



September 7, 2006

# THE CHILDREN'S DAY SCHOOL Weekly

## Words from Rick

### Getting Your Butterflies to Fly in Formation

On the first day of kindergarten for the class of 2015, the children were all over the woodchips swinging, climbing and running. A few sat with their parents on the edge, and most of the adults were chatting merrily away, happy to see each other again. Some were making new friends.

However, as I went from knot to knot of parents to join in the chatting, the big theme was "My son was a little nervous this morning." One parent reported that all summer long every time the subject of school came up her daughter would jump up and down and squeal with delight; however, with two days left to go she got quiet and talked about how nervous she was.

Another girl, who actually wanted to say "hi" to me upon returning to school, talked with me for a while about the summer and then said in a low voice, "I have butterflies in my stomach."

I said, "I know. I am nervous, too. Can you believe it? I have been going to school now for fifty-eight years, and I always get nervous before the first day of school." She looked at me with puzzlement and disbelief and ran off to the woodchips.

Every first day some kids cry or in various ways make like they don't want to enter the big building, and some kids just run to be first in line. But don't be fooled by the difference. We are all nervous. Our personalities and upbringing have trained us each to develop our own special reaction to a new social situation. Me, I'm a run-to-the-front-of-the-line person. I just figure the best defense is a good offense, but don't be fooled by the smile on my face. Getting up this morning was a 51-49 decision.

It takes a bit of a looking ahead, painting different scenarios and making a rational calculation of probabilities to decide that it is smarter to get up than to stay in bed:

"Let's see. Option A: I throw the covers off, go to the shower. No. Bad impulse. Option B: I could lie here and hope I will go back to sleep. Yes. That feels right. On the other hand, where will that lead me? Hmmmm. I could do that, but then I would be late, or not go in at all, and then people would be mad at me, and they might not want me to come to school at all. Since I am the boss, some Trustee will have to talk to me about my performance, and that would be bad, and then, I might even lose my job. That might be O.K., but then what would I do? Hmmmm. What was Option A, again?"

The wiring in my brain is so solid after fifty-some years of practice that it only takes me a split second to figure out that Option A is the only real option; so

### Hot Dates

Friday, September 8  
8:30-8:45 a.m.

Friday assembly  
Eighth grade presenting

Saturday, September 9  
11-2 p.m.

All-School Welcome Picnic  
Golden Gate Park  
Mother's Playground  
MLK and 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue

Tuesday, September 12

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

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



## Thank You!

- To Andy Northrop for drafting two proposals to local foundations.
- To Alycia Freeman for spearheading the design for the spiffed-up entryway, including coming up with the idea for the fabulous teacher/staff photo board!
- To Susan Chastain for sewing the lovely new cushion on the bench next to the Receptionist desk.
- To Betsy Cordes and Leslie Edelman for helping update the CDS ad we run in the various neighborhood newspapers – look for the new ad in the September issues!
- To Betsy Cordes and Alycia Freeman for designing the new mission statement banner that hangs behind the Receptionist desk.
- To Betsy Cordes, Alycia Freeman and Gayle Strang for designing our fabulous new donor recognition plaque hanging in the entryway.
- To all of the family farmers who lovingly cared for the sheep and chickens during the summer: Mike Abbott, Kim Nguyen-Gallagher (Ryan and Griffon), Angie Romagnoli and Megan Adams (Reese), Sally Nielsen (Cara), Michael Laflamme (Zoe and Jacob), Beth Porter and Brooks Crichlow (Maia), Peter Kusnierczyk (Patrice), Rebecca Grey and Chris Luomanen (Dinah), Nina Robin (Natasha), Amy Silverstein and Angela Padilla (Bella), Dee Dee Schroeder (Mo and Margot), Marilyn Rogers (Flynn) and Andrea Hyson.

let's get going. I also have learned (rightly or wrongly) that fast is better than slow. I hear my mother saying, "The sooner the better." The bad thing goes away sooner the faster you go. I have discovered that getting right on it is usually better than trying to delay the inevitable.

Others have learned that slow is a better strategy, and some are still working it out. To maximize the potential of our children school must be a safe place to do it your way. In a good school as the children get older, their characters get more divergent rather than more similar. Each kindergartner gives me a "high five" in his or her

own way: some like to really give me a wack, some prefer an intimate pat; some hit my hand with their heads, and sometimes I get a dodge. There is more variety as the year goes on.

"Do you know the difference between an amateur and a professional?"

"No. What's the difference between an amateur and a professional?"

"A professional gets his butterflies to fly in formation."

But how does one get his or her butterflies to fly in formation? The wisdom from the "how-to" books can be summarized to three important things for parents to remember: 1) Decision-making: Working it out is good. See your child as a decision-maker; this is just another decision to be made. 2) Boundaries: Don't blur reality. Remove from your mind all doubt. Don't let the anxiety turn into doubt. Your child *will* walk in the door; he or she is just deciding *how* it will happen. 3) Love: Just love them. Just delight in the miraculous way it always happens. Your confidence in them will rub off.

The problem is that this is hard. We can't help being ourselves, and we are only human. Butterflies don't fly in formation by simply following the three rules of good parenting. We have to be patient with ourselves, let the challenges with our kids help us grow, learn when to act and when to wait, learn to change perspective when we get stuck, and above all, find room for humor.

Parents and teachers need the disciplines of both the science and the art of raising children in order to get our butterflies to fly in formation.

## Transforming St. Joseph's Hall

Don't miss the news on the bulletin board in the main entryway into school! You can "meet the team" and find information about our award-winning architects, Jensen & Macy, as well as pictures of their previous projects. You'll also find information about the general contractor, members of the architect steering committee and members of the campaign cabinet. This is a great opportunity to familiarize yourself with this exciting project.

Check this box for news, updates and profiles.

## School Wish List

- The art department and fiber art class need a crock pot or electric hot plate and a large metal pot to be used for dyeing wool. If you can help out, please call Elizabeth McClellan at 861-5432 x363.

## The Dirt

### Family Farmer Training

One of the greatest things about being a CDS family is getting to spend time in the farm and garden! One way you can get to know the sheep and chickens (and watch the corn grow) is to become a family farmer. Family farmers help take care of the farm and garden on weekends and during holiday breaks. The fall family farmer training will be held at 9 a.m. on Saturday, September 16 in the 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 with Misty Cummings at 861-5432 x321 to sign up for a training. We only have space for ten families to participate so please RSVP. If you were trained last May and want to take care of the animals again, just RSVP and show up at 9:45 a.m. to pick dates; you don't need to attend the training. Family farmers only need to commit to two weekends and/or holidays during the next four months and in return you'll have the chance to bury your fingers in JoJo's warm, soft wool and collect fresh eggs for Sunday morning breakfast.

## From the Office

### Student Forms = Student Directory

This is a friendly reminder to turn in your student forms by 9 a.m. Wednesday, September 13 if you haven't done so already. We are going to produce the 2006-07 School Directory on Friday, September 15 and we need everyone's current information so that the directory can be as accurate as possible. Thank you for your cooperation.

## Updated 2006-07 Calendar

Please note the attached updated 2006-07 CDS calendar, which includes dates for the CDS Libaray Book Fair to be held on November 15-17, 2006.

## Drop-off Protocol

In order to maintain a safe and efficient morning drop-off, please make sure to follow the established drop-off protocol as stated in your *Family Handbook*. Please line up patiently behind one another as we help children get out of cars. Please remain in your vehicle at all times so the line can keep moving. There is no parking available in the parking lot for parents/caregivers in the morning as all CDS parking spots are reserved for faculty and administrators. Families choosing to walk their children into school must park on the street and enter the school via the sidewalk along the exit (north) driveway. Please note that in order to be safe and to be good neighbors, parking in the fire lanes, driveways or spaces designated handicapped or Notre Dame Plaza (NDP) is strictly prohibited at all times, and vehicles are subject to being towed. Please drive slowly and carefully. Thank you for your cooperation.

## Families of the Week

Please note the attached letter and pictures regarding our Families of the Week program. We hope you'll participate!

## Go Bulldogs!

The first volleyball practice of the season is today! Co-ed volleyball practices will be held Tuesday and Thursdays from 3:45-5 p.m.

Check back here for the upcoming volleyball schedule.

The new sports hotline is available! Call 861-5432 x397 to find out game and practice updates, driver needs and game scores.

As always, come out and support the Bulldogs!

## Events

### All-School Welcome Picnic

Please join us at the All School Welcome Picnic this Saturday, September 9 from 11-2 p.m. in the Mother's Playground in Golden Gate Park (MLK and 19<sup>th</sup> Avenue). The entire CDS community is welcome!

Please bring a blanket to sit on and any group activities (soccer balls, footballs, face painting, sacks for sack races, etc.) to share.

Lunches will be organized by class. Check with your classroom liaison for details. Although each class will have a picnic table labeled with a sign for their lunches, we encourage families to mingle with everyone.

### Middle School Fundraiser at the Picnic

Seventh and eighth graders will be selling lemonade, bottled water and a variety of tempting baked treats during the picnic. Buy your beverages and desserts at the picnic and help support the middle school social fund.

### Welcome Picnic Volunteers Needed

We still need volunteers in the following areas:

Volunteers to meet at 10 a.m. at CDS to load and drive tables to site (we especially need volunteers with big cars, SUVs, trucks or vans to hold the tables).

Volunteers to work ½ hour shifts selling CDS gear during the picnic.

Ten people to clean up, break-down and return tables to the school (we especially need volunteers with big cars, SUVs, trucks or vans to hold the tables).

Please contact Laura Pliska if you are able to volunteer yourself or your vehicle: ([laura@sfbabyworks.com](mailto:laura@sfbabyworks.com)), 641-5116 or 476-5130. Thanks for your support.

## Extended Program News

### A New Year in After School

Welcome back to another exciting year in the after school program! We have many returning teachers and several wonderful new staff members on our team this year. Please introduce yourself to the new faces on the yard and in the hallways. We are looking forward to meeting you.

Please note that all after school coordination

responsibilities have moved from Charlie Stephens to Michael Gast. You can call or e-mail Michael at any time with questions, concerns or congratulations at [michaelg@cds-sf.org](mailto:michaelg@cds-sf.org) or 861-5432 x329.

Last but not least, please note that enrichment class packets will go home on Thursday, September 14.

## PTTA Corner

### PTTA Questions or Ideas?

- Ray Baxter, PTTA President, (415) 902-0765 or [ray@warmroom.com](mailto:ray@warmroom.com)
- Patrick Everett, VP, Coordinator of Classroom Liaisons, (415) 609-4055 or [patrick@everettnilsson.com](mailto:patrick@everettnilsson.com)
- Laura Pliska, VP, Coordinator of Welcoming Initiatives, (415) 641-5116 or [laura@sfbabyworks.com](mailto:laura@sfbabyworks.com)
- Michael Silver, VP, Coordinator of Diversity Initiatives, (415) 518-1803 or [silvermas@aol.com](mailto:silvermas@aol.com)
- Ann Van Gelder, VP, Parent Volunteer Coordinator, (415) 647-8561 or [anndirkvg@hotmail.com](mailto:anndirkvg@hotmail.com)
- Tanja Beck, VP, Coordinator of Events, (415) 377-8756 or [tbeck@zephyrsf.com](mailto:tbeck@zephyrsf.com)
- Yvelise Cabral, VP, Middle School Coordinator, (415) 348-1154 or [yvelisecabral@msn.com](mailto:yvelisecabral@msn.com)
- Edwina Paschal, VP, Middle School Coordinator, (510) 499-7739 or [edwinapaschal@earthlink.net](mailto:edwinapaschal@earthlink.net)

## PTTA Update

### Join the CDS Community

Join us for the first PTTA meeting of the year on Tuesday September 12 from 4:30-5:45 p.m. to discuss PTTA plans for the year and stories about creating the CDS community.

### Friday Coffee

Every Friday morning from 8-9 a.m. join your fellow parents, trustees, administrators and staff for coffee in the courtyard, and sneak a peak at the weekly assembly. This is a great opportunity to meet new people and fuel up on caffeine and sugar before work!

## Upcoming Dates

Saturday, September 16  
9 a.m.

Family Farmer Training  
Farm and garden

Thursday, September 21  
6 p.m.

New Parent Reception

6:15-8:30 p.m.  
Back-to-School Night

Monday, October 2  
Fall enrichment classes begin

Monday, October 9  
Government Holiday  
No school  
Extended program available

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