



September 28, 2006

# THE CHILDREN'S DAY SCHOOL Weekly

## Words from Rick

### Greatness

*It's when I'm weary of considerations,  
And life is too much like a pathless wood. . . Robert Frost*

Everywhere I look, greatness. Everywhere I went yesterday, greatness. On one simple 5 minute walk around the school I noticed sixth graders taking notes as they sat in straight rows listening to Ms. Sara talk about what it was like in Canada when she was in seventh grade; fifth graders practicing their performance for the assembly on Friday; the entire first grade sitting in rapt confidence collectively working out a complicated pattern; second graders sorting and graphing an astounding array of tiny objects; third graders analyzing texts and stereotypes using Venn diagrams to compare the characteristics of realistic and mythical characters; the fourth grade sitting in a circle on the rug talking about cancer; and seventh graders guessing from a set of propositions the correct number and justifying their choice to their classmates based on those rules.

Out in the preschool yard half the little ones are dancing—well it looks like dancing, but it's physical education. Jim, Josh, Derrek and Carmen are cavorting with sylvan elves that have come out of their hiding places in the woods. That's what it is, there is no other word for it, and if you want a treat someday—work is getting you down or if you've grown "weary of considerations"—I recommend that you come to school around 9-ish and watch. I guarantee your faith in humanity will be restored and your hope for the future, too.

Or if you are up for smaller moments of delight you might see Ms. Emilie teaching Starfish students how to pull stars from the sky and put them in their pockets or Ms. Elizabeth getting the Tadpoles to experiment with color or Leaping Lizards experimenting with different ways to apply paint with Ms. Karen (brushes, hands, fingers.) Greatness everywhere I look. It was hard to see it yesterday without shouting for joy. By the afternoon faculty meeting people had to hold me down; now writing about it this morning it's hard to see the keyboard for the tears in my eyes. In some ways just watching the kindergartners line up to go outside was greatness in action.

Clarity in the eyes, the comfortable bearing of bodies, ease of movement and always, individuality and uniqueness. This was the face of greatness. The relationship between the students and the teacher: mutual caring, respect, appreciation, responsibility—love, actually. The work: engaging, interesting, intellectually challenging. The quality of the interactions between the students: I'm cool—so are you. Self-possessed and other-aware. Moving through the world with abandon, yet fully conscious. And I saw it all yesterday, wherever I

### Hot Dates

Today!  
4:30 p.m.  
Volleyball game vs. SF Christian  
Boys & Girls Club

Friday, September 29  
8:30 a.m.  
Friday assembly  
Fifth grade presenting

Monday, October 2  
Fall enrichment classes begin

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



## Thank You!

- To everyone who helped make Back to School Night such a success: Tina Corse for welcoming families and check-in assistance; Karen Georgiades for donating beautiful flower arrangements; Yvelise Cabral and Tina Corse for helping with set-up; Springer Huseby for bartending; Eric Guthertz for coordinating Mission High School volunteers; and Mylene Mercado, Tina Leung and Ann and Dirk Van Gelder for organizing and staffing the Escarp table.
- To Karen Levesque for her excellent analytical assistance this summer and fall with the development, implementation and analysis of several parent surveys.

went, even when I saw kids struggling with things that were difficult for them, and even when I knew how hard a teacher was struggling with a particular student.

Greatness. It's a different thing from excellence and best. In fact it's partly the result of liberation from all comparison. Greatness can never be achieved when comparison is involved. If you look over your shoulder to see if there is a person gaining on you, they will. My only greatness when I was in third grade was running. I ran because my body loved to run. The Yankee culture I grew up in made everything a comparison. In first grade when I was just learning how to read, I also learned that Johnny read faster. As I approached eighth grade we all knew who had a shot at the "better" schools and the "better" girls. (At a recent reunion I discovered that the better girls weren't better anymore and some of the "others" were pretty amazing—maybe they were not distorted by being best.) In races I ran to win (and usually lost to Jimmy Rodgers), but I always ran whether or not being faster than someone else was part of the game, because in running I was great.

Other active ingredients in the production of greatness: being on a mission that is at the cutting edge of your capabilities and related to your interests, values and needs; being respectful of the requirements of the environment; being responsible to both self and other simultaneously; freedom of movement and self-determination; love.

So when I see greatness everywhere I look, I can hardly stand it. Greatness is what shows up when the genius is engaged, when each character is being led out into the world gracefully. This is education!

## From the Director of Diversity

*Please note our new column from Charlie Stephens, the Director of Diversity. This column highlights diversity-related updates and activities by all members of the CDS community.*

### Diversity and Admission

Is diversity and inclusion at CDS an important issue for you? Admission is where it starts. We are right in the thick of the parent tour season, so now is a great time to pitch in and help the CDS Admission Office with outreach. An hour or two of your time can have a big impact on CDS's ability to reach as diverse a group of applicants as possible.

What you can do:

1. **Tell your friends, neighbors, and community members** that CDS is actively trying to recruit diverse families. Host a coffee at your house to talk about CDS and/or encourage your friends to come to a CDS tour. A personal recommendation is the best way to convince families to consider CDS.

2. **Help CDS reach infant/toddler-care providers.** The Admission Office offers a tour and breakfast for representatives from toddler-care facilities and preschools. If we can reach centers that serve a diverse group of families, they will help us reach the families themselves. Provide the Admission Office with contact information for any childcare operators you think might benefit from a tour of CDS. Offer to have a CDS parent appear at school information nights, preschool fairs or other parent gatherings.

3. **Help CDS contact community, church or professional groups.** See if groups you belong to will allow you to post a CDS flyer on a bulletin board or put a paragraph in a newsletter. Let the Admission Office know about parent groups that might be open to a Q&A visit from a CDS parent.

4. **Help with school tours and open houses.** The best way to help potential applicants understand diversity at CDS is to meet them. Multi-racial, multi-ethnic and LGBT families will all appreciate the chance to meet and talk with parents who may share their perspectives. Come to admission tour training tonight from 4:30-5:30 pm, or Monday, October 2 from 8:30-9:30 am, then sign up to help host a tour.

## Wish List

- The kindergarten class is looking for 2 used rocking chairs. If you'd like to donate a rocking chair, please contact Candy at [candym@cds-sf.org](mailto:candym@cds-sf.org). Thanks!

Contact Aimee Giles ([aimeeg@cds-sf.org](mailto:aimeeg@cds-sf.org)) or Diane Larabee ([dianel@cds-sf.org](mailto:dianel@cds-sf.org)) for CDS flyers, FAQs and additional guidance for outreach efforts.

Thanks for your support! —Sara O'Malley, parent of Nora Hylton, Starfish.

## Diversity and Justice News

Last week faculty and administrators signed up for our annual CDS committees, and this year there were many exciting committee options to choose from. Below are recent highlights from two of the groups.

### Clubs/Groups/Affinity Groups

CDS now has a committee whose primary goal is to work with students to determine groups and clubs they'd like to develop at CDS. The group brainstormed many potential ideas and this week Eric (third grade teacher) and Derrek (preschool teacher) will visit classrooms in the older grades to have discussions with students about what clubs they'd like to form. Eric and Derrek are also co-chairing an affinity group for faculty of color and would love to hear about any parents who might be interested in expanding this affinity group to incorporate parents of color as well. Feel free to contact Charlie ([charlies@cds-sf.org](mailto:charlies@cds-sf.org)) or Eric ([erics@cds-sf.org](mailto:erics@cds-sf.org)) for more information.

### Movie Nights and Book Clubs

Another exciting development is the CDS Movie Night and Book Club Organizing Group which is a subgroup of the more general Diversity and Social Justice Committee. Recently several faculty members met in the library and watched the first half of Spike Lee's latest film, *When the Levees Broke*, and are planning on hosting many more film and literary events that will be open to both faculty and parents. If you are a parent interested in getting involved, please contact Charlie at [charlies@cds-sf.org](mailto:charlies@cds-sf.org).

## Stories from the Classroom

In the kindergarten class we had a great conversation about dolls and who could play with them. At first there were giggles when kids said that boys could play with dolls, but then those same giggling kids told stories about how they had dolls and action figures. We talked about both mommies and daddies helping take care of babies (we have new siblings in the class and a pregnant family) and both girls and boys pretending to take care of babies (dolls). It turns out that many of the boys in our class have something called "ugly dolls" and two boys planned an ugly doll play date! —Brittany Musler, kindergarten teacher.

## Transforming St. Joseph's Hall

### Architect Steering Committee

The CDS Architect Steering Committee has been working with our architects, Jensen & Macy and with the general contractor, Plant Construction. Members of the committee represent a varied mix of professional and CDS experience and perspective. Who are they?

- Rick Ackerly, Head of School, has overseen 5 building projects in Oakland, New York and Kansas City.
- Patricia Buse, CDS parent of Anya '14 and Colin '12, served as chair of the David Minus Science Center Campaign and has a personal interest in "green" architecture.

## Go Bulldogs!

### Co-ed Volleyball Calendar

Today, September 28, 4:30 p.m.  
SF Christian, Boys & Girls Club

Friday, October 6, 4 p.m.  
Creative Arts

### Co-ed Volleyball Scores

September 18, CDS vs. Live Oak  
Game 1: CDS 25, LO 19  
Game 2: CDS 25, LO 5

September, 20, CDS vs. KDBS  
Game 1: CDS 27, KDBS 25  
Game 2: KDBS 25, CDS 18  
Game 3: CDS 15, KDBS 6

- Tracy Kirkham, Board Chair and CDS parent (Gillian '07 and Sydney and Greer '12), has been instrumental in leading CDS through several significant site development projects in the last decade.
- Jack Munson, Trustee, is a principle in the architectural firm of Fee Munson Ebert.
- Donna Shibata, Director of Finance & Operations/General Counsel, is a CDS parent of Mimi '12 and Aaron '06 and has extensive experience in financial management.
- Gayle Tsern Strang, Trustee and CDS parent of Carlyn '14, is an architect specializing in the design of small cultural institutions such as the Bay Area Discovery Museum.

## From the Office

### Sibling Applications

Do you have a child who is a sibling of a current CDS student that you would like to enroll at CDS in the fall of 2007? If so, please let us know of your interest as soon as possible by calling our Assistant Director of Admission & Communication, Diane Larrabee, at 861-5432 x337. We would appreciate hearing from you by Tuesday, October 10 at the latest.

CDS has a policy of giving preference to applications from children of faculty and staff members, board members and siblings of currently enrolled CDS students. We also view each child as a unique, distinct individual and are committed to meeting the needs of each child individually. For this reason, we cannot guarantee that a child of a faculty or staff member, board member or sibling of a currently enrolled CDS student will be admitted automatically to CDS. However, these applicants will usually be admitted unless unusual circumstances dictate that an applicant's needs cannot be met here.

Sibling applications are due on Friday, November 17. More information about the admission process will be available shortly, but if you have any questions or concerns, please call Diane at 861-5432 x337, or Aimee Giles, Director of Admission & Communication, at 861-5432 x322.

## CDS K-8 Tour (parents only!)

Curious to see what's going on in our K-8 classrooms? After coffee and the assembly on Friday, November 10, join Rebecca Kroll and Aimee Giles on a CDS parents-only tour of our K-8 classes from 9-10:30 a.m. This is an excellent opportunity for you to see our K-8 classes in action and to ask questions (Rick will join us for Q&A). No RSVP is necessary – we hope you join us.

## Lost and Found

All lost and found items will be on display at the front gate on Thursday, September 28 and Friday, September 29. Please claim you lost items; all leftover items will be donated to Community Thrift at the end of the day on Friday.

## PTTA Corner

### PTTA Questions or Ideas?

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

## From the Classroom

### High School Interns

For the second year in a row, high school students from Mission High School and the June Jordan School for Equity will be volunteering as interns in CDS classes. Last year, with the help of Eric Guthertz at Mission High School and Savannah Shange at June Jordan School for Equity, we were proud to start our intern program. Over 30 high school students participated, helping out once a week in classes ranging from preschool to 4th grade. This year we are continuing to improve and grow the program, offering opportunities for local high school students to gain skills, learn from our amazing staff and work with CDS students. CDS students benefit by the increased academic and social support, youthful energy and new perspectives offered by the high school students. Please help welcome the interns into the CDS community! If you have any questions about the program please contact Michael Gast at 861-5432 x329 or [michaelg@cds-sf.org](mailto:michaelg@cds-sf.org).

## Extended Program News

### Enrichment Classes

Fall enrichment classes begin on Monday, October 2. Please sign up by Friday (tomorrow!) at the latest if you are interested in having your child participate. Extra registration packets are available at the front desk.

Also, please note that violin is now offered to students as young as 5 years old on Wednesdays from 3:30-4:30 p.m. Please email Charlie at [charlies@cds-sf.org](mailto:charlies@cds-sf.org) if you are interested in signing up.

### Social Justice Camp

School will be closed on Monday, October 9 for Columbus/Indigenous Peoples Day but camp is open! This camp will explore themes of sharing, ancestry and concepts/myths of "discovery" through stories, a field trip, theater and art projects. There will be two camps; one is open to preschool and kindergarten students and the other is open to students in 1<sup>st</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades. Camp hours are from 8 a.m.-6 p.m. and the cost is \$50 for the day. Non-CDS students are welcome to attend as well. The registration due date is Wednesday, October 4.

## Upcoming Dates

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)

### Children's Day School

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