



November 12, 2009

# THE CHILDREN'S DAY SCHOOL Weekly

Don't miss the attached letter announcing our new Head of School!

## Words from Rick

### What Will She Be When She Grows Up?

I bought Miranda Phaal's book of short stories online last week, and yesterday it arrived. I clicked "make purchase" with the same pride that a father might as he puts his daughter's art up on the wall. (Miranda is now in the eighth grade and her 12<sup>th</sup> year at Children's Day School.)

Last night at four in the morning when I couldn't sleep, I turned on the light and decided that this might be a good time to take her book for a spin. I read the first two stories. They were cute, fun and revealed a developing voice. They were also well written, and I found myself reacting like an editor: "surreptitiously" would have been a better word than "discretely," and I need to tell her not to split the infinitive. I felt like calling her into my office. But it was 4:15 a.m.

The third story, "Encounters," describes a woman dressing up to go out and a man dressing down to go rob a bank. The point of view flips back and forth between the two people as they each pursue their pursuits, until finally she goes out, and he robs the bank. The story ends:

She walked in a euphoric daze of her thoughts, swinging her bag back and forth.  
He ran down the sidewalk blinded by adrenaline.  
She saw him.  
He saw her.  
They fell in love.

I laughed, "That's funny," and laughed again, "That's actually brilliant." Then, "Thomas Hardy would smile." Then I went back to sleep.

When my daughter Katie was two she looked up from her work and said "I am an artist." She didn't say "I am going to be an artist when I grow up." Sixteen years later she entered college an artist, and after four more years, came out a geologist. Today she is studying architecture, and wondering what she will be when she grows up. (Actually, she is more wondering how she will make money.)

Miranda is a writer. She has a blog and writes movie reviews. She has been writing since, well, since she started writing. We still don't know what she is going to be when she grows up.

### Hot Dates

Thursday, November 12  
9 a.m.

SPEAK event  
Greek Annunciation Cathedral  
245 Valencia Street

3:45 p.m.  
Volleyball play-off game  
KDBS, 7070 California Street

Friday, November 13

8:30 a.m.  
Friday assembly  
First grade (Paula) presenting  
9-11 a.m.  
CDS tour for current families

Thursday, November 19 –  
Friday, November 20

Family Conferences  
No school  
Extended program camp available

Wednesday, November 25  
Grandparents & Special Friends Day  
Noon dismissal  
No extended program



## Thank You!

- To second grade families for a fantastic faculty breakfast last week!
- To Wendy Bockhorst-Heng, Bob Concannon and Angie Jolie for taking photos of the Halloween parade.
- To Brooke and Bob Bianco, Katie Buono, Amanda Chapman, Viru Gupte, Kristin Henry, Debbie Jasso, Heather Kunz, Carlene Lim, Andrea Ow, Lauren Schwartz, Elizabeth Seirmarco, Ann Van Gelder, Jen Wana and Eric Young for helping with the admission open house.
- To Katie Buono, Amanda Chapman, Zahra Ghayour-Kelly, Viru Gupte, Kristin Henry, Todd Hosfelt, Michelle Lapuz, Jeanette Layden, Shermalee Nicholson, Andrea Ow, Louis Schump and Jeanette Wilmerding for leading admission tours.
- To Dave Concannon and Dave Greenberg, and Carmen and Jorge Tejada, for hosting Friday coffee in the yard last week, even in the rainy weather!

One of the biggest problems we educators have (parents and teachers alike) is that we see children as in process of becoming something. For example, we tend to see Miranda as a nascent author, rather than the writer that she already is.

We don't rush them through crawling or walking, of course. Even when they start to speak, we delight in their first crude utterances and in some ways don't even want them to grow up. What could be better? If only they could stay babies forever. As we help them grow and change into better writers and better people, we need to hold onto the feeling that nothing *could* ever be better. It's a paradox because they actually *do* have a lot of bettering to do.

By the time they go to school, at least, we start placing adult evaluative templates over their work, and we start getting anxious about the bettering that needs to happen. When they "exceed expectations" we think, "Good, I guess they will be O.K. in the language department," or "Wow, maybe a math genius." When one falls "below expectations" we say, "Oh no! Maybe he is organizationally challenged." Then we act as if our job is to make that challenge go away.

Why do we want that challenge to go away? Maybe it is our empathy acting up. We know that character building is painful. We have done it ourselves, and we are trying to protect our children from the pain. Maybe we believe the cultural myth: "Nothing succeeds like success." At times like this we have to say to ourselves, "Nothing succeeds like struggle. I need to focus on persistence, practice and patience." These disciplines build character.

Sure there are standards, and they need to be taught, but they should not be the focus of education. When we focus on standards, we compromise the work of education. We take away kids' authority, enthusiasm and their responsibility for their own education. We get distracted by ability (which does not correlate with success) and under-value practice (which does). We make students afraid they won't measure up. The ones that do measure up are vulnerable to attributing their success to their ability rather than their love of a challenge. Focusing on standards can narrow their focus, do damage to that marvelous mechanism that sits on their shoulders, and can weaken that inner force that makes them go: their own unique *genius*.

We need to respect and appreciate students' work on its own terms. Miranda's book stands on its own two feet, and it is worth reading.

## From the Classrooms

### Digging Deeper – CDS Tour

Curious to learn more about what's going on in our K-8 classrooms? After coffee and the assembly on Friday, November 13, from 9-11 a.m., join Rebecca Kroll, Margaret Piskitel, Josée Mayette and Aimee Giles for a tour and discussion of the CDS academic program. We will start with an overview of our K-8 programs and end with a school tour. This is an excellent opportunity for current CDS parents to see our K-8 classes in action and to ask questions. No RSVP is necessary – we hope you join us.

## From the Office

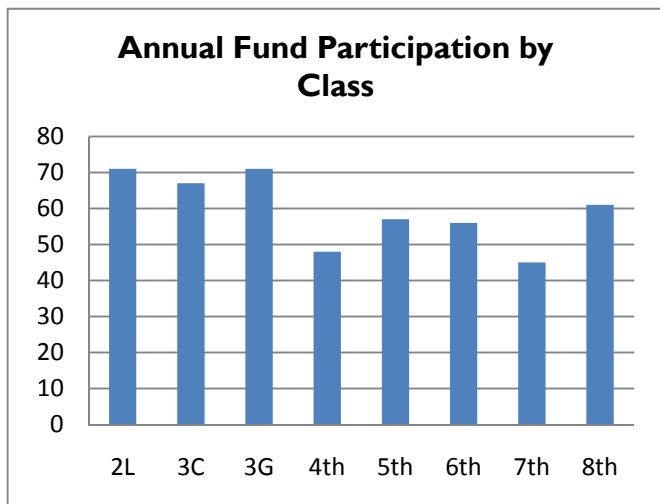
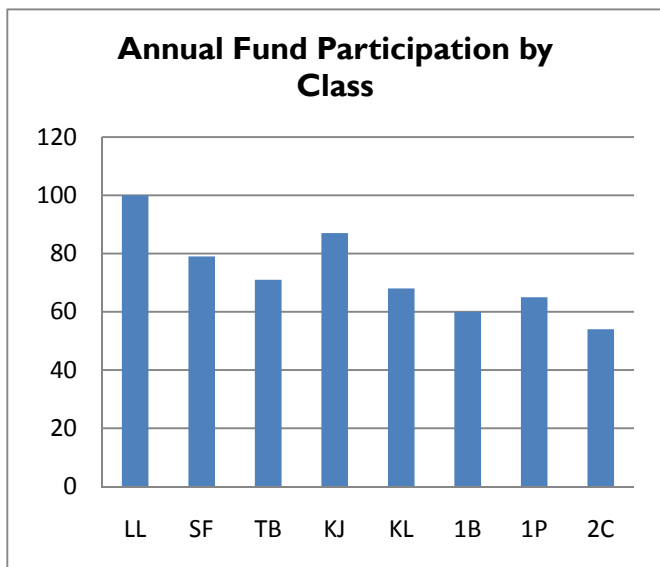
### Annual Fund Participation

Three cheers for CDS families, who are generously supporting the Annual Fund in pre-recession numbers! We're happy to report that two thirds of our families have made time to make a gift or pledge to the Annual Fund by mail, in person or through the very easy and

secure CDS website ([www.cds-sf.org/giving](http://www.cds-sf.org/giving)). Parent gifts and pledges total almost \$84,000. Thank you, fellow CDS parents.

As an incentive to keep up the great work and get this job done, 100% done, your CDS development office will provide a kid-friendly pizza lunch to all kids (and teachers too!) in each CDS class to reach 100% parent participation before Thanksgiving, i.e. in the next two weeks. In addition to the record-setting Leaping Lizard class, which has already reached 100% participation, top pizza contenders are the Prairie Dog kindergarten class (87%) and the Starfish (79%), but each and every class can get there.

If you haven't made a gift or pledge yet, please do. Strong participation from parents makes a big difference when we approach foundations and other outside donors, and we'd be thrilled to serve lunch to the whole school.



## Kid Chow Hot Lunches

We're happy to announce that following Thanksgiving vacation, Kid Chow will be offering its hot lunch menu to the CDS community. Check out some of Kid Chow's most popular hot lunch items: macaroni and cheese, roast turkey with gravy and potatoes, soft beef tacos, chicken burritos, pumpkin tamales, organic hot dogs, spaghetti and meatballs, grilled ham and cheese and more. Kid Chow's lunches are ordered via the web at [www.kidchow.com](http://www.kidchow.com). You can order lunches as often as suits your schedule and budget; there is no set weekly minimum. Remember, Kid Chow's ordering deadline is Monday, the week prior to the upcoming lunch week. Monday, November 23, is the deadline for the November 30 week of hot lunches.

## Family Farmer Dates Available

Please note that the following dates are still available for family farmer duty. Don't miss your chance to tend to our beloved chickens and sheep. Contact Misty Cummings (861-5432 x321 or [mistyc@cds-sf.org](mailto:mistyc@cds-sf.org)) to sign up:

- February 13-15
- February 18-19
- April 12-15

## Fall Conferences

Fall conferences will be held on Thursday, November 19 and Friday, November 20. All families are required to attend a fall parent-teacher conference. While no classes will be held, Extended Day Camp is available with prior registration, and childcare is available on the yard for CDS students during the times that their parents are in a conference with teachers.

The conference scheduling system, Pick-A-Time, will be available until November 17 so that teachers can plan

## Go Bulldogs!

Come out and support the Bulldogs in the first game of the play-offs!

Thursday, November 12, 3:45 p.m.  
Katherine Delmar Burke School, 7070 California St.

Stay tuned for more volleyball and basketball news.

their very full days. If you have not signed up by November 17, you will have to call Kerry Parker at 861-5432 x312 to see about fitting in your last-minute request.

### Sign Up via Pick-A-Time

To schedule your conference, please log on to the Pick-a-Time website at <https://www.pickatime.com/client?ven=11601461>.

The site will ask you to enter your email address and a password of your choice to create your account. In the field titled Student ID, please enter your child's "proper" name as one word (ex: kerryparker or kerryparker-smith). In the field titled Student's Birthday enter your child's date of birth (mm/dd/yyyy) to access your child's teacher's appointment schedule. You can view sibling calendars next to one another by following the directions to enter the values for an additional student and push "Add." If you do not have access to e-mail or the internet, please let Kerry know and she will help you choose a conference and orientation time.

If you need to cancel or change an appointment, please do so on the Pick-A-Time website until November 17. If you need to make changes later than that, you will need to call Kerry to help facilitate the process.

### Renew eScrip Safeway Cards

Thank you to all eScrip users and Safeway shoppers! Once registered with eScrip, each time you shop at Safeway, CDS receives a portion of your total amount spent. Periodically, you'll need to renew your commitment to eScrip and Safeway so that we continue to earn money each time you shop. It's easy to renew. Simply go online to [www.escrip.com](http://www.escrip.com) and log in. At the bottom of the screen you'll see a link to renew Safeway cards. Click on the link and the site will walk you through just a few easy steps. Renew now and you'll continue to contribute to CDS each time you shop. Thank you!

## Events

### Grandparents & Special Friends Day

Don't miss our annual Grandparents and Special Friends Day on Wednesday, November 25 from 10:15 a.m. to 12 noon. Guests are invited to gather in the yard (weather permitting) for coffee and a short presentation,

spend time in the classrooms and attend a musical assembly at 11:30. Dismissal for all students will be at noon, following the assembly, and will take place in the classrooms and at double doors. Preschool pick up will take place at noon at the preschool gate and will be walk-in only. Please note that if you'd like a grandparent or special friend to pick up your child, you need to send in an authorization note before Wednesday, November 25.

### Book Fair

Mark your calendars now for the CDS Book Fair on Friday, December 4 at Books Inc. in the Opera Plaza. Do your holiday shopping and help support the CDS PTTA at the same time. 10% of all revenue will go directly to CDS. The event will run from 5:30-9 p.m., childcare will be provided at school and Mr. Rick will make a guest appearance. See you there!

### Fiesta 2010

Mark your calendars now for this year's annual fundraising party, Fiesta 2010. This year's celebration will once again be held at Mighty, a nightclub owned and operated by CDS parents Isabel and Sean Manchester, on Saturday, March 27, 2010.

The Fiesta co-chairs, Andrea Reynolds and Shermalee Nicholson-Guillen, are in the planning stages for Fiesta 2010 and need your help and expertise! You're invited to the first volunteer meeting on **Monday, November 30 from 9- 10 a.m.** in the 2nd floor meeting room of the 16th Street building.

Several committees need your help:

- Susan Chastain, Quilt Chair, needs volunteers to help her coordinate and produce the class quilts.
- Ann Van Gelder, Silent Auction Processing Chair, needs writers to put together descriptions of donated items.
- Jeanette Wilmerding, Production Chair, needs technologically savvy people to help produce banners, slides of auction items, flyers, quilt posters and other materials.
- Meredith Ashworth, Auction Chair, needs parents to help with the Silent and Live Auction Committees, as well as someone to lead our night-of set-up and check-in group.

If you can't make the meeting but would like to volunteer, please e-mail Andrea Reynolds at [andrea-reynolds@sbcglobal.net](mailto:andrea-reynolds@sbcglobal.net), or Shermalee Nicholson-Guillen at [shermalee.nicholson@mac.com](mailto:shermalee.nicholson@mac.com). Thank you.

## Library Corner

### Library Thanks

The library is poised for its upcoming re-opening! Reconstruction's dust and clutter is just about gone and books are now on display, ready for eager readers to snatch up. Many thanks to the parents who helped bring the library back to its former splendor. Luma Dahlbacka, Greta Hanley and Melanie Piech provided invaluable help both shelving books and transporting them to and from classrooms for library time. Ava Taylor's grandma, Carol Damm, gave dozens of picture books a new lease on life by expertly wrapping them in clear plastic film covers.

The library's collection has grown recently thanks to donations from Jim Finberg and Melanie Piech, Matt and Luma Dahlbacka and Carol Damm. Tina Corse and Janine Wilburn's inspired and energetic efforts in October's Book Swap provided a boon for CDS library patrons. Many books on the students' Library Book Request List turned up at the Book Swap and are now getting ready for circulation! Thanks to Tina, Janine and all those whose generosity made the Book Swap so successful.

In the next few weeks there will be a mammoth effort to get all these new books processed so that students can check them out. To anyone wishing to help out, you are invited to join this ongoing "Book Bee." Come to the library (on the ground floor of the I6th Street building) on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons, from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. and on Wednesday afternoons, from 2 p.m. to 3:45 p.m. Thank you!

## PTTA Update

### SPEAK Event

Dr. Ken Ginsburg, author of *A Parent's Guide to Building Resilience in Children and Teens: Giving Your Child Roots and Wings*, is the featured speaker at the upcoming talk hosted by SPEAK, a parent education coalition of San Francisco independent schools.

Dr. Ginsburg is a nationally recognized pediatrician in Adolescent Medicine at The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia who aims to start a dialogue among parents

and children of all ages to redefine perceptions of success and evaluate the significant physical and emotional damage that stress and everyday pressure can have on development. He creates strategies to raise resilient children who are capable of dealing with life's difficulties and learn from personal defeat.

The event will be held on Thursday, November 12, at 9 a.m. at the Hall of the Greek Orthodox Annunciation Cathedral (245 Valencia Street @ I4<sup>th</sup> Street). For more information, go to <http://speaksf.org/>.

### Coffee Beans

Coffee beans make a great gift! Give a subscription to your favorite CDS teacher or bring a bag to a dinner party as a hostess gift. Did you get your boss for Secret Santa this year? Give her a bag of Ritual beans and get a raise.

Order a 3 bag assortment of locally roasted and world famous Ritual Coffee by Friday, December 4 and we'll happily ship in time for the holidays. Cost is \$50 plus shipping. All proceeds go to the PTTA Faculty and Staff Holiday Gift Fund.

Please e-mail Stephanie Scarpulla at [bluebirdcollection@gmail.com](mailto:bluebirdcollection@gmail.com) with feedback or questions.

## PTTA Corner

### Friday Morning Coffee

Come join other parents for coffee and doughnuts in the yard after Friday drop-off, 8-9 a.m. This is your chance to meet other families, have a few minutes of grown-up conversation and grab sustenance and caffeine before you start your day.

### PTTA Questions or Ideas?

- Robin McClarren, President, (415) 235-0295 or [robinmcc@speakeasy.net](mailto:robinmcc@speakeasy.net)
- Rebecca Grey, Secretary, (415) 269-0996 or [rgrey@pillsburylevinson.com](mailto:rgrey@pillsburylevinson.com)
- Carlos Vasquez, Classroom Liaison Coordinator, (415) 564-9734 or [xcvasquez@aol.com](mailto:xcvasquez@aol.com)
- Meredith Ashworth, Faculty Appreciation Coordinator, (415) 254-0229 or [meredith@glugcollection.com](mailto:meredith@glugcollection.com)
- Sara O'Malley, Parent Education Coordinator, (415) 348-8841 or [sara@omalleyhylton.com](mailto:sara@omalleyhylton.com)
- Ann Van Gelder, Admission Volunteer Coordinator, (415) 647-8561 or [cds.tourvolunteering@gmail.com](mailto:cds.tourvolunteering@gmail.com)
- Kristen Peña, Parent Involvement Coordinator, (415) 244-1411 or [Kristen@glugcollection.com](mailto:Kristen@glugcollection.com)
- Kate Flynn, Middle School Representative, (415) 305-6625 or [k8fln@aol.com](mailto:k8fln@aol.com)
- Lauren Schwartz, Preschool Representative, (415) 495-5757 or [schwartzbaum@mac.com](mailto:schwartzbaum@mac.com)
- Andrea Reynolds, Fiesta Chair, (415) 860-7556 or [andrea-reynolds@sbcglobal.net](mailto:andrea-reynolds@sbcglobal.net)
- Danielle Gutherie, Country Fair Chair, (415) 515-7994 or [danielle@vegaproject.com](mailto:danielle@vegaproject.com)

## Upcoming Dates

**Friday, December 4**

5:30-9 p.m.

CDS Book Fair  
Books Inc.

**Tuesday, December 8**

6:30-7:30 p.m.

Sliding scale tuition workshop

**Thursday, December 10**

5:30-7:30 p.m.

Curriculum Night

**Friday, December 18**

Winter Performance

Noon dismissal; extended program available

Sliding Scale Tuition applications due

**Monday, December 21 – Wednesday, December 23**

Winter vacation

No school; extended program available

**Thursday, December 24 – Friday, January 1**

Winter vacation

No school; no extended program

Dates also 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 e-mail



November 11, 2009

Dear CDS parents, faculty, staff and community members,

On behalf of the Children's Day School Board of Trustees, it is our pleasure to announce that last night the Board appointed Molly Huffman as our new Head of School, effective July 1, 2010. The Board's unanimous decision followed the unanimous recommendation from the Head Search Steering Committee. The Board is pleased to report that Molly has accepted the offer and will be relocating to San Francisco from her current home in Southern California at the end of the school year in June.

Molly is uniquely qualified for this position and brings an impressive level of educational leadership to Children's Day School. She has a deep alignment with, and vast experience in, our school's pedagogy of student-centered, project based learning with the broader social education elements of the Responsive Classroom and commitment to diversity. Molly has substantial experience growing a developing institution with proven ability in the areas of fiscal and project management and fundraising. It is her core belief that the heart of any school is its teachers, and she brings a powerful track record of hiring, nurturing and retaining great educators. In short, Molly's combination of experience and expertise, and her clear understanding of the challenges and opportunities that await her, makes her the clear choice to lead CDS at this time in the school's history.

This appointment concludes an exhaustive national search which brought us a field of truly extraordinary candidates, including three exceptional finalists. We are grateful for the guidance of our search consultant, Stephen DiCicco of Educational Directions. The Head Search Steering Committee would like to thank everyone who participated in the parent and faculty forums, met the three finalist candidates and submitted over 250 thoughtful responses on the feedback forms. Each of the candidates was impressed by the strong commitment of our community to the school and the process of finding new leadership, and it was heartening to see so many people involved at every level of this process starting last spring with the creation of the position statement and concluding last week with the community forums.

The Board of Trustees would like to extend to the faculty and staff our sincere thanks for your assistance during the search process. We want to give our special thanks to Rebecca Kroll and Sara Switzman for serving on the Head Search Steering Committee. And we would also like to extend our deepest gratitude to Rick Ackerly for his dedication and support to us during this process, as well as for his transformational leadership of CDS during the past eight years.

Below you will find a short summary of Molly's education, career and personal information for those of you who weren't able to meet her during her visit last week.

Molly Huffman is completing her ninth year as Head of School at The Children's School, a preschool through seventh grade school in La Jolla, CA (growing to preschool through eighth grade in 2010). While Head, Molly secured the school's first long-term lease of its site and completed its first significant upgrade to the school's facilities. Molly has also led TCS to deepen its focus on the "importance of each child's gifts" through a collaboration with San Diego State University to develop cognitive guided instruction training for TCS teachers. Prior to The Children's School, Molly was the Head of School at Touchstone School in Lake Oswego, Oregon and Assistant Head and Division Head at the French American School in Portland, Oregon. Molly also served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Cote d'Ivoire; her spouse became a Foreign Service officer and Molly served in a variety of embassy and Peace Corps roles in The Gambia, Barbados and Morocco. Molly graduated from Scripps College with a B.A., earned a master's of public/educational administration from Lewis and Clark College and has teaching and administrative credentials from the state of Oregon. Molly has two adult children, Michael and Brooke.

We are delighted to welcome Molly to the Children's Day School community.

Regards,

Matt Schwartz  
Chair, Board of Trustees

Marianne Evans  
Chair, Head Search Steering Committee



# BOOK FAIR

save the date:

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4**

5:30- 9:00 p.m.

where: **BOOKS INC. OPERA  
PLAZA**

10% of all purchased goes to cds

who: **CDS COMMUNITY**

Child Care will be available at CDS

what: **Live Music, special,  
guest Mr. Rick, appetizers &  
wine**