



The Pink Panther

Henry J. Kaiser, Jr. Elementary School

25 South Hill Court, Oakland, California 94618 (510) 879-1710

School & Community Newsletter April 4, 2006

Message from Principal Katie McLane

Dear Families,

I know that a lot of you are closely following the district and OEA negotiations and I'm still optimistic that some fair contract can be reached before the announced teacher job action on April 20th. We have 17 more days to negotiate. Everyone will need to make their own decision about what to do with your children that day, but I have been directed by the district to assure you that if your children are here, that they will be safe. There has been a far greater effort put forth by the district to have back-up plans including lessons, emergency teachers, etc. but hopefully, none of these will have to be used.

There is updated information on the OEA website <http://oaklandea.com> and on the district website under <http://webportal.ousd.k12.ca.us/proposal>. The OEA's phone hotline is 763-0900 and Oakland's Communications Office is 879-8242. I know that the district is also mailing information to you. We will plan to update our www.kaiserelementaryschool.com website as well as the school's phone message when you call 879-1710.

Thanks to all of the K-3 families who were able to attend the Orff Spring Music concert last Tuesday evening. On Monday, April 3rd, our 4th and 5th graders performed with students from Munck and Peralta here at Kaiser. There was some press coverage for the Arts in Education presentation at Kaiser in the Montclairion. Tuesday, we are attending a meeting at the Oakland Museum from 3-6 to hear about the application process for another year of funding for the Arts Anchor program at Kaiser. Hopefully, we will be funded!

While the concept of retirement is beginning to become a reality for me, I have to admit that it was a bit traumatic to go to the Social Security Office and apply for Medicare! Turning sixty-five has its challenges, among them, which health plans to sign up for. Fortunately, some of my friends, as well as my former husband, are busily researching their options, so I'm getting more advice than I'm prepared to act upon!! Guess it's a good thing that Spring break is next week (April 10-14) so that I can do some more research!

- Katie

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- *Health & Safety: easier than ever, but harder than you think*
- *Getting Ready for Change: good or bad*
- *Next Year's Leadership: all about You*
- *Thinking Ahead for the Kids: Kaiser is just the start*
- *Key Event Date Reminders: right places, right times*

Getting In The Know

Save the Date...
for Katie's retirement party on
Saturday, June 3, 11-4 p.m. @
Kaiser School.

Also donations will be accepted for
Katie. Please see Robin.

Also...
Kaiser Alumnae-
updated addresses needed

If you are aware of Kaiser families who
have moved since they left Kaiser, we
would like you to give us their updated
addresses so that the "guest list" can
be developed for the **June 3rd party.**

AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS

LEGO CLASS FOR GRADES K-1
still space for a few more students

The LEGO Pre-Engineering class for
Kindergarteners and first graders has
new session dates and location:
March 28 - June 6 in Portable A (Ms.
Apaydin's room) on Tuesdays from
3:00-4:30.

Contact Katy DeVecchi to request a form
or with any questions: 336-9679 or
katyhunterd@sbcglobal.net.

How to use the Pink Panther

To include your story or information in your
school newsletter: check with Katie McLane, then
forward to both editors by 5:00 p.m. on Sundays.
cara_eva@hotmail.com and
kbradley@ix.netcom.com

KAISER CALENDAR

DATE / DAY	EVENT
April 10 - 14	SPRING RECESS
April 22	Earth Day Gardening Day at Kaiser
May 1- 11	STAR testing for grades 2, 3, 4 and 5
May 6 th	Walkathon
May 12 th	Trip to Monterey Bay Aquarium for all 1 st , 2 nd and 3 rd graders (arranged by Amy Haruyama with buses provided through science grants)

How to Reach Kaiser

Our phone number is (510) 879-1710
(includes a 24 hour message service).

Principal Katie McLane's email address is
Catherine.Mclane@ousd.k12.ca.us

How to use the Kaiser School Website

For our public information, be sure to visit and browse
www.kaiserelementaryschool.com and to participate
in the school community group go to,
http://groups.yahoo.com/group/kaiserelementaryschool_group/ and join!!

Traffic & Weather Report

What's a "Commuter School"? Well, for one thing, it's a place where most people are going to drive up instead of walk up, and a traffic jam at the front door is more likely than a bicycle rack.

For another thing, at this time of year it's a place that— unfortunately too often — you get to by driving in a hurry through bad weather carrying the most important thing we have — the kids. **Even if most accidents are somebody else's fault, the causes equal danger to you.** We take it all for granted, which is the beginning of our creating risk to ourselves and to others. Because Kaiser's special qualities depend so much on your presence at the school, we can't ask you enough to **BE CAREFUL on your way.**

On the other hand, **wait until you see how easy we have it:**

1885

Daimler & Benz

Working independently, Germans Gottlieb Daimler and Karl Benz develop successful gas engines. Daimler's engine powers a motorcycle. Benz's powers a three-wheeled vehicle.

1888

That "Useless" Invention

By now, Karl Benz had been testing his car on the road for three years -- at night, to avoid spectators. Finally, in broad daylight, in 1888, Benz's wife, Berta, decides to take the car on its first long journey while Karl is asleep.

She brings their two young sons and drives 62 miles from Mannheim, Germany, to her home in Pforzheim. She is not defeated by mishaps along the way. She clears a fuel line with a hairpin. She uses her garters to correct an electrical short. Her sons help push the car up hills. A helpful blacksmith takes up the slack on the chains. Farmers along the route are awed by this noisy, snorting horseless carriage. She then turns around and makes the journey home.

Pop Quiz!

Question: When going out for a ride in a horseless carriage, which of the following was essential?

Answer: Goggles, hat and rain gear

Quality of roads was not keeping pace with the development of the motorized car. Cars with roofs or doors were a rarity. Driver and passengers were advised to cover up from head to toe because of road dust and exhaust fumes. A well-dressed woman was sure to soil her outfit -- and her femininity, particularly when the tires went flat. It was rare when an auto outing did not include at least one tire change.

Inclement weather meant considerable discomfort, especially if the car had no folding top (that cost extra). Sometimes, people had to pay passers-by to help dig the vehicle out of a muddy hole. Ironically, cars often needed REAL horsepower -- teams of horses from nearby farms.

Credit: <http://www.readingeagle.com/krt/tech/cars/html/print.htm>

FLU SEASON!!! -- HEALTH CHECK

DID YOU KNOW: new research announced last week says that aside from playgrounds (egad!) some of ***the dirtiest places*** in public that we might put our hands are

- (1) *The computer mouse on a public computer (like at a cyber café)*
- (2) *An ordinary One Dollar bill!*
- (3) *The shopping carts at the grocery store*

*Unfortunately, the home is pretty challenging too, led by kitchen cutting boards! See another list of ***all the scariest places inside and out*** at http://www.parenthood.com/articles.html?article_id=2088*

Parents & Teachers

What is the PTA? -- Have you ever wondered what the PTA board does at Kaiser?

You hear the name, you write the checks, but do you really know who these people are and what they're doing? The PTA board consists of several positions all held by parent volunteers. They meet once a month and work throughout the year to facilitate the programs sponsored by the general PTA. There are positions available for many different skills, interests, and levels of time commitment.

The PTA board members:

- coordinate after school programs
- organize pot lucks and assemblies
- maintain the Kaiser website (www.kaiserelementary.org)
- edit the Pink Panther
- coordinate room parents and phone trees
- run a PTA membership drive
- create the school directory
- coordinate the various fundraisers
- create the budget
- manage the incoming and outgoing funds
- collect and organize emergency supplies
- have fun working with other Kaiser parents and staff!

The PTA is you! Each and every parent plays an imperative role in the success of our school. Your commitment to your child's education is what allows us to continue to move forward and build our rich and nurturing community. There are many different ways to express that commitment. For some it may be as simple as driving the extra mile or 20 to get your child to school each day. For some it may mean spending time in the classroom or making a few calls in the evening. You may even be able to help with a fundraiser or just contribute to one.

Whatever you are able to offer makes a difference in the life of all the children at Kaiser.

We are currently looking for people to fill PTA board positions for next year. We will be holding elections in May. If you are interested in serving on the board please contact Lisa Downes at 532-5913 or lisadownes@sbcglobal.net.

Next Week: Where Do Your PTA Dollars Go?

Looking for Kaiser PTA Board Members for 2006-2007!

We are currently looking for people interested in serving on the PTA board next year. It is a great way to become more involved in our wonderful Kaiser community. We are specifically looking to fill positions for:

Assembly Coordinator
Walk-a-thon Chair
Auction Chair

Treasurer
Parliamentarian

Site/Safety/Environment Chair
Staff Appreciation Chair

If you think you might be interested in these, or any other position, please contact Lisa Downes (lisadownes@sbcglobal.net, 532-5913), Lesley Clark (lesleyrc@aol.com, 531-0114), or the office.

Does Your Child Want to Continue in the Arts?

This past weekend I had a chance to see Kaiser alum, Tyler Stansbury, perform in Skyline High School's "Fiddler on the Roof." Tyler first attended Bret Harte, then the Oakland School of the Arts High School (charter school started by Jerry Brown). He has returned to the public schools and is thrilled with the opportunities in the arts at Skyline. After the performance, I waited at the stage door to congratulate him and he was effusive about the wonderful friends he's met at Skyline.

As a former counselor for the Performing Arts students at Skyline, I remember fondly their amazing camaraderie. They kept track of each other so that they were all successful. Everyone who began as a tenth grader, graduated with his or her class three years later! That is one of the powerful elements of being in the band, the orchestra, the dance troupes, the stage crew or performing on stage.

We hope that our children will take their experiences that they've gained at Kaiser and carry them with them through the rest of their educational voyage. It is always a joy to have our former students come back and share their memories.

Kids Take The Page

Seven Questions with Robin Sasada

Let's face it - we're about to go through a whopping change at Kaiser. No one is likely to miss Principal McLane more than her full-time teammate Robin... But lucky for us Robin plans to stay!

How long have you been at Kaiser?

This is my 9th year at Kaiser! I'll be here at least next year too, to help the new principal with the transition. I look forward to staying after that, too, with a great principal.

Most of our time is spent with teachers. But, what does your job include?

My job includes answering the phone, taking care of problems/paperwork for Mrs. McLane, staff, parents and students. Facilitating the smooth running of Kaiser School.

Have you ever had a different job at Kaiser?

For the first 6 months I was the attendance clerk, and I did a job share including Hillcrest. But then I got my current job with Mrs. McLane and have had this same one ever since.

Do you work in the office during the weekends, and if you do, what kinds of things go on?

Sometimes... when I do work on weekends the main reason is because nothing much is going on around school, so it's the best time for Mrs. McLane and me to catch up on all the stuff that we can't do during a regular day because of all the things usually going on helping everyone including parents...

What do you like doing best when working with kids?

I like talking to the kids the best. You wouldn't believe the insight of most of the students. They are wise in so many ways and sometimes their solution is so much simpler than anything an adult can think of! They get right to the basics without all the extra stuff that adults get tied up in.

What's the difference between Kaiser and other schools you've worked at?

Kaiser's staff and family make it the best school where I've worked. It seems that everyone is on the same page and educating the child is the goal for all of us. We also believe that school should be a safe place for a child and that there shouldn't be put downs or picking on someone because they're "different". It's an incredible sense of community, and everyone cares about every child, not just their own or the ones in their classroom.

What's your favorite Kaiser special event (like Walkathons, Spirit Week, and stuff)?

I really don't have a favorite event. They all are very special in that they show how well our community gets along. Kaiser is special that it truly has a sense of family, so any event is fun to attend. BUT... Walkathon is really fun. An all day event and low stress!

Just for fun Bonus question: Guess what the speed limit in New York City was in 1895? 5 miles an hour? (Close! It was 8 miles per hour.)

Student reporters: Campbell (4th gr.) & Xia (Grade K). Hey, let's get more reporters!

Top Seven Reasons To Avoid Teenagers

1. **COLLEGE** - The most significant, and often the most crippling, expense. The 2005-2006 average cost of tuition at a four-year public university will set you back \$5,491, according to the College Board. Include all of the nontuition expenses (room and board, books, fees, etc.) and that figure climbs to \$12,127. Tuition at a four-year private institution averages \$21,235, with total charges increasing that figure to \$29,026. Financial experts advise parents to start saving as early as possible. A consultation with a financial planning professional can get you going down the right path.

2. **SPORTS** - It's not just the uniform and the registration fees that make sports costly. Some parents, whether trying to develop the next Andre Agassi or give their kids an edge in college admissions, spend thousands of dollars each year on private coaching and personalized training programs for their teens. Training facilities like Athletes Advantage, a 24,000-square-foot training center in Wellington, Fla., offer high school kids the opportunity to work with a private trainer for \$65 per hour, spend an hour in the batting cages for \$45 or hire a baseball pitcher for \$32 per hour. Being on a traveling team can also add significantly to the expense. "With gasoline prices steadily climbing, it's not unusual to dump \$150 or more into the tank within three days," says Amy Grisak of Kalispell, Mont., whose stepson plays ice hockey on a traveling team. On top of that, there's another \$125-plus for hotel accommodations and easily \$125 for meals.

3. **EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES** - Whether your child is into computers, music, art, theater, debate, chess or learning a foreign language, those activities can cost a pretty penny. Parents often don't realize just how much an activity will cost until their child is deeply immersed in it. And then it's difficult to deprive them of something they have grown to enjoy. Private lessons, registration fees, equipment, costumes or specialized clothing can all strain the family budget. And, if there are several children in the family, each of whom has two or three extracurricular interests, look out.

4. **FOOD** - Growing bodies demand food. A lot of food. "I have a 6-foot-2-inch 14-year-old boy who embraces a scorched-Earth eating style and leaves nothing behind," says Carole Lynch of Jacksonville, N.C. It's not necessarily expensive foods, it's just the quantity that teenagers pack away on any given day.

5. **DENTAL AND ORTHODONTIC CARE** - The cost of braces, depending on where you live and the type of orthodontic work that needs to be done, can range in cost from \$3,000 to well over \$7,000. But, while treatment can be expensive, without it many young people can develop serious oral health problems such as tooth decay, diseased gums and tooth loss. Compounding the expense is the fact that dental insurance is frequently not offered by employers and, if offered, is often limited in its coverage. Check to see if your employer offers a health-care spending account to help save for out-of-pocket costs.

6. **CLOTHES** - Lynch says after food and dental work, their family's next biggest expense has been clothing. "My son literally grows from one day to the next, especially his feet, and sneakers are expensive!" she says. Although you can't avoid buying new clothes for a growing body, teenagers don't need to have an extensive wardrobe of designer clothes. Instead of buying two or three new pairs of jeans, buy one and put the extra cash into savings.

7. **SENIOR YEAR** - Many parents are so focused on where to find the money for college that they overlook the price tag associated with preparing for and making the transition from high school to college. Paying for the class yearbook, a graduation cap and gown rental, the senior prom, a senior photo package (which could cost up to \$400), graduation parties, and graduation presents adds up quickly. Then, there are the costs associated with applying to colleges. "Ten college applications at \$75 a pop, plus fees for taking the SAT, SAT score reporting, transcripts, and mileage, airfare and hotel accommodations to visit just a few of my son's college choices just about put us into shock," says Nancy Hall of Madison, Conn. One big-ticket item growing in popularity is the SAT prep course, which many teens (and parents) feel is a necessity to boost their scores and increase their chances of getting into the school of their choice. Private educational organizations such as Kaplan Test Prep and Admissions offers a six-week SAT prep class for \$800 to \$1,000 (depending on your geographic location), private tutoring, which could run up to \$100 per hour, and online classes, which will set you back about \$400 per course.

Credit: *LYNNE TICKNOR, BANKRATE.COM, in The Star Ledger (NJ) Apr 2, 2006*

<http://www.nj.com/business/ledger/index.ssf?/base/business-3/1143956604260550.xml&coll=1&thispage=1>