



NIXON NEWS

Nixon PTA Newsletter—Vol. 2005-2006 Issue No. 3—September 30, 2005
The L.M. Nixon Elementary School, 1711 Stanford Ave., Stanford, CA 94305 (650) 856-1622 <http://www.nixon.pausd.org>

CALENDAR

Mon. Oct. 3
Giftwrap Orders Due

Thurs. Oct. 6
Walk To School Day

Fri. Oct. 7, 8:15 p.m.
PTA Executive Board Meeting

Fri. Oct 7
Directory Forms Due

Tues. Oct. 11
Parent Ed Speaker—"Hold On to Your Kids: Why Parents Matter" 7:00 p.m.
JLS Cafe

Thurs. and Fri. Oct. 13-14
No School
Local Holiday

Mon. Oct. 17
No School
Staff Development Day

Wed. Oct. 19
Bike Safety Day (3rd Grade)

Fri. Oct. 21
Ice Skating Party
5:30-7:30 p.m. Winter Lodge

NEXT PUBLICATION

DATE: October 21

DEADLINE:

Wednesday, Oct. 12 at 5 p.m.

Principal: Barbara Welch

PTA President: Tracy Stevens

Editor: Sharon Dally

Layout: Liz Fendorf

Principal's Corner by Barbara Welch

Dear Nixon Families,

The weather and how fortunate we are has been on many of our minds recently. There is a great deal of information in this issue of *Nixon News* about the Louisiana/Gulf Coast area. It would be rather hypocritical for the staff at Nixon to talk about life skills and caring and then ignore the plight of our fellow Americans who have been affected by the hurricanes. The PAUSD administrators have asked the District office, PTA, and community organizations to come up with a large scale, child-centered project that we could do together as a community. This coalition has found a sister school district in the hurricane-ravaged area. The Louisiana school is planning on reopening sometime in November, so it gives us some time to get organized. We have already had one of our parents step forward and volunteer to be the point person for our school with this

District project. Her job will be to act as an information conduit and to help organize us for relief effort activities as they come along. One that is presently beginning to gel will be spearheaded by the high schools. It will have a community fair format, and each site will have an opportunity to have a fundraising booth. You must be patient with us, and the community as a whole, as we move from brainstorming ideas to actually organizing. As we move forward, we will keep our parent community informed via e-news and *Nixon News*.

As a school site, we have already begun several activities. Most classrooms have discussed how they can do student-generated fundraising. In most cases this is

Continued on Page 2

PTA President's Message by Tracy Stevens

Dear Nixon Families,

In an unusual show of determined cooperation, four different community groups have decided to pool their resources and efforts in response to the recent hurricanes and the destruction that has been left in their wakes. The Palo Alto PTAs, Working Wonders (WOW), The Mothers Club of Palo Alto and Menlo Park (PAMP), and Youth Community Service (YCS) have begun to put together a recovery and relief program that will go directly back to the

children as we develop "Sister School" relationships. This will be a multiphase program called "The Bridge of Caring" which combines individual school site efforts with a larger community-wide program. Most schools are already beginning their activities; the community-wide event is planned for late October to very early November. You will continue to get updates from us and will see public announcements in the local newspapers.

Continued on Page 4

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

Principal's Corner *continued from page 1*

to be done outside of school time, as we did with the tsunami last year. Our primary music teacher is running a *sing-a-thon* (information came home in Friday Folders last week); the computer lab instructor is doing a *type-a-thon* (consult the Nixon computer lab website to sign up); and fifth graders are organizing a book drive. These are just a few of the ideas we have started with that your own student will be able to do or has already shared with you.

At our last Spirit Day assembly, we focused on what it means to be a friend and care for others. As in the past, our fundraising is never competitive, nor are students singled out for the size of their donation. To date, families have given up eating out and movie nights to donate what they would have spent. Lemonade and bake sales outside of school have flourished. Many children have given up savings and allowances earmarked for "wants" in order to help other children with their "needs". Any money raised by the site through the classrooms will be sent through the PTA to our sister school district for student needs. This way 100% of the money is used for children. The role your student plays and lessons he/she learns from this experience will be directly related to the effort you as a family expend. We as a staff support your family decision on how much you will become involved in any fundraising effort. We do hope that when a date is selected and a community event is named at one of the school sites you will join us in this act of caring.

Differentiation

Please mark your calendars that on Tuesday, November 15 there will be a **Parent Education Night** at Nixon. Our focus will be on how lessons are differentiated in the classroom in order to provide challenge to a variety of academic, social, emotional, and physical needs. The evening will be

Nixon On Ice!

Nixon's Annual Ice Skating Party is coming on Friday, October 21 at the Winter Lodge from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. If you are the kind of person who waits till last minute, please sign up NOW. Not only do we need to know roughly how many people are coming, but we also need to have a minimum of 75 skaters signed up in advance in order to avoid cancellation from the Winter Lodge. Costs are \$12 per skater, including skate rental, and free for non-skaters. Complete the sign-up/waiver forms attached to this issue of *Nixon News* and return it to the school office. Extra forms are also available in the office.

Come hungry! A variety of foods, beverages, and baked goods will be available for purchase, provided by the 5th grade class. Volunteers are also needed on the day of the party. Contact Lois or Lori.

similar to the one we did last year on literacy. You will receive updated information with the specific format as we get closer to the date.

Tutors

Last year we had 66 English Language Learners at Nixon. Many of these students qualify for tutorial help each week in their primary language. We can only provide this if we can find tutors. This year we have only been able to provide weekly tutors in Japanese and Spanish. Many parents are happy to help out in an emergency, but we need adults whom we can rely on to be with the students each week to help them translate their lessons and read. We are presently in need of primary tutors in Cantonese, Mandarin, and Korean. These are paid positions. Tutors must have a work visa. If you are interested, please let Megan Cox know. .

Enrichment

As of last week we had 212 students registered in after school enrichment classes. A PTA volunteer coordinates all of these classes, and the providers are independent contractors. These are not PAUSD or Nixon-run classes. If these programs are valuable to you, remember, a parent just like you runs them and she is retiring at the end of the year.

Thank you for your continued support.

Barbara

Sally Foster Giftwrap Order Deadline Extended!

If you did not get your Sally Foster order in today, it's not too late! The new deadline for getting in your gift-wrap order is Monday, October 3rd. Please send your order to school on Monday or drop it off at the office in the brightly colored giftwrap box. Please note: Nixon does not participate in the prize program.

Online ordering is easy at SallyFoster.com

Nixon account number: 357650

Last day to order online: Jan. 15, 2006.

Out-of-town family and friends can support our school by visiting SallyFoster.com. All you need to do is go to www.sallyfoster.com, register, and fill out the easy-to-use "Email Template" form in the Seller's Section using our school's account number and email addresses of your out-of-town friends and family. Nixon still receives 50% of the profit when online orders are placed. If you want to also order online, you can credit our school during the checkout process. When prompted, you just enter our school's account number: 357650.

For questions contact Susan Nicholls.

Just For Fun

Dear Nixon Families,

Hello, my name is Denise Provost, and I will be serving our school this year as the PTA Just For Fun Coordinator. I also would like to introduce Just For Fun's publicist, Chantel Brown. At this time, the annual Nixon auction is not scheduled to take place. But we don't want to lose all those fantastic community building/fund raising parties for both children and parents, so we are taking the section from the auction previously named "Teachers, Class Parties, and Get-togethers" and placing them under the auspices of Just For Fun. Instead of auctioning off these activities during one huge event, we are soliciting offers from our Nixon families to host events throughout the school year.

As a debutante coordinator, what I hope to accomplish, at the very least, is to have parent committees (that's you and a few friends, old and new) from each grade level create an event. It can be large or small, all you need to do is plan and/or host a party. It's easier than it sounds, lots of fun, a great way to meet new people, and supports our children. Watch for sign up sheets in your child(ren)'s Friday folders.

Some of you are probably asking, "What type of event should I plan?" To answer that question, I have compiled some activities from last year. These include:

- **Strike Up the Fun—Bowling Party**
- **Ice Skating Extravaganza with Skating and Pizza**
- **Gingerbread Decorating Party**
- **Roll Out the Barrel—Oktoberfest**
- **Surf's Up—Swim Party**
- **You're It—Laser Quest**
- **Hide and Seek—Scavenger Hunt**
- **Disco Bingo**
- **Let's Toast—Wine Tasting Party**

These are just a few of the numerous possibilities. I will compile a more extensive and detailed list for those of you who are interested. Because many of these parties have been done in the past, they are easy to recreate, and there is lots of help and support to get you going. Please call me or e-mail me for more information.

Denise

President's Message *continued from page 1*

I thought that as we begin our relief activities at Nixon it might be helpful to provide a bit of information about Louisiana and the Gulf Coast area. In addition to the loss of life, the displacement, and obvious destruction, we have potentially lost a unique part of American history.

It is my hope that you share this information with your children so they have a better sense of Louisiana and what it means to America. It may also help when thinking of a meaningful way to provide assistance or relief.

Tracy

Hurricanes Katrina & Rita: Why We Should Care?

In addition to the general obligation to help, there are two unique reasons why we should care deeply about the Gulf Coast and especially New Orleans. First, the region damaged by Katrina is among the poorest in the nation. This means that many of those affected do not have the same level of resources that others might have to survive a disaster of this size. This helps explain why so many did not leave the area when ordered to do so before Katrina hit. How can you leave if you have no car, no money, and no place to go? Over 60% of those in New Orleans relied on public transportation or walked to their destinations. Those left behind were, in effect, the poorest of the poor. They need our help all the more.

The area deserves our help for a second reason. It is among the most unique areas in a nation filled with rich regional diversity. In fact, a case could be made for New Orleans as the most distinctive city in the country. At least it was *before* Katrina hit. **Preserving its distinctiveness will be one of the great challenges of the rebuilding effort.**

What makes New Orleans so distinctive? At least five things:

History – Most U.S. cities developed under British or American rule. New Orleans was a French, and briefly a Spanish, city for nearly 100 years before passing into American hands in the early 1800s. These “foreign” influences left an indelible mark on the city that has persisted to the present.

Architecture – Most of you have probably seen pictures of New Orleans’s “French Quarter”. This is the heart of the old French city, 100 or so blocks of narrow streets, lined with one and two story buildings, many with beautiful wrought iron balconies. In fact, the Quarter is not French at all, but built mostly during the Spanish occupation of the city, at the same time as the American Revolution.

Food – New Orleans has long been one of the food capitals of the U.S. The French influence inspired distinctive Creole and Cajun style dishes, rich in flavor and spices. These dishes include things like: gumbo, red beans and rice, etouffe, and jambalaya. But later German and Italian

immigrants brought other styles of cooking that enriched the city’s food scene. Before the storm, few cities in the U.S. were as famous for their distinctive local cooking as New Orleans.

Music – For many, New Orleans’s most valuable heritage is its music—or styles of music, because the city has helped nurture not one, but maybe as many as three different kinds of music. Jazz is its most famous musical export. Traditional New Orleans jazz emerged at the very beginning of the 20th century. In this sense it is fitting that the most famous jazz musician of all time, Louis Armstrong, was born in New Orleans on July 4, 1900. Unlike jazz, rock and roll did not develop in any one place, but New Orleans did develop a unique style of rollicking piano-based rhythm and blues music that was one of the musical currents that fed into rock and roll. Finally, there is zydeco, a tasty musical stew, rooted in French folk music, but seasoned by all the other musical styles—especially rhythm and blues and country—peculiar to the region.

Cultures – If zydeco is a musical stew, the United States is a rich cultural soup. Nowhere is this more apparent than in New Orleans. French Acadians fleeing the British conquest of Canada in the mid-1700s were the first to settle in large numbers. Their descendants are today’s **Cajuns**. Spanish colonists came after that and stayed in some numbers even after the French regained control in 1783. The Americans took possession in the early 1800s, but without displacing the French and Spanish. African-Americans have been in New Orleans since the very beginning, making incalculable contributions to the social and cultural life of the city. They now make up some 70 percent of the city’s population. Many other cultures—Cuban, Mexican, Italian, Jewish, etc.—are well represented as well. In its diversity and richness of cultures, it is truly an All-American city.

(Many thanks to Nixon parent Doug McAdam for compiling this information.)

News from Partners in Education



Last week, Palo Alto Partners in Education launched its 2005-2006 Schools Campaign with a direct appeal solicitation to all Palo Alto Unified parents. The foundation's goal this year is to donate \$2 million to augment the 2006-2007 PAUSD budgets. With

that \$2 million donation, Partners in Education expects to grant \$100,000 on average to each of the 12 elementary schools and between \$120,000 and \$180,000 to each of the five secondary schools.

Partners in Education funds alleviate critical needs in our schools. The money goes directly to the classroom, funding teacher aides, electives teachers, reading tutors, teacher support, and technology upgrades. Many of these services were reduced in the past few years because of district budget shortfalls.

"This is a crucial year for Partners in Education," said Susan Bailey, Partners in Education board president and a parent at Addison Elementary School. "Although the Measure A parcel tax restored some needed funds, the PAUSD budget is still reeling from the cuts of the past few years, which have not been fully replaced. And the con-

tinuing growth in enrollment puts increasing demands on the budget."

Several families and organizations have already pledged to contribute to a \$150,000 challenge grant to Partners in Education, promising to match any contribution above \$500 per child made by October 28, 2005. Partners in Education also encourages parent participation, regardless of contribution amount.

This year's \$2 million campaign by Partners in Education follows a total grant of \$1.8 million to the district in 2004-05, the first year that a district wide campaign was conducted. Nixon received a grant of approximately \$107,000.

Next year, the elementary principals will again use the Partners in Education donation to fund classroom aides, reading and math specialists, Spectra art, and supplemental science instruction. For middle and high schools, the Partners in Education funds will not only underwrite key staffing needs but also upgrade out-of-date technology infrastructure—a major priority for secondary school principals.

Palo Alto Partners in Education is a nonprofit 501(c)3 foundation dedicated to sustaining extraordinary public education in Palo Alto. For more information, please visit www.papie.org.

Tuck Your Napkin Under Your Chin!

Save the date: Tuesday, October 25, from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Armadillo Willy's Restaurant, 1031 N. San Antonio Road, Los Altos, is the location for our next Nixon Night Out event. Take a break from cooking and join your friends at Armadillo Willy's for a night of great barbeque and fun for the whole family. Nixon School benefits too! Armadillo Willy's will donate 20% of our purchases to the school (dine in or take out). You'll be dancing the Texas two-step when you see how easy and fun it is to support Nixon School.

Gentle Reminder!!

Please don't park in the "Reserved Parking" spaces that run down the side of the bus circle. Those spaces are for some of the staff, and the last parking space with the "Reserved Parking" sign is for the winning bidder from last year's auction. The family paid for the use of that spot, which includes anytime during school hours as well as school functions happening after school. If you have someone else pick up your child, please tell him or her not to use any of those "Reserved Parking" spaces. Thanks!

Three Students showed the most School Spirit this Summer!

EA and TA had their picture taken wearing their Nixon School spirit shirts in Baja, Mexico!

TM wore his Nixon School spirit shirt for a picture taken next to a mysterious submarine.

Barbara Vana, genius of the computer lab, took a break from electronics this summer and traveled to far off Vodice, Croatia, where she wore her Nixon School spirit shirt for her picture.

That's the spirit, E, T, T, and Barbara! Anywhere, anytime, it's always the right time to show your school spirit!

All are winners of a "Dolphin Pack." You can see their pictures posted in the school library.

S.O.S. HELP

If you can tune a violin, viola, or cello, we desperately need your help in the beginning strings and orchestra classes. If you can spare 10 minutes at the beginning of class to help tune instruments, please call Phyllis. Thank you for sharing your time with the children.

Music lessons at Nixon are held on:

Monday, 12:50-1:30

Wednesday, 8:20-9:00

Sign up for e-News!

Nixon has an e-mail list for parents and staff interested in receiving weekly updates on school events. To subscribe (or unsubscribe) from the list, send e-mail to majordomo@laki.pausd.org with the words "subscribe nixon" (or "unsubscribe nixon") in the body (not the subject) of the message.

If you have items that should be publicized in e-News, e-mail Linda Baker.

Classroom Happenings

1st Grade

First graders in Joe Young's class really know their apples. They've done apple math, read apple poems, created apple books, and cooked applesauce. The students all helped to cut the apples, add ingredients, and prepare the applesauce. The final step was to mash the cooked apples. Yummy!

4th Grade

Thanks to a great turnout of parent volunteers, Martha Waterhouse's 4th graders became geographers and made realistic relief maps of California. The students learned how to mix a pliable salt dough and then pinched and pushed it into shape. They formed and labeled the coastal range and Sierra Nevadas, the coastline and bays, Mount Whitney and Death Valley, and then located California's major cities. All of this California geography will come in handy as they study California history throughout the year.

Parents' Corner Bulletin Board

Do you have something to sell...something you would like to buy...a class you teach...an announcement to make...or photos to share? A Nixon family community bulletin board is available for just this purpose, in addition to posting PTA information. The bulletin board is located inside the school, opposite the front office stairs.

It may be used to: communicate information pertaining to extracurricular activities, buy/sell household items, vacation rentals wanted or available, garage sales, looking for advice or referrals, classes or programs, babysitters needed or available, etc., etc. Of course, any notice must be appropriate for our school setting.

When posting a note, please date it, and remember to remove it as needed. Using tear-off tags at the bottom of the paper with your name and phone number will make it easier for someone to contact you. Go take a look or give it try!

Don't Be Left Out

Work has begun on putting together the Nixonnames school directory. If you did not turn in your completed form at registration and you would like to have your family contact information appear in the directory (great for setting up play dates, birthday parties, etc.), please turn in your completed forms to the Nixon PTA (attention Tracy Stevens). The deadline for forms is October 7. If you need a form, please contact either Tracy Stevens or the office staff.

International Walk to School Week is October 3-7

Join kids and their schools around the world and in Palo Alto for Walk to School Day on Thursday, October 6. How far do you live from Nixon? How much gas can you save?

Do your part on October 6th by walking, riding a bike, taking the bus, or using a carpool! Way2Go!

Are You Seeing Double? Are You Seeing Double?

In order to reduce our printing costs, as well as save trees, we print just one copy of *Nixon News* per family. Only the youngest child in each Nixon family should bring a copy home. If your family receives multiple copies of *Nixon News*, please contact Donna Kruep or Leisa Waschura. Thank-you for your help!

Beyond Nixon

Parent Education Opportunities

Take advantage of the excellent parent education opportunities available in our community. Look in the Councilor and Community Kiosk pages attached to this newsletter for details regarding any of the following:

- PAUSD Candidates Forum, Oct. 6, 7-9 p.m., District Office
- PAUSD Candidates Forum, Oct. 19, 7:30-9 p.m., Terman Middle School Cafetorium
- "Hold On To Your Kids: Why Parents Matter", Oct. 11, 7-9 p.m., JLS Middle School Cafe
- "Safe Relationships", Oct. 26, 7:00 p.m., District Office
- "College Unranked: Calming the Admissions Frenzy", Nov. 3, 7-9 p.m., Spangenberg Theatre (at Gunn High School)

Become an Environmental Volunteer Docent

Want to make a difference in your community? Teach kids to love nature and learning. No experience required. Our volunteer training programs provide you with all the skills and materials you need to become a nature docent. Call Hillary or visit our web site at www.Evols.org for details.

3rd Annual Running of the Bulls 5k Fun Run & Walk

Saturday, October 1, 2005
Peers Park, Palo Alto

This premiere neighborhood event brings local Olympians together to mentor and inspire schoolchildren and their families. The morning starts with a track and field clinic for kids aged 5 to 12, run by USATF coaches, PAUSD elementary school Physical Education teachers, and Olympic athletes. While the kids learn track and field events, parents can run or walk the tree-lined 5k course, which features Olympians in bull and cow costumes who "chase" participants to the finish (you get a head start!). When the adult race ends, the kids' races, the Running of the Calves, begin. Five dollars from each entry is donated to the Bay Area school of your choice. There are prizes for finishers of all ages, in all categories, including first Mom and Dad to finish with jogger-strollers! The Running of the Bulls features some of the world's fastest athletes, bringing them together with the local community for an event that encourages athletics in children and challenges even the strongest non-professional athlete. Visit www.bulls5k.com for more details, complete event schedule, and on-line registration.

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, Sharon Dally. Either type the text directly in the body of the e-mail or attach a Microsoft Word or Rich Text 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 front page of every issue. They are normally (but not always) the Friday 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.