



December 11, 2008

THE CHILDREN'S DAY SCHOOL Weekly

Words from Rick

Light in Darkness

It's dark in my office. I leave the lights off because I want to see the eastern sky when it lights up. These mornings are cold. As a northeasterner it's good for me to feel like it is winter as we approach the holidays.

"Happy holidays to you." That's what we say this time of year. These days we regularly see the stereotypical image of families gathered together in their home for the holidays—all with smiles on their faces. It's the time when little children are encouraged to think about the things they are going to get: a time of plenty.

But December is not inherently a time a plenty. It can also be a time of shortage, apprehension and loss. This year the anxiety in our community is almost palpable. Yesterday I talked to a parent who had just lost his job. Another told me a similar story at Friday coffee. Last month a CDS parent lost her mother. Yesterday, a parent told me that her father had passed away over the weekend—this on top of her friend, Wini, mother of Kate and Sasha.

Often, the images of togetherness we see in this season do not conform to our reality. It's during this time of year that I am most impressed, not with how together I am with my family, but how distant I am from many of them. So really, this time of year can easily be a time of sorrow, a time of longing. The image of a happy, prosperous, united family can be a painful reminder of the discrepancy between how things are and how they are "supposed to be."

And still every day the children come flooding in the gate. Jordan tells me she has a sore on her mouth, and then shows me. Bianca, juggling cello, backpack and jacket, walks in the gate with her little sister, Bella. They say goodbye to each other at the corner of the Leaping Lizard bungalow and separate. Bianca schleps merrily off to second grade. Brienz says good morning to me. The twins Amanda and Natasha are playing stationary freeze tag. Two more kindergartners come to join them and the four of them seem to dance as they tag, freeze, release, tag, freeze, release. Children of all sizes and shapes swarm by them on their way into the big building.

Just as the seventh grade has rallied around the Zirulniks, our community can come together for everyone, and so often does. One parent apologized to another last month that he could only give \$300 to the annual fund this year—ten percent of what he gave last year, but another parent told us that she knew members of her class were hurting—one was applying for emergency funds—and that she was increasing her gift to cover that. Two weeks ago, another family gave \$25,000, a quantum leap from what they had ever given before.

Hot Dates

Thursday, December 11

6:15-8 p.m.

Parent Education Night

Friday, December 12

8:30 a.m.

Friday assembly

Leaping Lizards presenting

4:30 p.m.

Extended Program Winter Arts
Festival

Grace Fellowship Church

Tuesday, December 16

4:30-6 p.m.

Committee on Inclusion &

Diversity meeting

16th Street, 2nd floor

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



Thank You!

- To Justine Juson and Travis Paoe for providing coffee and bagels, to Louis Schump for bringing scones, and to Jocelyn Colopy for bringing orange juice and muffins to Friday morning coffee.
- To Amanda Chapman, Jim Colopy, Lourdes Cordero, Manda Ederer, Fasil Fikreab, Zahra Ghayour-Kelly, Andrew Henry, Richard Hylton, Debbie Jasso, Amanda Newstetter, Andrea Reynolds, Louis Schump, Lauren Schwartz and Elizabeth Seirmarco for helping out at the Admission Open House. In addition, thank you to eighth graders Anoli Motowala and Vita Newstetter, and alumni Sonja Carlson for volunteering at the Open House.
- To the Lima family for donating bubble blowers to the after school program.
- To Angie Jolie for taking pictures during Grandparents and Special Friends Day and sharing them with CDS. You can view them online at <http://www.cds.smugmug.com>.

It is no accident that this time of year, when the nights are the longest, is the time when we light candles. It is a time to be reminded of our priorities and get back to what really matters—caring for our families, building our relationships, contributing to our community and living the values and priorities that we want to see in our children's lives.

Mother Nature, bless her heart, is fickle and inconstant, at least from a human point of view. Maybe, she is reminding us that things are ephemeral; we can remind ourselves that our relationships are not. Affluence is not something we can count on, but community is something we can. We at CDS are very lucky people. We cannot guarantee we will always receive, but there is always someone to love and take care of.

We have to count on each other and look out for each other. It is about generosity. The joy is in the giving, not the getting. Giving is the way through the darkness to the light. This time of the year is about love, not happiness.

“Look,” said Nora. “There is Jupiter and Venus.” And sure enough, there, just in front of the waxing half moon, low in the cold southern sky after the sun has set, are Jupiter and Venus shining like beacons.

From the Classrooms

Did You Know?

Children's Day is proud to partner with the Bay Area Teacher Training Institute (BATTI), a Bay Area collaborative effort to create the next generation of teachers for public and private elementary schools. Specifically, BATTI trains independent school interns for their credentials through its partnership with San Francisco State University's Department of Elementary Education. BATTI interns can be found all over the Bay Area, in 26 different independent schools.

We're fortunate to have three BATTI interns with us this year: Vi Le (third grade), Christian Strauli (kindergarten) and Nick Martin (fourth grade). BATTI interns work hard! In addition to their teaching, they complete their BATTI credential requirements by attending graduate classes Tuesday and Thursday evenings and one Saturday morning a month. One day a week our interns volunteer at a local public school. They take courses in teaching reading, math, social studies and science, as well as child development and second language acquisition.

Children's Day School is pleased to support BATTI and fortunate to be part of this collaboration. To find out more about BATTI, check out their website at www.batti.org.

Middle School News

- Eighth graders recently observed World AIDS Day at a powerful ceremony at the AIDS Memorial Grove.
- Melanie attended the People of Color Conference in New Orleans, sponsored by the National Association of Independent Schools.
- Middle school girls attended a session by GirlVentures, a non profit organization that provides four core program areas: summer outdoor

CDS Yahoo Group

Our CDS Community Yahoo group is a forum for the CDS community to share information about life outside of school. Join this Yahoo group, our in-house "craigslist," by visiting: groups.yahoo.com/group/cdscommunity.

adventure programs, school-year programs, leadership development programs and community courses. Go to www.girlventures.org for more information.

From the Office

Year-End Giving

With a tremendous boost from a family's recent record-setting gift of \$25,000 to the CDS Annual Fund, parent contributions now total over \$109,000, with 73% participation. Joining Barbara's first grade class at 100% participation is the Leaping Lizard class, with four other classes also over 80%. Our goal for parent gifts this year is \$130,000, and we hope that *all* CDS parents will help us reach this goal by making a gift or pledge by January. Although pledges do not have to be paid in full until June, many parents like to take advantage of the tax deduction prior to the end of the calendar year, so please consider making a donation before winter vacation. The Development Office will be closed starting December 22, so please make a gift online (www.cds-sf.org/giving) or mail a check before the end of the year to make sure that you receive credit for a 2008 gift. Thanks to everyone for your continued support and generosity. Your donations benefit all of the people and programs (and sheep and chickens) that make CDS special.

CAIS Progress Report

CDS was accredited by the California Association of Independent Schools (CAIS) in 2006. As part of the accreditation process, CDS completed a comprehensive Self-Study that reviewed all aspects of the school (from educational program to facilities to finances) and included an Action Plan detailing the areas the school would focus on in the ensuing three years. The accreditation provided for an interim visit by CAIS after three years.

The CAIS interim visit is scheduled for March of 2009. As part of the interim visit process, CDS has been asked to provide a Progress Report that summarizes the school's progress on the Action Plan as well as its efforts in response to CAIS recommendations made during the accreditation process.

A copy of the preliminary draft of the CAIS Progress Report has been included with the e-mail version of the *Weekly*. You can find a hard copy at the front desk. Please read it and let us know if you have any suggestions, comments or questions, by e-mailing

Rebecca Kroll, Assistant Head of School, at rebeccak@cds-sf.org. We would like to finalize the report by the winter break, so please send your thoughts to Rebecca by Monday, December 15. We value your input.

Family Farmers Needed

Want to learn more about our beloved chickens and sheep and take home farm fresh eggs for Sunday breakfast? Simply sign up to be a family farmer with Misty Cummings at mistyc@cds-sf.org or 861-5432 x321 and you'll be trained and ready to tend the farm and garden in no time. The following dates are available for future family farmers:

- April 6-12
- July 3-5
- August 17-21, 24-28, 31
- September 1, 5-7

COID Meeting

The Committee on Inclusion & Diversity (COID) will meet on Tuesday, December 16 from 4:30-6 p.m. in the second floor meeting room of the 16th Stret building. Attendees will hear from COID members who attended the People of Color Conference in New Orleans, discuss updates from our working groups (admission, community and curriculum, with a focus on diversity in admissions and enrollment), and plan for our annual Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration. New members are welcome. Childcare is free through the extended program if you sign your child up at the front desk by 10 a.m.

Lost & Found

Please claim your belongings on Thursday and Friday. All leftover items will be donated to Community Thrift on Friday afternoon.

Go Bulldogs!

Boys Basketball Calendar

Tuesday, December 16, 4:10 p.m.

Live Oak, Boys & Girls Club

Come cheer on the Bulldog basketball team in their season opener!

Events

Fiesta 2009

Don't forget to mark your calendars for Fiesta 2009, our annual celebration and auction fundraiser, to be held on Saturday, March 28, 2009 at Mighty. Also, look for your Save the Date kit in early January, which includes all the details you'll need for this terrific event. If you have any questions, or would like to volunteer, contact Pat Rose at patrosepr@yahoo.com, or Andrea Reynolds at andrea-reynolds@sbcglobal.net.

Extended Program News

Winter Arts Festival

The second annual after school Winter Arts Festival will be held on Friday, December 12. The festival showcases the year's projects in pet club, building club and fun hall, features performances by the cello, violin and guitar enrichment classes, and hosts the premiere of another original production from Ms. Jasmin's theatre club. Refreshments will be provided, and festivities start at 4:30 and will be hosted at Grace Fellowship Church, two doors down from CDS on 16th Street.

Holiday Camp

The Extended Program will be offering Holiday Camp on December 19, 22 and 23. Preschool camp will be open to 24 students and K-8 will host 30 participants. Registration forms are included with today's *Weekly* and can also be found online. For questions, please contact Dan at 861-5432 x315 or [danl@cds-sf.org](mailto:d anl@cds-sf.org).

Upcoming Dates

Friday, December 19

11 a.m.

Winter Performance

Noon dismissal

Extended program available

Sliding scale tuition applications due

Monday, December 22 & Tuesday, December 23

Winter vacation

No school

Extended program available

Wednesday, December 24 – Friday, January 2

Winter vacation

No school

No extended program

Tuesday, January 13

5:30-7 p.m.

PTTA meeting: Mid-year check-in

Monday, January 19

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

No school

No extended program

Tuesday, January 20

Teacher workday

No school

No extended program

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

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