



# The Pink Panther

## Henry J. Kaiser, Jr. Elementary School

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

SCHOOL & COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

JUNE 4, 2007

**Dear Kaiser Families,**

Since we had our music performances earlier this year, we will not be having a regular Open House. Instead, the faculty has put up bulletin boards showing examples of student work. Last week I attached descriptions of those boards to this newsletter. Please come and see the student exhibition!

Ms. Reese is retiring. You're all invited to the reception this coming Saturday, June 9, from 4:00-6:00. True to form, she is going out with a bang! She has guided her class in the publication of a book, Through Our Eyes: Conversations with Kids about Topics That Matter. You're also invited to the book launching at the Claremont Resort and Spa on Monday, June 11, from 5:30-7:00, to celebrate with Ms. Reese and her class. Wow!

When I read the results of the Use Your Voice Survey, I felt a little like Sally Fields at the Oscars. You like us, you really like us! Here are a few highlights of the survey:

- 95% agreed with the statement, "Other students are respectful of my child's cultural background."
- 96% agreed with the statement, "At school, my child gets to learn about different cultures."
- 94% agreed with the statement, "There is a culture of high expectations for everyone at the school."
- 95% agreed with the statement, "This school feels like a caring and supportive environment."
- 94% agree with the statement, "The school does a good job of teaching skills and knowledge my child needs for college." 82% agree with the statement, "The school does a good job of teaching my child about how to get into college."
- 94% agree with the statement, "I have attended teacher-parent night or other school meetings at least once this year."
- 86% agree with the statement, "My child's teachers include me in decisions that affect him or her."
- 84% agree with the statement, "My child receives challenging and rigorous instruction in his or her classes."
- 96% agree with the statement, "The principal keeps the school focus on academic achievement."
- 91% are satisfied overall with the child's teachers.
- 94% are satisfied overall with the child's school principal.
- 94% are satisfied overall with the child's school.

The level of commitment and giving that happens here is constantly amazing. Your support of what we do here comes back in the form of a wonderful learning community, so it's all worth it.

***Mel Stenger, Principal***

# Getting In The Know

## Please Join Us Friday, June 8 at 6 p.m. For an End-of-Year Potluck!

Come say goodbye to the friends you won't see over the summer, and meet the new families who will be joining us in the fall. And don't forget your dancing shoes. The children have been learning folk dance with Miss Laura and now a friend of hers is coming to teach the rest of the family. Also performing is our African dancers with Pope Flynn.

Please bring a favorite dish to share.

We look forward to sharing the evening with you as we say goodbye to another fabulous year.

### ***Say It With Flowers!***

*Please send a flower to your child's teacher and to the other staff members this week. You might also want to guide your child into writing a short thank you note. This end-of-the-year gesture was started several years ago, and helps us all to end the school year on a positive note.*

### **How to be in the *Pink Panther***

To include your story or information in your school newsletter: forward your news, questions, or article to both of the editors by 5 p.m. on Sundays via email

**carriemail2001@yahoo.com – Carrie Shepherd**  
**jolie@earthlink.net – Jolie McRae**

### **2006-2007 Pink Panther Staff:**

Copy Editor: Wendy Harcarik  
Pink Panther Co-Editors: Carrie Shepherd  
Jolie McRae

## KAISER CALENDAR

| DATE / DAY   | EVENT  |
|--------------|--|
| June 4       | GATE meeting, 6 p.m. Anyone with an interest in learning more about the Gifted And Talented Education program is encouraged to attend and help plan next year's program. |
| June 5       | Teacher Appreciation Day (Haruyama, Gorham, Rust)  |
| June 8       | End-of-year/new family potluck, 6 p.m.   |
| June 11 - 13 | Early release days 1:25 p.m.   |
| June 12      | 5 <sup>th</sup> grade promotion, 1 p.m.  |
| June 13      | Last day of school   |
| August 27    | 2007-08 classes begin  |

### **How to Reach Kaiser School**

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

To participate in the school community group,  
go to (and join) this website:

**[http://groups.yahoo.com/group/kaiserelementaryschool\\_group/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/kaiserelementaryschool_group/)**

### **Pink Panther's PTA Sponsors:**

PTA President: Lisa Downes  
VPs Communication: Kim Carl  
Kiki Bradley

# Kaiser Kiosk

**Saturday, June 9**

## **Oakland Family Fun Day**

Oakland is kicking off summer with free admission for Oakland families (with ID) to Oakland Museum of California, Chabot Space & Science Center, Children's Fairyland and the Oakland Zoo on Saturday, June 9.

**Oakland Museum of California:** Visit the breathtaking exhibition *Yosemite: Art of an American Icon*. From 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., the museum hosts the Oakland Youth Arts Festival, sponsored by the Oakland Unified School District. Enjoy family art projects, films, a drumming circle, mural making and dance and musical performances. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**Chabot Space & Science Center:** Wander through a kaleidoscope of whirling galaxies and stars to the outer reaches of the universe... Marvel at the wonders of our neighbors, the Moon and Mars... Explore natural processes and patterns like craters, volcanoes, and atmospheric turbulence. 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.

**Children's Fairyland:** It's Literacy Day! Bilingual storytelling and arts and crafts and special activities provided by KQED.

**Oakland Zoo:** More than 400 native and exotic animals from around the world. Special feedings: elephants at 11:45 a.m., meerkats at 1:45 p.m., and alligators at 2 p.m.

Check institution websites for addresses and operating hours.

## **We need the help of some builders!**

Some new furniture for our campus arrived this week. We have some sport benches, park benches and planter/bench combinations. We need help assembling them, placing them around the school and bolting them to the concrete. Bring your tool kit and strong backs!

Wednesday, June 6, at 6:30 p.m. Should take an hour to an hour and a half. Not limited to men-folk!

## **Don't Forget: Minimum Days Next Week**

**June 13 is the final day for students.** June 11, 12, and 13, are all minimum days. School will be dismissed at 1:25 p.m. Please make arrangements to pick up your child on time those three days.

## **Library Summer Reading Program Begins June 9**

Oakland Public Library invites kids 13 and under to *Get a Clue @ Your Library* this summer. That's the theme of the 2007 Summer Reading Game, a chance for our city's youngest sleuths to read their way to great prizes from June 9 through August 11.

Drop by a branch library to sign up. Pre-readers can participate by having someone read to them. Children are encouraged to read anything they want for the program, so they can develop their own interests and a love of reading.

This year's participants can earn free admission tickets to the Oakland Museum of California, Lawrence Hall of Science, Children's Fairyland and the Oakland Ice Center. Additionally, anyone who completes the game will qualify for a raffle to win more prizes, such as tickets to Oakland A's baseball games, the Alameda/Oakland Ferry, Chabot Space & Science Center and more.

For a full list of Summer Reading programs, please visit [www.oaklandlibrary.org](http://www.oaklandlibrary.org).

## FOOD FOR MRS. REESE'S RETIREMENT PARTY

Attention Kaiser Families: I am organizing the food for Mrs. Reese's retirement party. I am trying to tap into the incredible talent of our families (as we all know from our potlucks, Kaiser families are amazing cooks!) and avoid the cost of catering. So for all of you that would like to help me in this effort, please contact me and let me know what you will be bringing. I'm thinking that simple finger foods will be best (mini-quiches, crudités with dip, fruit plate, bruschetta, cheese platter w/ bread & crackers, etc.). There will be cake, so we'll focus on appetizer-type foods. The party is on Saturday (this Saturday, June 9th), here at the school, from 4-6. I will be there at 2PM, helping with set up and accepting food drop-offs. Please contact me if you need to arrange for an earlier drop-off. I can be reached at 336-9679 or 703-9679(C) or at [katyhunterd@sbcglobal.net](mailto:katyhunterd@sbcglobal.net). Thanks for your help!

Katy DeVecchi

## Graduation Thoughts: "What Matters" vs. "What Counts"

Incoming emails during May and June almost always include news that some of our own kids are graduating from somewhere.

About a year ago, I had the luck of being chosen as an on-the-air caller during a listener's dial-in portion of an excellent Bay Area NPR radio show called "Forum with Michael Krasny." Michael is one of these guys who has an encyclopedic intellect, magically limitless time to read every new book, an amazing personal presence as an interviewer, and best of all, a killer combination of humor and humanism. He set aside one entire show to attend to the topic, "What advice would you give to the graduates today?"

When I called in, the pre-screener committee liked the comment that I proposed making on the air, and they connected me to Michael. For the next five minutes, we talked over the air about "The difference between what matters versus what counts."

The heart of my point, which Michael helped me to zero in on, is that increasingly we train our kids to measure up to "objective" standards that leave them working for "grades" like certain levels of recognition, money, or rank. Too often it's done hypercompetitively (for kids who can stand that), and often with the insidious presumption that these measurements condone a class system—in which not being in or near the top is either not okay (you'll just be less valuable) or is okay (you don't need to look into other value systems).

Both of these horrifying positions ignore the need for a person to make heat-of-the-moment critically analytical decisions based on ethics, community, insight and foresight (what matters) instead of just on the double-headed pre-approval of authority and technique (what counts). What could be more fundamental, to an understanding of the triumph over arbitrary discrimination, than to understand that "what matters" is more important than what is so often arbitrarily imposed on us as being "what counts"...

Our youngest kids are on a path already. Where will they actually head? Down the road, give me a high school grad or a college grad who is out to make a Better Quality of Life instead of a Higher Standard of Living. Someone who is not afraid to be graded, but is not afraid to grade the grading system too. Someone who can tell the difference between following orders (law) and doing the right thing (justice). Between romance (I love the way you make me feel) and responsibility (I love the way I make you feel). Between finishing the old (graduation) and beginning the new (commencement)."

—Malcolm Ryder