



The Pink Panther

Henry J. Kaiser, Jr. Elementary School

25 South Hill Court, Oakland, California 94618 (510) 549-4900

SCHOOL & COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 17, 2008

Dear Kaiser Families,

It's the week before Thanksgiving break (and Friday's a minimum day!). It's the time for some reflection on gratitude, thinking about our accomplishments and how our lives have been graced. I know some of the teachers are leading their students through the process of discussing and writing about gratitude and the things they are grateful for. You can also take this time as an opportunity to guide your own children in developing their sense of thankfulness.

That's usually what I write about the week before Thanksgiving, but this year something else is on my mind. It's about letting gratitude transform us. It seems like a simple thing to say "thank you" to someone, to appreciate what the other person has done for you, given to you. If we let ourselves stop and think about it, the experience of gratitude can be a point of change and transformation. A few years ago there was a bumper sticker that said, "Practice senseless acts of beauty and random acts of kindness." When they happen those "acts of kindness" disturb our thinking. We may become confused at what is happening. We may wonder why someone would choose us to be the recipient. We may even become suspicious of the giver.

About that time I was in line at the toll booth for the Bay Bridge (before FasTrak). When I got up to the toll taker she waved me on, saying the person in front of me had already paid my toll. Wow! What an experience! I tried to catch up with them, but they were gone. For a mere \$3 that other driver gave me a thrill that lasted weeks. I told many others about it and relived the joy repeatedly and I did it myself several times.

Sometimes gratitude can be the start of doing good for other people. When we experience thankfulness we learn about the generosity of others firsthand. I've attached a wonderful article about a woman who challenged herself to do a good deed each day for 50 days. Take a look and get inspired. She didn't come from a particularly religious background and she wasn't living luxuriously. What the article doesn't go into is why she chose to do what she did. Chances are Lisa would say something like, "I want to give back to the community." We've all heard that before from individuals doing selfless acts to help others. They feel grateful, thankful, and it inspires them to give to others who in turn appreciate what's been done, who then go out and show generosity....and the cycle goes on. If we let it, if we support it, if we choose to continue it.

Where do we begin? I read recently that we rehearse our way into our beliefs. It was said in reference to getting children to become students, that we need to convince them to act like successful students and they will soon believe they are, and that will lead to achievement. Well, it's not that simple, but you get the point. The same is true with the gratitude-generosity cycle. We don't need to feel particularly grateful to start acting generous, but the strange thing is, we will start to feel grateful by acting generous. One of those wonderful paradoxes of the human heart!

There is so much to be thankful for. Act generously! Have a wonderful week off!

Mel Stenger, Principal

Getting In The Know

Mark Your Calendars:

We have a minimum day this Friday and then Thanksgiving vacation is the entire week of November 24. See you all again on December 1.

Last year we hosted a middle school information night at Kaiser. This year it will be at Chabot Elementary on December 15 from 7-9 p.m. RSVP by calling 879-1060.

Middle School Information Night

12/15/08, from 7-9 p.m.
in Chabot Elementary's Auditorium

Hear information about these schools:

- Bret Harte Middle School
- Claremont Middle School
- Edna Brewer Middle School
- Montera Middle School

How to Reach Kaiser School

Our phone number is **(510) 549-4900**
(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>

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 e-mail:

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

Please put "Pink Panther" in the subject of your email to ensure that it is not deleted accidentally!

KAISER CALENDAR

DATE / DAY	EVENT
Nov. 18	SSC Meeting
Nov. 19	Picture Retake Day
Nov. 19	PTA Board Meeting
Nov. 21	Minimum Day
Nov. 24-28	NO SCHOOL
Dec. 3	Kindergarten Info Night at Kaiser, 6 p.m.
Dec. 15	Middle School Info Night at Chabot Elementary, 7-9 p.m.

Know Any Future Kaiser Students?

There will be an information meeting for kindergarten on Wednesday, December 3, at 6 p.m. Please tell interested friends and family.

The Pink Panther is also available at www.KaiserElementary.org.

Pink Panther's PTA Sponsors

PTA President: Janice Murphy

Pink Panther Staff

Co-editors: Jolie McRae & Carrie Shepherd
Copy editor: Wendy Harcarik

Kaiser Kiosk

Claremont Middle School Information Night

12/13/08, from 6:30-8 pm
in the Claremont Band Hall
5750 College Ave.

Hear detailed information about Claremont
Middle School.

Auction Thanks from Mel

*A big **Thank You** goes out to all you volunteers who gave time and energy to make our Benefit Auction a success! Last week I omitted several people who really deserve to be named. Monica Lannon did a fabulous job on the decorations, changing the boxy room into a party palace! Liz and Bill Hall were in charge of the bar, which so many people appreciated! Leticia Avalos prepared the food—thp, thp, thp—that's me licking my fingers! And Valerie and Matt Rogers conducted the checkout, a very crucial part of the whole process.*

Thank you all!

—Mel Stenger

Hooray for PTA Movie Night!

Our first PTA Movie Night was a big success! The multipurpose room was packed with kids, parents, alumni and families for a presentation of *Kung Fu Panda*. We were happily surprised by how many families took part and the spirit and community of the event was heartwarming. It was a fun night to remember! Thank you to all the volunteers who helped to create this special evening. We hope to have another Movie Night soon.

Kaiser Elementary 2009-2010 Open Houses and Kindergarten Informational Visits

Kaiser Elementary is hosting its annual Prospective Parents Open Houses on Wednesday, December 3, 2008 and Wednesday, January 7, 2009, from 6-7:30 p.m. Parents interested in looking at the school for their entering grade school children are welcome. Kaiser serves a K-5 population.

Kindergarten Informational Visits started on November 4. Continuing visits will be held on Tuesdays and Wednesdays with the earliest visits beginning at 9 a.m. and the latest visits at 11:30 a.m. To schedule a classroom visit, RSVP to Robin Sasada, administrative assistant, at 510.549.4900 or robin.sasada@ousd.k12.ca.us.

Kaiser Kiosk

PARENTS **WE NEED YOUR HELP!**

We have created three new PTA positions that we need to fill as soon as possible:

Assistant to the Financial Secretary: Our current Financial Secretary, Cheryl Ting, is greatly in need of someone who can help her organize, categorize and deposit our PTA checks. With two people doing the job together, your time commitment should not be too great, but you would greatly help streamline our operations.

Community Liaison: We need someone who can be the go-between for Kaiser School and the neighborhood and the Oakland community in general. This person would be responsible for attending, when possible, bi-monthly school board town hall meetings, as well as OUSD meetings that involve topics pertinent to the Kaiser school community. He or she also would communicate with the neighborhood about any issues of concern as they relate to, for example, parking on the street, school activities, noise, etc. This person would report to the PTA board any issues of which we need to be aware.

Wellness Coordinator: There is a growing demand from the OUSD that schools maintain certain nutritional standards, and this includes any food sold at PTA functions. Our coordinator would work with the PTA to help improve the quality of food served as well as make suggestions on how we can help our students live healthier lifestyles. The coordinator also would attend bi-monthly OUSD wellness meetings and report back to the PTA.

If you are able to take on any of these positions, or just want to receive more information on what the jobs entail, please contact PTA president, Janice Murphy, at (510) 482-5453, or e-mail her at Janice-Murphy@SBCGlobal.net. We need your involvement to keep Kaiser School and its PTA going strong!

PTA MEMBERSHIPS—THE RESULTS ARE IN!

The pizza party winners are Ms. Araki's class with 90% and Ms. McGhee's class with 20 memberships. Congratulations!!!!
We now have 240 members, which is 15 more than last year. Thank you for joining and supporting our wonderful school.

—*Joyce Wessling*