



NIXON NEWS

Nixon PTA Newsletter—Vol. 2005-2006 Issue No.6—November 18, 2005
The L.M. Nixon Elementary School, 1711 Stanford Ave., Stanford, CA 94305 (650) 856-1622 <http://www.nixon.pausd.org>

CALENDAR

Wed.-Fri. Nov. 23-25
Holidays
No School

Wed. Nov. 30
Book Fair Begins

Wed. Nov. 30
Just for Fun Kick-off

Thurs. Dec. 1
Book Fair & Family Night
6:00-8:00 p.m.
Nixon Theater

Fri. Dec. 2
PTA Executive Board Mtg.
8:15 a.m.

Sat. Dec. 3
Book Fair Ends

Mon. Dec. 5
Site Council Meeting
2:40-4:40 p.m.
Staff Lounge

NEXT PUBLICATION
DATE: December 9

DEADLINE:
Friday, December 2 at 5 p.m.

Principal: Barbara Welch

PTA President: Tracy Stevens

Editor: Sharon Dally
Layout: Liz Fendorf

PTA President's Message by Tracy Stevens

It is Thanksgiving time, so as I think back on the last year both at home and abroad, I am overwhelmed by all that has taken place. Between local and worldwide politics and natural disasters, it has been a heck of a year. And yet, I count my blessings and feel almost guilty that we remain virtually untouched. We live in an area (although earthquake prone) where politics are taken seriously but also provide entertainment, and as of late our weather and land remain stable.

There may be some of our families where the effects of worldwide events may have taken its personal toll. To each of you, may gentler times soon be yours. I would like to think that peace of mind and generosity of heart is not just a sentiment but a possibility.

Happy Thanksgiving To You All.

To punctuate the acts of goodwill, I would like to report that in addition to supplies and books, the total contribution towards the Bridge of Caring in the form of a cash donation from Nixon was \$3425.00. This came from piggy banks, the relinquishing of chore allowances, funds from yard sale donations, and many other small, but important contributions that make for a very big impact.

Tracy

Book Fair 2005 *A Nixon PTA Sponsored Event*

The Scholastic Book Fair will run from Wednesday, November 30 until Saturday, December 3 in the Nixon Theater. The Fair is a great way to get books into kids' hands, and it raises over \$3,000!

Scholarships

Every Nixon child will have the opportunity to purchase a book at the fair. As in past years, scholarships will be available through the PTA. Please contact Sylvia Sanders if you would like a scholarship for your child.

Teacher and Classroom Gifts

Want to help build a classroom library? Teachers will compile lists of books they'd like for their classrooms; interested families can then purchase books from these "wish lists." And teachers always appreciate Book Fair gift certificates!

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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.

Book Fair 2005

A Nixon PTA Sponsored Event

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Volunteers Needed

The Book Fair requires parent power in the form of fair set up and take down, and book sales. Specifically, we will need help on:

- Monday, November 28 for Fair set up
- Wednesday, November 30 through Friday, December 2 for sales before school, at lunch, and at pick up time
- Thursday, December 1 for book sales 6:00-8:00 p.m.
- Saturday, December 3 for book sales 10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.
- Monday, December 5 at 10:30 a.m. for Fair take down

Family Night at the Fair

Please bring your family back to Nixon on Thursday night, December 1, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. for story time, extra shopping, and catching up with friends. The Junior Girl Scouts will gift wrap your purchases for a small fee, and fifth graders will sell drinks and snacks for their annual fundraiser.

Thanks in advance for your participation.

Sylvia Sanders and Ih-hae Chang

Book Fair Co-chairs

Pakistani Earthquake Relief

Please donate warm, gently used clothing for the Pakistani relief effort. The PTA Wardrobe is an organization that provides used clothing and toys to needy families in our school district. During November, the Wardrobe will be collecting clothes for the Pakistani relief effort. As you already know, the families there desperately need warm clothing. Please drop off your contributions to the PTA Wardrobe at the portable (near the dumpsters) at Jordan Middle School, 2263 Middlefield Road. Open Wednesdays 2:00-5:00 p.m. and Saturdays 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Just For Fun *A Nixon PTA Sponsored Program*

Look for the Just For Fun sign-up table at the Book Fair! This will be your opportunity to purchase parties and fun social events offered by generous Nixon parents, teachers, and grade-level groups. Get better acquainted with other Nixon families and have a great time by participating in some of these events. Best of all, the proceeds support PTA programs at Nixon.

Our first event will be the Cookie Exchange hosted by our 2nd grade families on December 13th. See the article below for more details. A tentative listing of events will come home shortly before the Book Fair begins, but be sure to check the sign-up table at the Fair for late additions.

During the Book Fair (November 30-December 3), the Just For Fun sign-up table will be open Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday after school, at Family Night (Thursday, 6:00-8:00 p.m.), and Saturday, 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Some very popular events may sell out fast. Don't miss your chance to reserve your spots!

Fill Your Cookie Jar with Cookies from Around the World!

Tuesday, December 13th
Nixon Multipurpose Room, 2:20–6:30 p.m.

This year the Nixon PTA Just For Fun Committee and our generous 2nd grade families will bring you a delightful event – *A World of Cookies*. Stop by the Multipurpose Room after school on Tuesday, December 13 and select from a beautiful and delicious assortment of homemade cookies. Sip warm apple cider, visit with your friends, and bring home a box of cookies to enjoy with your family. You may purchase your event ticket in advance at the Just

For Fun sign-up table at the Nixon PTA Book Fair, or you may pay at the door. For only \$10.00 you will receive an empty box to fill with marvelous cookies of your choice. Be warned, cookies may be sold out before 6:30 p.m. Please come early for the best selection.

Funds raised at Just For Fun events directly support our children through PTA school programs. Thank you in advance for your participation.

Lost & Found Overflowing!

The cool mornings and warm afternoons we enjoy this time of year result in many jackets and sweatshirts being left on the playground. If your child's closet is looking roomier than usual, check out our lost and found collection located at the base of the stairs leading to the main office. You might just discover that missing sweater or long-lost lunchbox, or maybe something you didn't even realize was gone! ***Don't delay, because any items not claimed by December 9 will be donated to a charitable organization.***

Remember that if you put your student's name inside their clothing, then the office staff can see that lost items get returned to them.

“I Can Do That!”

Parliamentarian? What is that? And why does the PTA need one?

The best person to answer that question is Duncan MacMillan, who has served the Nixon PTA in this capacity for the last two years. Duncan wears a number of hats in addition to being Nixon PTA parliamentarian—he’s also co-parliamentarian of the Palo Alto PTA council; co-chairman of the Nixon School site council; a frequent classroom volunteer; and, most importantly, the father of 5th grader J and Gunn senior C. He will most certainly be missed when he “graduates” to middle school next June.

At PTA executive board and general membership meetings, the parliamentarian assists the president in keeping the discussion of agenda items courteous and on-topic and making sure that any motions are acted on in a fair, efficient, and unambiguous manner. Other duties include conducting the first meeting of the nominating committee each year (only the first meeting) and reviewing and guiding the revision of the bylaws as needed (every other year).

In short, the role of the parliamentarian is to ensure that PTA business is conducted in such a way that “the rights of the majority are reflected but the rights of the minority are

protected.” Nixon PTA represents the entire Nixon community, and every PTA member is entitled to have a voice in PTA decisions. The parliamentarian plays an important role in making sure that can happen.

The best part - no experience required! The Palo Alto Council of PTAs conducts training sessions in May and September of each year on the duties of the parliamentarian, so not knowing the job should not be an issue for anyone who wants to get involved. Besides, Duncan promises to show you the ropes and has documented just about everything you could possibly ask about the job.

Hopefully by now you’re saying, “I can do that!” Please step up to the plate; volunteer to serve as parliamentarian next year by contacting Duncan OR Tracy Stevens. **Nixon PTA needs YOU!**

PTA Positions Previously Profiled in *Nixon News* and Still Unfilled

- ◆ Nominating Committee Chair (profiled October 21)
- ◆ *Nixon News* Editor (profiled November 4)

Previous profiles can be found in the *Nixon News* archive on the school website at <http://www.nixon.pausd.org/news.htm>.

Site Council Meeting

At its November 7th meeting, the Nixon Site Council reviewed the results of the October 24 earthquake drill and decided to form a subcommittee to address such areas as control of vehicles (closing of the Stanford Avenue entrance), temporary shelter/supplies, and coordinating activities with the PTA. Any comments or suggestions in the area of disaster preparedness are requested and should be forwarded to Duncan MacMillan or Teal Derrer.

The council heard more on the district-level attendance-area committee that is being formed to advise the superintendent on issues of capacity of district schools, avenues for expansion/modification of attendance areas, and alter-

natives for additional schools (planning for a possible “third high school” is expected to be a major item). The committee will be staffed in November/December, and work will be done starting in January 2006 with a report to the superintendent in May/June. Implementation of any attendance-area changes is not likely before 2007/8. Duncan and Teal were tasked to work with Tracy Stevens, Nixon PTA president, to select a parent representative and alternate to serve on the attendance-area committee. Interested parties should contact them as soon as possible.

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Site Council Meeting *continued from page 4*

A parent survey, similar to the one conducted in 2003, is being considered by the council, and Barbara Klausner is working on suggestions of how the survey should be modified and how data should be handled. Interested parties can visit the Nixon web site to see the previous survey and are encouraged to contact Barbara Klausner before the next meeting of the council on December 5, 2005.

The council is looking forward to the November 15 parent education night where “differentiated instruction” is being highlighted. Expecting a good showing and the usual excellent presentations from our teachers, the council wants to thank the staff for all their work in making the sessions so informative for parents.

At the December 5th meeting, the council expects to decide how to allocate the Site Improvement Plan (SIP) funds it receives from the district. About \$30,000 will be allocated during the meeting.

As always, parents and teachers are welcome to attend council meetings, which are held between 2:40 and 4:40 p.m. in the Staff Lounge. You are welcome to attend on December 5th!

PiE Participation Goal is 100%

Dear Nixon Parents,

Please make your donations to the Partners in Education (PiE) Program today! Let’s ensure that our programs for ***Reading Specialists, Science, and Teacher’s Aides*** continue on in the same successful manner that ***our children have all benefited from.***

We all want our children to have the best we can offer! Please help maintain these high standards. Participation to date is a little lower than we would like, especially in comparison to other schools. If you’ve been putting off making your contribution, now is the time. Our goal is 100% participation; whether it is \$5 or \$50 or \$500, it will all be appreciated!

Remember that you can return the remit form you were sent in the mail, pick up an extra form in the office, or go to www.papie.org and contribute through PayPal. Thank you in advance for your much needed support!

Dianne Vernon
Nixon PiE Coordinator

Heads Up Everyone

Each class will be asked to provide two volunteer parents who will be responsible for facilitating the Palo Alto district “No Nit” policy. All volunteers will attend a 30-minute training session on Thursday, December 1 at 8:15 a.m. First head check will be prior to Winter Break.

Look for the flyer in today’s Friday Folder for more information.

Meet the Teachers by Sylvia Sanders

Dream Team: Sandra Fujii and Sue Chakos, 2nd Grade Teachers

There is a dynamic duo in Room C-4. Sandra Fujii and Sue Chakos are both enthusiastic about team teaching. Each credits the other for improving her teaching craft by providing another perspective and reflective eye as they plan lessons. Two brains and two sets of experiences make it easier for them to meet individual kids' needs, and to be more flexible with the curriculum. Sue teaches on Mondays; Sandra teaches Tuesday through Friday. Though it sounds great in theory, parents sometimes worry about teacher communication when their children have two teachers. In addition to a formal weekly meeting, Sue drops by the classroom the days she is on campus as Nixon's Reading Specialist. And the two e-mail avidly about what's going on in class. There is an added perk of job sharing, says Sandra. Because she is more physically and mentally rested, she has more energy to give to the students.

Did you know that...

- Sue Chakos has worked at Nixon for 23 years?
- Sandra Fujii had hamsters, turtles, rabbits, dogs, cats, and fish as pets when she was a kid?
- Sue enjoys spending time with her husband, Robert, and their shepherd, Bella.

- Sandra and her husband, Tom, enjoy hiking, roller-blading and biking.
- Sue's 3rd grade teacher gave her extra dittos (remember those?) so she could play school with her younger brother and sister.
- Sandra and Tom have recently vacationed in Cancún, Vancouver, and Whistler.

Looking for a good book to read? Sue recommends *The Secret Life of Bees* by Sue Monk Kidd; Sandra recommends *The Lovely Bones* by Alice Sebold and anything by Amy Tan.

How about a movie? Sandra recommends *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*, *The Motorcycle Diaries*, and *As Good As It Gets*. Sue recommends *The Shawshank Redemption*, though she recently humored Robert by watching *Are We There Yet?*

Thank you, Sue and Sandra, for your hard work and enthusiasm!

Clip Box Tops for Education for Nixon!

The **Clip** program makes it simple to help earn cash for our school. Make a difference each time you go to the grocery store just by purchasing your favorite General Mills brands. Clip and earn in three easy steps...

1. Clip Box Tops

Clip Box Tops from hundreds of your favorite General Mills products found throughout your local grocery store. Get your family and friends involved! Each Box Top is worth 10¢ to our school.

2. Bring Those Box Tops to School

You can turn in your Box Tops to the front office. We will collect submitted Box Tops and send them into General Mills.

3. Nixon Elementary Earns Cash

Twice a year, General Mills will send our school a check worth 10¢ for each Box Top redeemed.

Look for Box Tops on hundreds of your favorite General Mills products.

If you have any questions please contact Liz Fendorf.

Classroom Happenings

2nd Grade Gardeners

Gardening Is So Fun! (by C-5 student E M):

We are doing a lot of gardening in this class. We saw a lot of worms, and they were so gross because it was a wet day. I saw a tomato plant that was pretty big. There was a very, very thick root in the ground in the dirt, it was like one inch thick. It was raining so hard, it was wild, and I saw a big lightning bolt in the sky. It was so dirty and muddy. I love gardening a lot!

About Gardening Tools (by C-5 student V S):

I am very lucky to do gardening every other Friday. It is fun to learn how to use different kinds of tools. We practiced how to use tools lots of times, and we now know how to use them. We tried to dig by ourselves and pull weeds and planted seeds. It is lots of fun to learn gardening.

School-wide Piano Concert

(by T A, A-1 student):

It's late in the day, and the last thing is a piano concert. Most people expect a visiting pianist from an orchestra, but surprise, it's the chess teacher, Dan Gertmenian, better known as Mr. G. Mr. G is playing piano at his sister's wedding and he needs a place to practice, and what's a better answer than Nixon School? It would be perfect. Everyone is sitting down, and Mr. G is ready to start his presentation. He starts it out by talking about the composers of the pieces he is going to play. Some are more classic composers such as Bach, but most are newer, more obscure composers. Not surprisingly, one of the composers is from his sister's country of birth, Armenia. The concert was beautiful and a wonderful, relaxing way to end the day. It had been an enjoyable concert, especially for the kids in Mr. G's chess class.

Bullying Assembly

(by I S S, A-1 student):

This previous Monday (November 7), Nixon students, in two separate age groups, met in the multipurpose room to watch two women perform a puppet show about bullying and how it is **BAD**. The two women are members of a group called "The Kids on the Block." They used Muppet-like puppets (the difference being the puppets looked human) to perform a skit. The story was about one girl who felt bad because she hadn't stopped a bully when they were bullying one of her friends. When the skit was finished, the presenters asked the audience what the students thought was a good way to help a bullied friend. Nixon students were eager to share their thoughts. One of the comments shared was "walk away and tell an adult." Apparently, it is best to try and get the victim out of a bullying situation. Some tips were to try calling the victim of the bully over when they are being teased, so they'd have a good reason to leave the depressing situation. Questions about being bullied included, "What if someone e-mails you mean things?" or "What if you are being blackmailed?" The answer was basically the same. No matter how you're bullied, tell an adult before it gets worse. A lesson we can all use in life.

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.

Beyond Nixon

ADHD Support Group

Thursday, December 8, 7:30-9:00 p.m.

25 Churchill Ave., Palo Alto

Room A

This support group focuses on issues such as how to manage school, organization, time management and study skills, IEP's, etc. Led by Janet Dafoe, Ph.D., Children's Health Council.

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.

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