity group meeting of the year was held in the staff lounge. We discussed our ideas about some of the things we'd like to focus on this year at CDS, including research on how other schools have been successful in incorporating LGBTQ issues into the curriculum, starting a yahoo group to keep each other informed of events and ideas, having brunches and potlucks that will give parents and children a chance to socialize with other LGBTQ families, participating in job fairs to recruit more LGBTQ faculty and helping in the admission department. Sometime this year we'd love to host a larger celebratory event that everyone is invited to attend. We'll keep you posted! This affinity group is co-facilitated by kindergarten parent Michael Silver ([michael.silver@barclaysglobal.com](mailto:michael.silver@barclaysglobal.com)) and Diversity Director Charlie Stephens ([charlies@cds-sf.org](mailto:charlies@cds-sf.org)). Please contact either of us for more information.

## Go Bulldogs!

Wow! The Bulldog volleyball team finished the season in first place with a record of 6-1! This means they are going to the play-offs; please check this box for a schedule of play-off games and get out there and cheer on the winning Bulldogs!

Congratulations to all of the players, Coach Sara, Coach Josh and Coach Jim!

## Transforming St. Joseph's Hall

### Parent-Architect Meeting Tonight!

Please join CDS parents and Jensen & Macy architects tonight from 7-8:30 p.m. to hear the architects' vision for transforming St. Joseph's Hall. Parents are invited to meet the architects and provide feedback tonight at the home of Board Chair Tracy Kirkham and Joe Cooper at 25 Burnett Avenue. We hope to see you there!

## From the Classrooms

### Professional Development Day

School will be closed on Friday, October 27 (tomorrow!) for a teacher Professional Development Day. Each CDS teacher will spend the morning visiting a colleague at another Bay Area school in order to observe other teachers' best practices. The teachers will return to CDS in the afternoon to discuss and debrief what each observed, as well as plan how to implement any inspirational practices into their current and future classroom work. Please check in with Rebecca or your child's teacher if you're interested in hearing more!

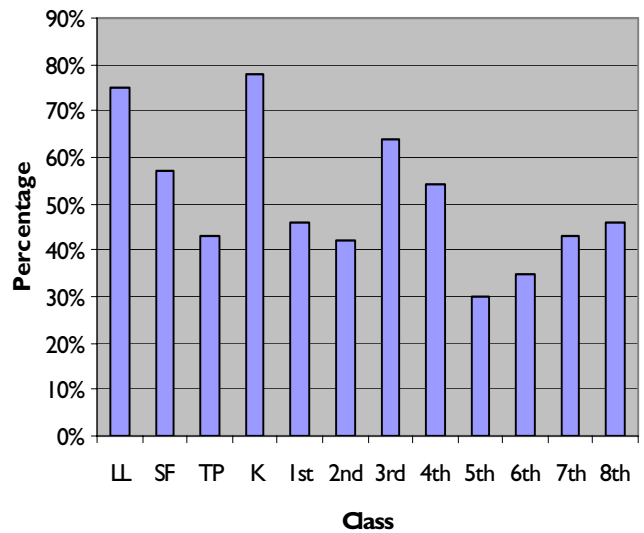
## From the Office

### Annual Fund Update

An enthusiastic thank you to all class captains as well as parents on both ends of the telephone for making last week's phonathon both successful and fun. Parents have been terrifically generous and giving is breaking records for October – 53% of families have made a pledge or gift to the Annual Fund so far, and over \$77,000 has been raised toward the parent goal of \$120,000. The kindergarten class, the largest class in the school, is leading CDS in parent participation at 78%. Kindergarten families have taken an early lead in the ever-competitive race for the coveted pizza lunch offered to the first class to reach 100% participation, with the Leaping Lizards right behind at 75%.

We invite all parents to participate in this campaign by contributing what you can. Giving to the annual fund allows CDS to lead the Bay Area in sliding scale tuition. Gifts support your children's teachers and favorite programs including the farm and garden, art, music and sports. Please contact the development office if you have any questions or would like to make a donation. Thank you for your help reaching our goal.

Annual Fund Participation by Class



## Lost & Found

On Thursday, November 2 and Friday, November 3, we'll make our monthly effort to connect lost items with their owners. The contents of several large bins will be spread out upon the benches around the yard. Please survey the scene for familiar items. Dedicated parent volunteers Linda Glover and Ray Baxter will cart, sort and clean everything left unclaimed and bring it to Community Thrift. CDS earns proceeds from Community Thrift's sales of these items. In the event of rain, lost and found items will not be displayed.

## Donate to Community Thrift

If you're contemplating cleaning out closets and cupboards, please consider donating most anything and everything to Community Thrift at 623 Valencia (near 17th Street). Over the years, generous donations from the CDS community to Community Thrift have resulted in thousands of dollars disbursed back to CDS! Check your storerooms and shelves for unwanted items such as:

- Clean clothing, shoes, jewelry and accessories
- Books, stationery, even magazines!
- Housewares, furniture, lamps and electronics
- CDs, videos, DVDs, luggage and baskets

For information regarding drop-off procedures and hours, please visit Community Thrift's website: <http://www.communitythrift.bravehost.com/>.

## Photo Proofs

Proofs from Mugshots should arrive within the next three weeks. A make-up session for missed pictures and re-shoots will be scheduled for the end of November. All picture orders should be ready in time for the holidays.

## Events

### Halloween Celebration

Students in kindergarten through eighth grade will be marching in our annual Halloween Parade on Tuesday, October 31 at 1:30 p.m. Preschoolers will stay in the bungalows at this time. Please have your students pack their costumes with them so that they can come to school in “school clothes” and change into costumes after lunch. Parents and friends, please join us in the yard at 1:30 p.m. for the celebration!

## Extended Program News

### News and Photos

Please check out the Extended Program bulletin board to the left of the reception desk to see a report-back, complete with photos, from the Social Justice Camp earlier this month. The next CDS camp, held December 18-22, will center around the theme “Community Action.” Details will be available soon.

## Library Corner

### Check it Out at the Library!

#### 3rd Annual Library Fair November 8-10

Each year, CDS selects over 350 new books that will enrich the school curriculum and add to our library collection. At the annual Library Fair, you can become a part of the Children’s Day School library by purchasing one of these specially selected books in the name of your child or family.

This year we’re kicking off the Library Fair with a party on Wednesday night. So pick your child up a little early (or a little late!) and buy a book for the library.

- Wednesday, November 8: wine & cheese reception, 4:30-6:30 p.m.
- Thursday, November 9: morning and afternoon sales, 8-10 a.m. and 2-6 p.m.
- Friday, November 10: Friday Coffee, 8-10 a.m.

## Upcoming Dates

### Saturday, November 4

9 a.m.-1 p.m.

POCIS event for parents of students of color  
“People Like Us”: Social Class in America  
The Bay School of San Francisco  
35 Keyes Way

### Wednesday, November 8 – Friday, November 10

Library Book Fair

CDS Library

### Thursday, November 16 & Friday, November 17

Parent-teacher conferences

No school

No extended program

### Friday, November 17

Sibling admission applications due

### Saturday, November 18

SSAT administered at CDS  
for eighth graders

### Wednesday, November 22

Grandparents and Special Friends Day

Noon dismissal

No extended program

Dates now posted on CDS website!  
[www.cds-sf.org/news/calendar.html](http://www.cds-sf.org/news/calendar.html)

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Submissions due Wednesdays, 8 a.m.

Contact Mary to receive the Weekly via email