

THE PINK PANTHER

H. J. KAISER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 9, 2004



PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

What a week! We certainly experienced the highs and lows of the political process, didn't we? We can look on the positive side and recognize that there was a tremendous growth in the percentage of persons registering and voting, and the democratic process still is alive! We need to continue to be vigilant about our rights and take part in the debates, letter writing and other means of getting our messages to those who currently govern.

Last week, in addition to the discussions of the election process, the electoral college and some mock elections in classrooms, we also celebrated **Dia de los Muertos**. Laura Sherman (during Orff music- grades K-3) and some of our classes visited the Oakland Museum's exhibition. The fourth and fifth graders had a visit by a Mexican artisan who demonstrated the centuries-old tradition of making sugar skulls and decorating them in honor of a deceased relative. Thanks to all the parents who helped pay for the artisan or who drove on field trips. Broadening our children's cultural awareness is an important facet of their education.

We also had a delightful assembly, sponsored by our PTA, featuring a group of Irish musicians. They demonstrated how their unique instruments were played and then played a number of Irish songs and jigs. One of fifth graders, Jasmine Hain, willingly demonstrated one of the dances with tremendous poise!

This week **Renae Briggs** is going to work with one of the fifth grade classes to show them how to clean and repair computers. Every child in

fifth grade will be taking home a computer which they have refurbished. The next scheduled day will be on December 6th for Mr. Neat's fifth graders.

We look forward to having a great turn-out on **Wednesday evening for Math Night and the annual GATE meeting**. Parents and students are encouraged to attend.

Pizza will be served between 6:00 and 6:45, a brief PTA meeting at 6:45 and then math activities in the auditorium and a speaker for the GATE meeting in the library at 7:00 p.m. Parents and students who love math are invited to help at the various stations. Let Mr. Wade or Ms. Apaydin know if you are available.



THREE-DAY WEEK; NO SCHOOL THURSDAY AND FRIDAY

The month of November is really cut up this year. Minimum days for conferencing last week, only three days of school this week (Veterans' Day and a staff development day), followed by a full week in school and then **the entire week of Thanksgiving is a vacation for the Oakland School District this year**. There will be three weeks of school in December and then vacation begins on the 18th and we return January 3, 2005.

PTA MEMBERSHIP !!

It's never too late to join the PTA! We encourage every family to help out with the membership drive and continue to send in the \$7/person membership fee. We will be sending a pledge letter to you, soon, which we hope you will carefully read and take action on.

Upcoming calendar

Thursday / Friday November 11th & 12th
Veteran's Day Holiday – School Closed for Students

Wednesday, November 10 PTA Meeting/Math Night
Wednesday, November 17 Harvest Festival and
School Site Council

Monday - Friday, November 22 - 26
Thanksgiving Holidays - School Closed

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Monday, December 6 PTA Board Meeting
December 6-17 Food and Clothing Drive
Tuesday, December 14 Winter Holiday Performance
Thursday, December 16 Winter Holiday Performance

December 20-31 Winter Recess - School Closed
School reopens January 3, 2005

MULTIPLICATION MASTERY CLUB IS BEING SPONSORED BY MRS. MCLANE

It is so clear to me how essential it is for students to know their multiplication facts with *automaticity* (a new educational phrase that translates to “knowing them by heart”). If students can master them in third grade, then the process of solving division problems, algebraic equations and working with fractions will be SO much faster and easier. The club is open to any child, and special awards will be given to those who can quickly recall their multiplication facts. Any second grader who has mastered his or her addition and subtraction facts is also invited to join in the challenge.

RESEARCH IS UNDERWAY ON REMAINING A PTA UNIT OR BECOMING A PARENT & FACULTY ORGANIZATION

If friends of yours in other schools have a successful parent teacher organization that is a 501.c3 (charitable organization) but not under the PTA umbrella, would you please contact **Susan Simonds**, PTA President, or any of the board

members. You may also contact Katie McLane. We are currently gathering information to see which organizational structure will allow us the greatest amount of autonomy and still provide us with the tax deductions and insurance for events. The results of the survey will be presented for discussion in January.

A SPECIAL RESPONSE TO THE OPEN COURT FRIENDSHIP UNIT IN READING

Third grader, Tommy Gonda, wrote about his mother as a conclusion to unit on Friendship. Pretty special when a child chooses to write about his or her parent!

“My mom did an Ironman Triathalon. She swam two miles, rode a bicycle for one hundred and sixteen miles, and ran for twenty-six miles. My estimate is that it took her twenty-six hours. After mom’s Ironman Triathalon, she was exhausted, so I gave her comfort and food. I said, “Mom, great job!” Then I was trying to tell dad to get to the hotel. After the drive to the hotel, we fell asleep. Mom looked very sleepy too. She felt much better in the morning.”

JACKETS GALORE!

We are absolutely amazed to find that there are over 150 jackets and sweaters on the rack in the foyer of the auditorium that are unclaimed. When checking for names in the jackets, I failed to find any names this weekend. If someone could come in and help sort the jackets, we would be thrilled. Please give us a call at 879-1710. Meanwhile, be sure to claim your child’s jacket for the cold weather that is expected this weekend. Thank you!



ONE WARM COAT

Brownie Troop #1877 from our own Kaiser School will be collecting "gently worn" coats, which will be donated to the East Oakland Recovery Center, in time for the colder weather season. This coat drive begins today and we will be collecting coats through the end of the month. The drop-off location is the large wardrobe box in the main hallway, decorated by the Brownies with their images of what One Warm Coat and community service mean to them. If you have any outwear at home that is in good condition but that you and your family members haven't worn for a while, consider a donation to our coat drive.

Thanks in advance for all your support of this effort. Last year, Brownie Troop #1877 collected over 90 coats for the East Oakland Recovery Center and the families that they support.



Mr. Byers: World Traveler and Teacher

Mr. Byers has traveled the world and has taught in some incredible places. He began his teaching career after spending some years as a landscaper, a waiter, and a Recreation Director in Piedmont. One of his favorite jobs was as a forklift operator in the construction group for Lucas Films. Mr. Byers worked for them during the time they were making the Star Wars

movies, which was an exciting time for the company. After completing his Teaching Credential at San Francisco State University,

Mr. Byers taught at Peralta School here in Oakland during their intersession, helping students to improve their language arts skills. It was during this time that Mr. Byers' wife, Gloria Jean Garland took a job with the United States Agency for International Development, helping countries develop small businesses. Her work took them to Bratislava, Slovakia where Mr. Byers taught in the International School there. He taught a variety of children from 3rd-9th graders and enjoyed teaching biology and singing. After a couple of years, the Byers moved back to the States and returned to Oakland where Mr. Byers taught first grade at Lincoln Elementary. It was a bilingual class, with all nineteen children speaking Cantonese as their primary language. Then, on to Budapest, Hungary for six years, where Mr. Byers taught in English at a private International school with children from Hungary, Korea, Uganda, and Germany. Mr. Byers taught everything from pre-kindergarten up to sixth grade in this school. During this time, Ms. Garland was working on a project in Human Rights Law, helping to secure equal protection under the law for Hungary's gypsies.

Upon returning to the States, they moved back into their home, which the Byers had been renting to a very eccentric man. He had been feeding the raccoons for years, so their first few weeks back in the house were interrupted by nightly visits by all the neighborhood raccoons expecting their dinner!!

Mr. Byers taught at Highland Elementary School before coming to Kaiser. He likes Kaiser's great teaching staff, parent involvement, the supportive staff and the tone that Ms. McLane sets at our school. He has found his transition very easy.

Mr. Byers is constantly amazed at how quickly students learn and what things they pick up first. He enjoys using songs in his teaching, which help kids remember what they learn. What Mr. Byers loves most about teaching is the uniqueness of each child. He likes the fact that his students are open-minded and too young to be jaded. He feels strongly that his young students need a positive experience early in their school years so that they stay engaged in learning. To a kindergartner, one year is a fifth of their entire life, and Mr. Byers believes that the impact that he makes on them during kindergarten leaves an imprint forever. He takes this responsibility very seriously.

We welcome Mr. Byers to Kaiser Elementary School and are excited to have him join our wonderful faculty!!

**Kaiser's Walk-A-Thon:
A Walk on the Wild Side**

Well the day was a little cloudy on Saturday, October 30th, but that did not dampen the spirits of our 137 walkers who walked **a total of 2,931 laps supported by 1,369 sponsors, raising an estimated \$17,749.72** for our school!!! What a fabulous job everyone did!! Special recognition to **Mr. Byer's** class, with the highest level of participation, at **72.22%**, **Ms. Pletcher's** class with **65.22%** and **Mr. Stenger's** class with **63.13%**. Congratulations to **Ms. Reese's** class who **walked the most number of laps at 481**, and Ms. Pletcher's class following close behind at 471. Special thanks to Mr. Rust's class, at the highest number of sponsors, at 192, followed by Mr. Neat's class at 159. And to our top pledge earners: Ms. Reese's class at \$2838.65, Ms. Pletcher at \$2176.80 and Mr. Rust at \$2176.80.

Remember to get those pledges in today!! **All pledges need to be received by Friday, November 19th** for students and their classes to be eligible for the awards ceremony. Pledges should be turned into Robin or your child's teacher.

THANKS TO EVERYONE FOR A GREAT WALK-A-THON!!

*****Reruns - Blasts from the past!*****

**PARENT POTLUCK AT
OAKLAND YOUTH CHORUS**

Wednesday, November 10, 6:30-7:45 at 2501 Harrison (at 27th, in First Congregational Church, next to Westlake Middle School) **Oakland Youth Chorus** will bring parents together from all of the schools OYC serves. This is the parents' opportunity to learn about their children's music classes, meet (continued page 3) the teachers, and find out more about all of OYC programs for students 5-21 years old. Parents should bring an ethnic dish of their choice to make this a festive multicultural event. OYC artists will do demonstrations. Students welcome. **Please RSVP** with OYC Operations Manager, **Angela Dant 287-9700** or through the invitation in the monthly OYC parent envelopes.

AFTER-SCHOOL COORDINATORS AND PRINCIPALS INVITED, TOO!!!!

Emergency Cards Needed Now!

The following families need to return their emergency cards to the office immediately:

Neijah Cox
Hannah Caldwell
Arther and David Suruki
Marquis Taylor
Jacquez Clifton

**(THIS IS WORTH ANOTHER MENTION)
PLEASE DON'T MOVE THE ROPE!**

There is **limited parking for staff members** at Kaiser and we must reserve all the spaces behind the buildings for staff parking only. We understand how frustrating it is to have to park and walk up the hill, but there is no other alternative. We have had a few near misses with cars driving behind the auditorium. Our children exit to the playground from the auditorium, using the access road behind our buildings. **Thank you for your help!**