



NIXON NEWS

Nixon PTA Newsletter—Vol. 2006-2007 Issue No. 11—March 9, 2007
The L.M. Nixon Elementary School, 1711 Stanford Ave., Stanford, CA 94305 (650) 856-1622
<http://www.nixon.pausd.org>

Principal's Corner *By Barbara Welch*

Dear Nixon Families,

Let's Work Together

For the last ten years at Nixon, with the appearance of the first crocus, has come the school-wide discussion of handball rules. Last year, the students and I worked collaboratively to draft rules. Then the classroom teachers set aside some physical education time to practice them. Although we need to review the rules each year, the rules are really not the issue on the courts. Modifying court rules has become one of the ways that some students control the game to their advantage. This last month, we have been having classroom, grade level and school-wide discussions on how this type of behavior becomes a form of bullying. Stronger players have been taking over courts where students with less expertise play. This way, the former can monopolize and control the game. Each of the courts on the K-3rd grade playground have been marked either advanced, intermediate, or beginner. Playground supervisors have been asked to maintain this distinction as is age-appropriate; the 4-5th grades have been monitoring this themselves. It is the staff's job to provide the perimeters of play and supervise that rules are followed. BUT, we need you to have family conversations about fair play, respecting others, and how overpowering others with our words, looks and games, is bullying. Secondly, help us convince your students, if they are on the receiving end of this subtle bullying, that they need to seek the help of an adult. We can help them resolve these conflicts without making them "tattle-tails." Finally, we

have been working hard to convince bystanders that they have a role in stopping any playground bullying. If children who are watching do not take a stand against teasing, they are doing the same as approving of it. Although, I do not think bullying (that is where the intent of someone is to cause *harm* to another) is prevalent at Nixon, but any hurtful teasing is unacceptable. We appreciate you helping us set and maintain this standard.

Coffee and Conversation

During PTA and Site Council meetings, the members have had several conversations on how we can continue to build the community at Nixon and keep the lines of communication open between parents/parents, parents/staff and parents/District. In the past, we have had Principal's Coffees, which have not been well attended. There are probably a variety of reasons. One, which is widely circulated, is that they were too structured. In the past, I have prepared topics and fielded questions from parents. If a parent did not have questions or need information on a topic they figured the coffee was not for them. On Friday, March 16th we are going to put coffee and bagels in the teachers' lounge. The purpose is to create a friendly, comfortable place for Nixon families to gather to build community, share ideas, brainstorm and dialogue about issues that

Continued on page 2.

To Do List:

- Sign-up or renew your eScrip today!
- Nixon Night Out at Armadillo Willy's on Tues. 3/20.
- Volunteer for the Nixon PTA!

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CALENDAR

Wed. Mar. 14

Wow Kid's prep meeting for Animal Beacons of Light Fairmeadow Elementary 1:45-3:30 p.m.

Fri. Mar. 16

Principal's Coffee
Teachers Lounge, 8:00 a.m.

Mon. Mar. 19

West Bay Opera Assembly
9:15 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

Tues. Mar. 20

Nixon Night Out
Armadillo Willy's

Mon. Mar. 26

Teacher/Staff Appreciation
Brunch

Mon.—Fri. Mar. 26-30

Teacher Appreciation Week

Se puede encontrar una edición de *Nixon News* en español en la oficina general de la escuela. Favor de avisar a Gabriela Balas si usted desea añadir su nombre a la lista de distribución.

Principal's Corner *Continued from page 1.*

affect us. I will be there and will happily engage in these activities with you, but I will not have formal presentations. We can even have a discussion on a format that would suit your needs better. If this coffee is successful, we can have them as often as is helpful for you. I will be meeting formally on Friday, April 20th with all new incoming kindergarten parents to help acclimate them to our culture.

of the PiE fundraising. We did increase our percentage, although I had hoped that it would be higher.

Barbara

PiE

I want to extend a very heartfelt thanks to those of you who worked on or contributed to the final push of the campaign

Next Nixon Night Out is Tuesday, March 20th:

The next "Nixon Night Out" event is at Armadillo Willy's BBQ and Café, located at 1031 N. San Antonio Road, Los Altos (cross-street is El Camino Real). Dine in or carry-out from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. and Nixon Elementary school receives 20% of your tab. This is a great way to support our school and enjoy tasty BBQ ribs, chicken, etc. All you have to do is bring the attached flyer to the restaurant. Extra copies of the flyer are available electronically by sending an e-mail to Tena Cherry or look for a hard copy version of the newsletter in the school office.

Attention 5th Grade Parents and Students!

The 5th grade yearbook committee and graduation committee have started working on the yearbook and graduation slide/video presentation. We are asking you to loan or e-mail us any photos of the 5th grade class from the past 5 years—(and 1 baby shot of your child), class projects, field trips, Halloween...etc. Please email TIFF or JPEG photo files to Carolina Albers. Please be sure to write the name of the child in the body of the email message and identify the 5th grade event. If you only have hard copy photos (baby picture or others) please write the child's name on the back of the picture and leave it in the folder in your child's classroom to the attention of Leslie Fiedler. The photographs will be scanned and returned to you. We want to be sure to have an equal amount of each 5th grader, so please help us out.

Questions? Contact Leslie Fiedler

To ensure your child has a spot in the yearbook and slide presentation, please send us the photos no later than April 16.

Noon Art Happenings

By Sukey Bryan

Nixon Children have been busy making art! During the after lunch recess on every other Wednesday, all Nixon children are invited to Noon Art in the theatre. They have been drawing ink paintings of the figure in quick poses, making leaf rubbings, painting with watercolors, drawing life-sized self-portraits with chalk on the blacktop, working with clay, creating an outdoor art installation of a river of leaves, creating the cloud backdrop for the Martin Luther King Jr. assembly and other art project including the popular “free

choice”. Teal Derrer and I, with the drop in help from Nancy Campbell and Vicki Dempsey, organize and run Noon Art. We are parents who have a passion for the arts and are happy to be able to give the children another opportunity for creativity and fun. If you are interested in working with us, in whatever interest or time commitment you have available.

Arts Around the World

This year International Night, Friday May 18th, at Nixon School is titled *Arts Around the World* and it is sure to be a special event. Festivities will include our now famous International potluck food buffet, student art gallery and performances, a handcraft marketplace, and the Silent Auction. You will be able to browse through tables with silent auction items including vacation homes, event tickets, fine wines, gift certificates, and special experiences!

The Silent Auction committee is working diligently right now to solicit donations. If you can contribute an auction item, or solicit items for the auction, please email Jim Chang or Yvonne Karanas. All donations are tax-deductible, and funds raised will be directly applied to Nixon School PTA activities. If you would like to join the Silent Auction or one of the Arts Around the World committees, please contact Harriett Roeder.

Many hands make light work. More details to come.

Your PTA Dollars at Work

West Bay Opera Assembly Performance

Monday, March 19th at 9:15 and 10:30 a.m. our children will be treated to an assembly performance of Hansel and Gretel from West Bay Opera. Professional singers, in costume and a piano accompanist perform a shortened version of an actual opera, which has been specially adapted for children. Opportunities for some students to take part in the performance as actors, stage hands, and chorus members are a regular feature of the program.

A special offer to parents whose children have seen this great show; now you may come and see a show for adults! West Bay Opera is pleased to offer discount tickets at \$36.00 (regular (\$46.00) to parents of students who have seen a West Bay Opera school performance during the school year. This offer is open to parents who have not previously attended a WBO production at the Lucie Stern Theater in Palo Alto. Parents may order 2 adults tickets to "The Merry Widow" May 25-27 and June 1-3, by calling the box office at (650) 424-9999, Mon-Fri, between 1:00 and 6:00 p.m.

Day Light Savings Time...We're springing forward!

Don't forget to set your clocks one hour ahead this weekend!

Nominating Committee Update

During the PTA meeting held Friday, March 2, 2007, the Executive Board voted to approve the slate of 2007-08 PTA Board nominees. A vote by the General membership will take place at the April 13, 2007 PTA meeting. A full list of proposed candidates is posted inside the main entrance.

Any PTA member is welcome to run for any position on the Executive Board.

Please consider joining the many dedicated parents at Nixon (some of whom work full-time) on the board or by participating on various committees. Most jobs can be shared to make them more manageable.

No candidates have been identified for the following Executive Board positions: **Parliamentarian, PTA Council Representative, and Vice President of Fundraising.** Or consider volunteering as: **PiE Liaison, PTA Membership Coordinator, Nixon Names Directory, Website Coordinator, Family Math Night, World Art Celebration, Theatre Liaison, 3rd Grade Bike Safety, Traffic Safety, Classroom Volunteer Coordinator, or New Families Liaison.**

If everyone pitches in to help, our community becomes stronger and more supportive of our children and the staff at Nixon. Please contact one of the following members of the nominating committee for additional information on how you can help.

Leisa Waschura
Jo Marcus
Gabriela Balas
Christine Abraham
Sandra Nadim

NOTICE OF COMMUNITY MEETINGS TO SOLICIT PUBLIC COMMENT

Long-Range Facilities Master Plan

The Palo Alto Unified School District (District) is interested in presenting proposed modernization and growth needs for district facilities for community input. This information will be presented to the Board of Trustees on Tuesday, April 24, 2007. The District welcomes your comments on the project.

Elementary Schools

Thursday, March 8, 2007, 6:30 p.m.
25 Churchill Avenue (Staff Development Center)

Middle Schools

Wednesday, March 14, 2007, 6:30 p.m.
25 Churchill Avenue (Staff Development Center)

High Schools

Thursday, March 22, 2007, 6:30 p.m.
25 Churchill Avenue (Staff Development Center)

Written and oral comments will be accepted at these meetings, and you may also send your written comments to Tom Hodges at 25 Churchill Avenue, Building D, or e-mail thodges@ocmi.com. The District will accept comments on this information until March 31, 2007.

Classroom Happenings

Friday, March 2, was Read Across America Day and Nixon classrooms honored it with all sorts of fun reading activities. In room C-6, Jan Krinsley's second graders wore their pajamas to school and brought in favorite books from home that they shared with each other. They had special reading time with their Kinder buddies from Deborah Schweninger's class and enjoyed several guest-parent readers. Teacher Joan Dreschke had them making little bookmarks as well as acting out stories in 'Readers Theatre'.

Second graders also are enjoying Spectra Art Lessons this week as they are studying self-portraits. They looked at portraits made at various times over the past few hundred

years and talked about the differences in styles. They then made a self-portrait in a style of Picasso using black markers and watercolors.

Summer Camp Info

Summer will be here before we know it, and many of us are making plans for our children's summer activities. *Nixon News* receives many requests from various summer camp providers to publicize their camps—many more than we have space to print. If you are looking for summer camp information, check the Parents Corner bulletin board (located to the left as you enter the main doors to the school) or look for flyers and brochures in the main office. The *Community Kiosk*, published by the Palo Alto PTA Council and attached to the back of *Nixon News* also occasionally publishes listings for summer camps. Don't forget to check the school district calendar available on www.pausd.org for first and last days of class.

Here are a few popular camp web sites that may be of interest. ID tech Computer camp www.internaldrive.com, Jefunira Camp www.jefuniracamp.com, Horsemanship Camp www.springdown.com, Language Immersion Camp www.istp.org, Hope Musical Theatre www.hopemusicaltheatre.com, Science Camp www.destinationscience.org, Aquatic Camp www.shorlinelake.com, Sports Camps www.ymcamidpen.org. Submit some of *your* favorite camp web sites to recommend to the Nixon News for publication. Happy Planning and Happy Camping!

Palo Altans for Government Effectiveness

Nixon Elementary is pleased to be a community partner for the upcoming "Developing Civic Engagement" series being presented by PAGE, Palo Altans for Government Effectiveness. Save the date for "13 Tips for Effective Advocacy" presented by Sen. Joe Simitian on March, 24, 9:00 –11:30 AM. The Garden Court Hotel, 520 Cowper St. Palo Alto, will host the event. Learn from one who is frequently on the 'receiving end' of advocacy about how your approaches and techniques may fortify or undermine your objectives. Info and RSVP: <http://paloaltopage.org>. A suggested \$10.00 donation per person is requested at the door.

Palo Altans for Government Effectiveness (PAGE) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting civil discourse. By that we mean a thoughtful discussion of public issues that is respectful of all participants, including those with dissenting opinions. The purpose is to foster a careful examination of issues disseminated through public testimony, media articles and direct communication with the community.

Meet the Staff.... Interview by Thomas Rasmussen and Arman Iranmanesh

Name: Joan Dreschke

Classroom: C-6

Grade: 2

Years teaching: 17

Years at Nixon: 2

First job: I was a babysitter for many years. One little boy I babysat for lived upstairs from me in our apartment building. (It was a very short commute.) I enjoyed the fact that he could come and visit me often.

Known at Nixon for: Having lots of energy on Fridays, which is my job-share day.

If you weren't teaching, what would you be doing: I love making crafts and creating art. I suppose I would be an artist. I also love to travel and considered becoming a travel agent when I was younger.

Fondest memory: This is the story of how I acquired my first kitten. I found her one day outside my apartment. She was so very tiny, just a little ball of fur. I dutifully made signs and hung them around the neighborhood FOUND KITTEN. A few days later someone did call to say it was their kitten. But, when I went to return her, the people said "you have had her longer than we have, you should keep her". And I did.

Book on your nightstand: Did you know one can only check out 50 books at a time at the library? I do, because sometimes that is how many I get. I keep a book in my room, one in the car, and I listen to lots of books on tape. I am currently listening to *Fahrenheit 451*. It is set in the future and it's about burning books.

Most loved children's book: Easy, *The Giving Tree*, it is a wonderful story.

Favorite weekend retreat: I like to go hiking in the woods. Mt. Tamalpais in Marin has one of my favorite hikes.

Proudest moment: My son was in the musical play *A Christmas Carole*. He played Scrooge as a young boy. He sang a song with such passion, he even had a tear in his eye. I think it brought a tear to my eye too. I was very proud of him.

Biggest challenge: To be on time! Although you will be glad to know I am never late for school at Nixon.

Favorite food: Indian food is my favorite cuisine. I love it so much I have begun taking an Indian cooking class. My favorite dish is Chicken Masala.

Perfect day: This would be like a birthday day! I would have breakfast in bed, brought in by my family. The kids would make and pack a scrumptious picnic lunch and we would all head out to the mountains for a hike. It would be a cool day, with a bit of fog lingering on the ground. As we reached the top of the mountain, the fog would clear and the sun would be shining out to a beautiful view. As we drove home we would stop at an Indian restaurant for take out and bring the food to the beach. The day would end with me and my family snuggled up watching the sunset.

Most interesting vacation: In the summer of 2005, I took the kids to London for 2 weeks. Highlights included seeing the Queen and watching two wonderful plays; *Mary Poppins* and *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*. Then we met my husband in Germany and traveled around for 4 more weeks. Besides seeing lots of Germany, we also visited Austria.

Last purchase: Last night I had to buy deli sandwiches for dinner. It was a rehearsal night and that is all we had time for.

Favorite play: *Mamma Mia*

Inspiration for becoming a teacher: I had a 4th grade teacher who I adored. She taught us how to croquet a pillow. She also introduced us to pen pals. I have kept my pen pal into adulthood.

Bonus Question: You mentioned your first cat, have you had others? Yes, I love cats (especially kittens). Tiger was my first cat, then came Liquorice, and now we have Lilo.

Beyond Nixon

Tom Chapin

Family concerts are a wonderful opportunity to share joyful moments with the special children in your life. Join us Sunday, March 11 at 1:00 p.m. or 4:00 p.m. for rollicking concerts with Tom Chapin. Tickets to any of the concerts are \$12 each and the concerts will be at Smithwick Theater, Foothill College, Los Altos Hills. You can order tickets at lindentree.booksense.com, call 650-949-3390 or stop in at Linden Tree bookstore in Los Altos to purchase tickets.

WOW Kids Stuffed Animal After-School Meeting:

Wednesday, March 14th Fairmeadow School MP Room
1:45- 3:30 p.m.

All children [and their parents] are invited to help get the Animal Beacons of Light donated stuffed animals ready for their new homes! We'll sort, cut off labels, make cards, and attach tags. We'll also listen to and ask questions of a speaker from Animal Beacons of Light. (Please bring a pair of scissors to use.) For more information email: Animalbeaconsoflight@yahoo.com

Wildlife Rescue

Thursday, March 22nd at 2:30 special guests from Wildlife Rescue will visit Nixon School in the MP Room. Invite your friends and family. Beth Karpas will speak to us about the mission and services of Wildlife Rescue, and she will bring two live animals from the shelter to visit with us! Learn what to do if you find a baby bird, a baby squirrel, and how to protect the wild animals where we live. Contributions for Wildlife Rescue are requested.

Here's what they need and how they use it:

- Paper towels for cleaning & lining cages & drying hands
- Dry Eukanuba Chicken & Rice Formula, a basic nestling diet for kittens
- Pedialyte (unflavored) for hydrating squirrels
- Wheat germ (Kretschmer Original Toasted), a special food for birds
- Folding wire dog exercise pen 4' high, 8 or 12 panels
- Duck care Pet carrier – large, 27" deep x 16" high x 17" wide
- King size pillow cases for squirrel bedding
- Receiving blankets as hammocks for the squirrels
- Unscented toilet tissue for lining nests for baby birds
- And, of course– *CASH*, even the smallest amount makes a difference! Money raised for Wildlife Rescue helps care for wildlife in your area.

Wildlife Rescue, Inc. (WRI) has provided wildlife intake and rehabilitation services to the communities of Palo Alto, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, and Mountain View, California since 1974. For the past thirty years, WRI has been a resource for citizens and local agencies by accepting injured and orphaned wildlife for the purpose of wildlife rehabilitation under the auspices of the California Department of Fish and Game, Region 3 and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Our mission is to fully provide for the welfare of local wildlife and its coexistence with our community through rehabilitation, education, and example. Wildlife Rescue serves the community by instilling an awareness and appreciation for local wildlife and providing a resource for wildlife rehabilitation.

WRI provides educational services to the public regarding the critical role our local wildlife play in our Pacific coastal ecosystems. Our goal is to promote a safe and peaceful coexistence between people and animals that live together in our urban environment, and to rehabilitate and release injured and orphaned wildlife that are brought to our shelter.

Wildlife Rescue, Inc. (WRI) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, tax-exempt organization. We are funded through membership dues, individual and corporate donations, and grants. Wildlife Rescue, Inc. has service contracts with the City of Palo Alto and City of Los Altos Hills to help cover some of the facility expenses.

Wildlife Rescue admits over 2,000 animals a year. Birds make up the largest group of animals that we care for, ranging from very small birds like the Anna's Hummingbird that builds a nest the size of a quarter, up to the White Pelican with a wingspan of over seven feet. Last year, we treated more than 300 Eastern Gray Squirrels. In addition, Wildlife Rescue rehabilitates a small number of reptiles and amphibians each year, usually lizards and snakes.

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District

Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District has ongoing outdoor activities through out the season. The spring calendar of events and hikes is now available. Go to www.openspace.org or visit the David C. Daniels Nature Center located on the edge of Alpine Pond at Skyline Ridge Open Space Preserve, opening March 31. The Nature Center is open Saturdays and Sundays for 12:00 noon until 5:00PM during Spring and Summer.

Stock Up on Girl Scout Cookies!

Have you been waiting all year for Thin Mints or Caramel Delites? Nixon's Girl Scout Troops 296 and troop 626 have a limited number of boxes left. Choose from Caramel Delites, Peanut Butter Patties, Shortbread, Thin Mints, Peanut Butter Sandwiches, Lemonades, Cartwheels, and Thanks-A-Lot. Order now to make sure you get your favorite kind or look for the troop 626 "Cookie Booth" after school on Friday, March 16th. The cost is \$3.50 per box, and the proceeds support our very active Nixon Girl Scouts. Or to order now, Contact Susan (Troop 296) or Christine Abraham (Troop 626).

NEXT PUBLICATION

DATE: Friday, March 30

DEADLINE:

Thursday, March 22, 5:00 p.m.

Principal: Barbara Welch

PTA Presidents: Jan Rossi
and Leslie Fiedler

Editor: Vicki Dempsey

Layout: Liz Fendorf

About *Nixon News*

Nixon News is a PTA funded newsletter, designed to serve as a parent educational and information resource. It is published every other Friday (except when holidays interfere). Submissions should be sent via e-mail to the editor, Vicki Dempsey, at vldempsey@yahoo.com. Either type the text directly in the body of the e-mail or attach a Microsoft Word Format file. If your article is on paper and cannot be submitted electronically or if you have a photo or graphic, please contact the editor for instructions. Deadlines are announced on the last page of every issue. They are normally (but not always) the Thursday one week before publication. Articles may be edited for spelling, grammar, clarity, and length. All submissions must include your name and contact information.

Information in this newsletter is provided as a community service. The mention of any business, service, or organization in this newsletter does not imply endorsement by the Nixon PTA or the PAUSD.