



October 30, 2008

THE CHILDREN'S DAY SCHOOL Weekly

Words from Rick

American Pride

This week's article is guest written by Josée Mayette, Middle School Head.

I became an American citizen last year and next week I will get to cast my first vote as an American in the 2008 presidential election. I am hoping that I will be able to count that moment among my proudest as an American. Let me tell you about the other two.

The road to becoming a citizen can be long and painful. The meticulous paperwork involved can make you want the swearing in ceremony to be just over and done with. On a windy March morning, I shuffled into the Masonic Auditorium with 2,000 strangers. At first, it was just another crowded theater, the audience members faceless and insignificant. Upon entering, ushers handed us cheap little American flags, with toothpick-like poles, and documents that we had to place at our feet. Soon enough, those documents became personal handheld fans as the stuffy room heated up.

Then the ceremony started. The emcee asked us to look around the room at our fellow immigrants. That's when I started to see the faces of my neighbors, their beaming smiles, their proud eyes looking up to family members in the balcony, and the acknowledging nods of folks about to walk through the door of American promise. The feeling of being part of something so many want, but so few have the opportunity to achieve, started to sink in.

At the ceremony, people are recognized by being asked to stand with former country mates. People from over 90 countries stood up! As the Indians out-cheered the Italians and the Peruvians out-whooped the Polish, a feeling of pride rooted not only in my former home country, but also in my new one, started to swell. I was part of a vast community of nations becoming one nation of Americans, all different, yet alike.

When the emcee asked the lone gentleman from the former Soviet Union to stand, the auditorium erupted in applause. Not because of the Cold War and not because of any residual political tension. People stood and cheered because they realized how long this man must have waited for his citizenship, and how he must have sacrificed to come to America. In fact, what sacrifices had others made to arrive at this moment? My eyes welled up as I looked around the room and realized that I had always taken my democratic rights for granted, and in the company of those around me, I had no right to do so.

Next, the emcee announced the new law that children of new citizens are awarded citizenship upon the naturalization of their parents. Once again, the auditorium exploded in celebration. I wept tears of joy and waved my little American flag like a kid on the fourth of July. My Vietnamese-American

Hot Dates

Friday, October 31

8:30 a.m.

Friday assembly

Second grade (Colette) presenting

2 p.m.

Halloween parade (K-8)

CDS yard

Gift wrap and greenery orders due

Sunday, November 2

Daylight savings time ends

Monday, November 3

3-4:30 p.m.

Development Committee meeting

2nd floor, 16th Street building

Tuesday, November 4

3:30 p.m.

Green Task Force meeting

2nd floor, 16th Street building

Wednesday, November 5

6-7:30 p.m.

CDS Book Club meeting

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



Thank You!

- To our excellent cadre of phonathon callers for giving their time, good humor and enthusiasm while calling CDS parents in support of this year's Annual Fund: Susi Alexander, Annabelle Anido, Amanda Chapman, Kim Cohen, Ed Haslam, Jackie Haslam, Cristina Hernandez, Dave Jasso, Tracy Kirkham, Dave Klaus, Kit Land, Lisa Li, Nancy Ramamurthi, Jim Reynolds, Nina Robin, Gigi Rosales, Matt Schwartz, Beau Timken, Chris van Löben Sels, Bill Veiga and Lisa Wally.
- To our fabulous crew of admission tour volunteers: Jim Colopy, Mary Dennis, Anne Funsten, Stephanie Holland, Michelle Lapuz, Jeanette Layden, Roger Nys, Daama Sheepo, Ann Van Gelder, Carlos Vasquez and Tessa Wilcox.
- To Sherry Spitzer for taking photos at last Saturday's Alumni Reunion.
- To Rosemarie MacGuinness for donating five soccer balls for use on the CDS yard.
- To Lida and David Morgenstein for donating three heavy duty extension cords to the CDS office.
- To Beth Saiki and Viru Gupte for bringing much appreciated coffee and carbohydrates to Friday morning coffee last week.
- To Melanie Piech and Jim Finberg and after school teacher Anthony Nguyen for donating books to the library.

neighbor handed me a kleenex as we held hands and proudly pledged allegiance to our new country.

My next proudest American moment took place last week. Every morning, I sip my coffee while catching the news on TV. Lately, it's been depressing as the economy worsens and politics have found their silly season. But last Wednesday, a local reporter in Virginia was interviewing early voters. The polling station line stretched for almost a quarter of a mile and when people spoke, you could see their breath, it was such a cold day. Some had been in line for hours and yet everyone was happy! The reporter never asked for whom people were voting, only why they had lined up to vote at all. A mother said she wanted to share this special occasion with her daughter who was home from college, voting for the first time. A young man could

barely contain his excitement as he said he had just reached voting age, and this was his chance to "speak." An older couple, who had not missed an election in 50 years, claimed this was their most "solemn duty of freedom" and didn't want to miss out due to expected long lines on November 4th, but would wait into the night if they had to. No one volunteered their candidate of choice. These Virginians only spoke proudly of having a voice and playing their vital part in our democratic process. This was 10 of the most compelling minutes of TV I have seen in a while. Americans wanting to make a difference! I too would stand in line for that!

Active citizenship starts at home and this election coincides perfectly with the initiation of a new middle school program that encourages **students to serve students**. An all-volunteer leadership team will coordinate volunteer student task forces whose job it is to organize and implement activities and improvements to middle school student life. Student ideas so far include a Dance Task Force (of course), a Spirit Task Force (go Bulldogs!) and my personal favorite, the Task Force to change the name of task forces Task Force (oy). But why not? It's their school as much as anyone's. And, if we teach our students anything, it should be that they can and do make a difference. We all do. It's ingrained in the CDS culture and it is also where we find our common American pride, red state and blue state alike. At swearing in ceremonies across the nation, in lines of freezing, unwavering voters, and in the motivation of your children to do good, people are speaking up. They are mightily exercising their rights and making a difference for the people, by the people. See you all at the voting booths on Tuesday!

From the Classrooms

Halloween Parade

All families are invited to this year's Halloween parade, which will be held on Friday, October 31 at 2 p.m. Students in grades K-8 will be participating and everyone is invited to gather on the yard and watch the procession. Please note that preschool students will not participate in the parade and that preschool pick up is walk-in only. K-4 students will be signed out from classrooms (before dismissal time) or at double doors (at or after dismissal time). Happy Halloween!

School Wish List

- The after school program needs the following items for after school activities and classes: yoga mats, old (clean) socks, yogurt containers, toilet paper rolls, cardboard boxes, foam packing material, old pillows or stuffing, ribbons, beads, buttons and fabric. If you have any items to donate, please contact Dan Larson at danl@cds-sf.org. Thank you.

Food Drive

The fifth grade, along with the Teddy Bear class, has begun a food drive to benefit the San Francisco Food Bank. The bins are located outside the preschool and inside the entry of St. Joseph's Hall. The school with the most food raised per student will have a school-wide ice cream party. You can find more details in the following letter from the food bank: www.sffoodbank.org/food_drives/pdfs/08SampleParentsLetter.pdf.

Bake Sale

The third grade class will be hosting a bake sale after Friday's assembly and during the Halloween parade. Items will include applesauce, muffins and other great treats! All proceeds will benefit Project Homeless Connect.

Middle Schoolers are Reading...

- Eighth graders are reading *What is the What?*, Dave Eggers' award winning fictional novel of a boy who survives the Sudanese civil war, child militias and refugee camps in Ethiopia and Kenya, and eventually makes his way to America.
- Seventh graders are reading *Catcher in the Rye*, J.D. Salinger's novel about a teenager who finds flaws with the "adult world" and tries to find his way in a world of alienation and complexity.
- Sixth graders are reading *I3: Thirteen Stories that Capture the Agony and Ecstasy of Being Thirteen*, stories about the differences and unique, emerging identities of 13-year-olds.
- Fifth graders are reading "Rules," a story about a 12-year-old girl who has conflicting feelings about her autistic younger brother.

From the Office

Annual Fund News

An enthusiastic thank you to all CDS parents on both ends of the telephone for making last week's phonathon both successful and fun. Parents have been terrifically generous, as always – 47% of families have made a pledge or gift to the Annual Fund so far, and over \$61,000 has been raised toward the parent goal of \$130,000. Barbara's first grade class is leading CDS in parent participation at 71%, taking an early lead in the ever-competitive race for the coveted pizza lunch offered to the first class to reach 100% participation. Colette's second grade class is right behind at 69%.

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 and inspires confidence in foundations and other outside donors. 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.

Parent-Teacher Book Group

Please join us for the first meeting of our new Parent-Teacher Book Group on Wednesday, November 5 from 6-7:30 p.m. *Raising Lifelong Learners*, by Lucy Calkin, provides many hands-on ideas and advice about how to help your child love learning. We will have a lively discussion about how to support your child's learning in a way that merges nicely with the CDS curriculum and philosophy. In this first meeting we will discuss literacy, so please come prepared to talk about chapters 1-4. If your child is in upper elementary/middle school, we will also discuss chapters seven and eight. Childcare is available and food will be provided for children and adults. Please RSVP with Margaret Piskitel, Curriculum Coordinator, at 861-5432 x349 margaretp@cds-sf.org.

Go Bulldogs!

Co-ed Volleyball Calendar

Tuesday, November 4, 4:10 p.m.
SF Friends, Boys & Girls Club

Wednesday, November 5, 3:45 p.m.
Live Oak, UCSF Mission Bay campus

Extended Program News

New Camp!

As a service to parents who need half or full-day care for their children during parent-teacher conferences on November 9 and 10, the Extended Program will be offering day camps. K-8 students will have the opportunity to participate in neighborhood field trips as well as group activities at the Boys & Girls Club. New this year, camp is also open to preschoolers; activities will be hosted on the CDS campus. The cost for a full day of camp will be \$60, a half-day session is \$35. Registration materials are due by Tuesday, November 4. Please register promptly as space is limited. Questions can be directed to Dan Larson, Extended Program Director, at 861-5432 x315 or danl@cds-sf.org.

PTTA Update

Wraps & Greens

The PTTA sponsored Wraps & Greens sale, benefitting the faculty holiday gift fund, ends this Friday! **All orders must be turned in by Friday, October 31.** You can drop your order at the front desk or with a parent volunteer during morning drop-off. Thank you for your support of the wonderful teachers and staff of CDS.

Friday Coffee Volunteers

Thank you to all of the volunteers who have brought hot coffee and delicious baked goods to Friday morning coffee! We're always looking for additional volunteers—if you're willing to sign up to bring morning sustenance, please contact Friday morning coffee coordinators Wendy Bokhorst-Heng at wdbheng@gmail.com, or Angie Jolie at ajolie@morillojolie.net.

Upcoming Dates

Monday, November 10 & Tuesday, November 11
Parent-teacher conferences
Extended program camp available

Tuesday, November 18
5:30-7 p.m.
PTTA meeting: The Inclusive CDS Community

Saturday, November 22
SSAT administered at CDS for eighth graders

Wednesday, November 26
Grandparents & Special Friends Day
Noon dismissal
No extended program

Thursday, November 27 & Friday, November 28
Thanksgiving vacation
No school
No extended program

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

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Contact Mary to receive the Weekly via e-mail

Children's Day School

Preschool – 8th grade

Parent-Teacher Book Group

Raising Lifelong Learners

by Lucy Calkins

Wednesday, November 5, 2008

6 – 7:30 p.m.

Do you wonder what you can do to help your child succeed at school, learn to read and write, understand math and do his or her homework? If so, please join us for the first meeting of our new Parent-Teacher Book Group! *Raising Lifelong Learners* is a book that provides many hands-on ideas and advice about how to help your child love learning.

We will have a lively discussion with parents and teachers about how to support your child's learning in a way that merges nicely with the CDS curriculum and philosophy.

In this first meeting we will discuss literacy, so please come prepared to talk about chapters 1–4. If your child is in upper elementary/middle school, we will also discuss chapters seven and eight.

We will discuss more topics and chapters at a later date.

The book is available at Amazon.com for \$11.53. In addition, three copies are available at CDS and can be checked out from Margaret Piskitel, Curriculum Coordinator.

Food and childcare will be provided

If you plan to attend, please **RSVP to Margaret Piskitel**, Curriculum Coordinator, at 861-5432 x349 or margaretp@cds-sf.org, so that we can plan for food and childcare.