

Mt. Diablo Elementary School

The Eagle's Press

Issue 3 — November 2008

Principal's Message

Dear Mt. Diablo Elementary School Community,

This is an exciting time of year with fall activities and upcoming holidays to enjoy with family and friends.

Our school community is thriving, and students seem very happy at MDES. Our Peaceful Playground improvements have been received enthusiastically by students who engage in Four Square, tetherball, Wall Ball, Fun Hoop, kickball, hula hoops, jump rope, basketball, random dot activities, circle games, and much more during recess and PE time. In addition, the Concord Rotary Club painted a beautiful map of the United States on our upper playground, which is used daily by students and will be for many years to come. We are extremely grateful for this community service project and encourage our students to do good deeds in our community and society, as well.

Our new restroom facility on the upper playground is complete. While

our "normal" playground activities were temporarily disrupted by the construction, it was well worth the inconvenience. The students have a brand spanking new, state of the art restroom facility, and they were lined up with excitement on the first day of operation as if they were going to a blockbuster movie!

Our Noon League sports and enrichment program will begin in November, starting with soccer and football on Tuesdays and Thursdays and fun activities every other Friday during lunch recess. Basketball and baseball will be implemented later, and the Friday activities will include such things as relay races, hula hoop activities, punt/pass/kick competition, parachute activities, and more. Many thanks go to Bill Calkins who will be directing the program, and he may be contacting you to volunteer. You may also call

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PFC President's Perspective

Hello Everyone,

The PFC has been busy during the 1st quarter in an effort to get the school year off to a great start. One of the first events we really wanted to hit the ground running with was the Gift Wrap Fundraiser. We owe a big thank you to Linda Martin, her volunteers, the MDE teachers, stu-

dents and families for all of their hard work. We could not have done it without them. Unfortunately, our preliminary figures are showing that the gift wrap sales were only half of what we were anticipating. We hope to make up the difference with future fundraisers.

(Continued on page 2)

Our Mission

Mt. Diablo Elementary School is a learning community that strives to educate the mind and to encourage the heart and spirit of every individual

November Life Skill

Flexibility

Principal

Bob Dodson

Vice Principal

Anne Eggleston

Office Manager

Karina Hemby

PFC Co-Presidents

Cathy Myers

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Next Article Deadline

Principal's Message (Con't)

(Continued from page 1)

Bill at 876-9278 if you would like to help out.

Please welcome Tami Reckler-Smith who is our new instructional assistant in fourth grade. We had a record number of qualified and outstanding applicants for the position, and the fourth grade teachers and I are confident that Tami will do an outstanding job and serve our students well. Tami had children go through MDES, and she graduated from Simmons College in Boston with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Management.

The School Site Council, comprised of five parents and five school employees, is in the process of writing and approving the school's Single Plan for Student

Achievement. This document addresses the needs of all students including English learners, special education, economically disadvantaged, and GATE students. It also identifies supplemental support activities related to safety and school climate, library, and technology. A budget of approximately \$75,000 is used to address the needs of students and support the instructional program.

Our teachers have been trained in writing programs such as Write Reflections and Step Up to Writing. Analyzing student achievement data, we have determined that writing achievement is an area of need and focus this school year. Teachers integrate writing in many subject areas including reading, social studies, science, and more. They engage stu-

dents in rigorous writing activities that are focused and systematic in design. You too can assist in promoting writing proficiency by encouraging your child to write daily by keeping a journal, writing letters to friends and family members, and assisting them with their homework writing assignments. This along with facilitating reading 20-30 minutes every evening will contribute to your child's success at school and beyond.

Thank you all for your continued support, and I wish you a happy holiday season.

Sincerely,

Bob Dodson

PFC Presidents' Perspective (Con't)

In these tough economic times, we realize how hard it is to sell gift wrap items (for example). We are very cognizant of the fact people may need to be a bit more fugal with their money these days. Nevertheless, your donations are critical to providing the consistent resources for our children's education. Therefore, we appreciate your donations, your time, and effort to make it happen.

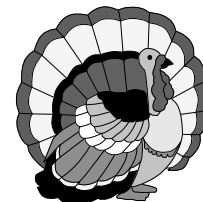
Our next fundraiser will be Vendor Night on December 3, from 1 p.m. – 7 p.m. in the MUR. Come do your holiday shopping and help our school at the same time. Also, if you would like

to volunteer your time for this event, please contact Mary Del Monte or Cheryl Childs.

Lastly, our PFC General Meeting this month will be on Tuesday, November 18th at 7 p.m. in the Library. Please join us! Childcare and refreshments will be provided.

Have a Happy Thanksgiving!

Susan Sovik & Cathy Myers



Kid's Korner



Watch for the new independent Kid's Korner which will feature exclusive articles from our wonderful MDE Student Reporters. This separate issue will be coming to your Monday Mail soon!



Messages From The Office

From the Vice Principal

The following are some additional suggestions to help your child succeed.

How to Help our Children Learn:

- Listen to them and pay attention to their problems.
- Read them stories.
- Limit TV watching.
- Have books and other reading materials in the house.
- Look up words in the dictionary with them.
- Share favorite poems and songs with them.
- Encourage them to use the encyclopedia.
- Visit the public library.
- Get them their own Library card.
- Take them to museums and historical sites.
- Discuss the daily news.
- Find a quiet place for them to work.
- Meet with their teachers.
- Have high expectations and support for them.
- Value education and stress its importance.

How to Help our Child Get Organized...It Takes Teamwork!

- Expect responsibility.
- Schedule study time.
- Keep track of assignments.
- Help with homework and supervise time spent.
- Provide a study place.
- Get involved!



From the Library...



Explore your world! Go to the library and get a book about the bay area and the possible trips you could take together...visit the U.S.S. Hornet in Alameda, ride a ferry boat across the bay to Alcatraz, or hike out to a windy point and climb down to the lighthouse at Pt. Reyes.

Our library catalog is available online. Your student can show you how to search for books from home.

We are thankful for good books and warm places to curl up and read. We are thankful for parents who promote literacy by reading and circulating books to children.

Happy Thanksgiving!

~ M.Schenke



Designated Parking

Please be considerate by parking in designated parking places only. Do not use the parking lot to drop off or pick up students. Pull all the way forward, and do not leave your car unattended in the drop-off/pick-up zone.

For the safety of students and adults, drive safely at all times.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this

Student Absences

Parents, please remember to follow school procedures when your child is absent. Please notify the school office either by phone or send an email to mdeattendance@mdusd.k12.ca.us.

Our school is required by California State Law to mark a student "truant" if parents have not contacted the school office within a 72-hour period following the student's return to school.

Thank you very much for your cooperation!

Save The Date!!

**Win With Books
Continues Until**
1/31/2009

Gift Wrap Pickup
watch Monday Mail
for November date!

**Upcoming PFC
Meetings**
11/18 at 7:00 p.m.
12/16 at 7:00 p.m.

**Veteran's Day
Holiday Recess**
11/10 - 11/11

**Troop 31895
Toy Drive**
11/3 - 12/12

**Thanksgiving
Holiday Recess**
11/24 – 11/28

**Kids Secret
Shopee**
12/2

Vendor Craft Fare
12/3
1:00 p.m.–7:00 p.m.

Movie Night
12/5

**Chorus Winter
Holiday Concert**
12/18
7:00 p.m.

Winter Recess
12/22 – 1/2/2009

PEP for Grade 4
"Empowering Kids
to make Safe and
Healthy Choices"
1/19 - 3/6/2009

Fundraising Corner

Auction Planning

November 5th was the first Auction Planning gathering. Hopefully a wonderful group of leaders stepped up to run this fabulous event!! Did you miss it? Still want to help MDE earn the money needed for classroom aides, technology, etc?? e-mail: marydm64@yahoo.com for information. The auction date is Friday, April 3rd.

Vendor Fair

A huge thank you to Cheryl Childs for Co/Chairing the Vendor Fair! Look in this Eagle's Press as well as your Monday mail for more information regarding the fabulous vendors we will have at this Holiday Craft and Gift Boutique as well as the Secret Santa Shoppe that will be back for the kids!

Coupon of the Month...

Our Coupon for November is on page 5-- Johnny Rockets...there are three buy one get one free coupons!! Best onion rings around! and fabulous service--Heading to Sun Valley Mall? Zumies, Vans, Mainland, maybe? Right next door, (well almost!)

Gift Wrap Pick Up

Gift wrap orders should arrive before the Thanksgiving break. Please watch your child's mail and the e-blasts for specific pickup dates and times. Thank you again for supporting our school!



Noon League

Noon League began this week during lunchtime on Tuesday November 4th with football games and Soccer games on Thursday November 6th, for 4th and 5th grade students who wish to participate. Sign-ups have already begun! There will be football and soccer skills games for 3rd grade students as well. Football games will be on Tuesdays and Soccer will be on Thursdays through November. We are also planning to have two Fun Friday's in November that will be a Football Skills Challenge (November 7th) and a Soccer Skills Challenge (November 21st). **It will be lots of fun but the kids need you!** If you can help out for a few hours on one or both of the days it would be greatly appreciated! Please contact Bill Calkins at 925-673-9279 or wcalkins@pacbell.net to help make

Clayton Community School Now Enrolling!

for School Age Childcare And Preschool

School Age Hours: 7:00 am – 6:00 pm Monday – Friday
Preschool Hours: 9:00 am – 11:30 am Monday – Friday

Located on the MDES campus! Need More Info? (925) 672-0388

Principal's Appreciation

Dear Mt. Diablo Elementary School Community,

Thank you for your support and assistance during the crisis our school community endured on Thursday, October 23. We apologize for any inconvenience to you or your family, yet we are so grateful that our children were sheltered from this tragic event.

I had been in contact with the MDES faculty and staff and met with them on Friday morning, October 24, to discuss the facts of the event as well as the conversations that would take place with students once school started. While the conversations would vary depending on the ages of the students, we agreed that the common messages would include school being cancelled so the police could do their work during an emergency situation and that all MDES students and adults were safe. We would encourage students not to spread rumors or information that was not true or speculative, so as not to alarm other students. We would also encourage students to have further conversations with their parents outside of school. This message was reiterated by me during morning announcements at the beginning of the school day.

Faculty and staff were encouraged to welcome students and parents on Friday morning before school on the playground and elsewhere on campus. A crisis intervention team, consisting of three school psychologists and our psychologist intern, was also available throughout the day to counsel students and adults who may have needed assistance. I observed the team engaged in an activity with a small group of children, and they handled the situation masterfully.

I also observed every classroom that morning, and students seemed to be upbeat, energetic, and working hard on their school activities. Things seemed to be back to normal, and it was "business as usual".

I am extremely proud of our school community and how we handled this crisis together.

If you have any questions about the event, please don't hesitate to contact me at 672-4840 or send an email to dodsonb@mdusd.k12.ca.us.

Thank you again for your support, and thank you for the care you provide your children everyday.

Sincerely,

Bob Dodson
Principal

Support Our Library, Clip Box Tops!



Clipping Box Tops helps support our school library!

Please return your Box Tops to the office, school library, or your child's teacher.

If you need additional information or what products support Box Tops for Education, please call Johanna Wright 672-3050.

You may also visit the website at www.boxtops4education.com.

Thank You!!!

Red Ribbon Week A Success!



Thank You to Janine Wishnow and her team of volunteers for creating a memorable Red Ribbon Week. Throughout the week our children were given opportunities to learn about making good choices.

Watch our beautiful flowers bloom in the spring as a reminder of how today's good choices can lead to beautiful things!



Life Skill for the Month of November:

Flexibility

During November all of Mt. Diablo Elementary School will be focusing on the Life Skill Flexibility. In the classrooms, teachers will be working with students on what Flexibility is and how to be Flexible. Students will learn to be adventurous and explore new things, and to be open-minded, resilient, and willing to try new things.

Flexibility means to be adaptable. Children need to learn to be flexible and adaptable in life. The one thing in life that is constant is CHANGE. To help children adapt to change they need to be taught how to be flexible.

Below are suggested activities to assist in teaching flexibility.

Discuss "House Rules". What are the rules in the family? Why are they there? Tell children that the rules are there to help the family run better. What happens when things do not run well. Share a time when things did not run well. What happened? Did anyone have to be flexible? Compromise?

Ask children to share times when they disagreed with one another. They can be times at home,

school. Discuss what happened. Did they all agree on what should be done or did they have to compromise. One aspect of flexibility is compromise. Children need to see and learn when compromise is used and needed.

Life changes everyday and that means people change also. Discuss as a family how each person has changed. Try to focus on the positives and have each person comment on every other person. Discuss how it feels to change.

Identify times when the family had to change plans. (Didn't go swimming because it rained. Couldn't go to a friends house because mom needed help, etc.) Discuss why you had to change plans and how you felt. What helped you to feel better about the situation? What did people say or do? Children need to talk and share times when they were flexible. Sharing these times helps to validate their efforts as well as understand and appreciate that they are not the only people in the world being flexible and compromising.

"To Kids From Kids" Girl Scout Toy Drive

"To Kids from Kids" is a San Francisco Bay Area Girl Scout service project providing holiday gifts to children in living in foster care. The Contra Costa TKFK effort is being lead this year by Clayton Junior Troop 31895. To earn their Bronze Award, the girls are organizing a TKFK Toy Drive, highlighted by an exciting event on November 16th. The public is invited to attend and bring a new, unwrapped toy.

- What:** "To Kids From Kids" Toy Drive Event
- Details:** A short walk will be followed by refreshments, children's activities, games, and prizes.
- When:** Sunday, November 16, 2008 at 2:00 p.m.
- Where:** The Grove Park in downtown Clayton, at Marsh Creek Rd and Main Street
- RSVP:** clmitchell8@hotmail.com (to assist in planning refreshments and supplies)

Troop 31895 will have collection bins at Mt. Diablo Elementary School and Diablo View Middle School from 10/27 through 12/12. TKFK suggests that the toys be valued at least \$15 and non-violent theme. For more information or to get your troop involved, contact the Project Coordinator for Contra Costa County, Christine Mitchell, at clmitchell8@hotmail.com.



MDE Movie Night

Friday, December 5th
Featuring
The Polar Express

in 3-D!!

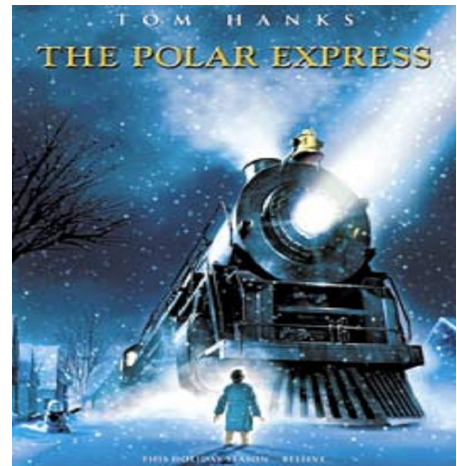
Rated G

MDE multi-use room

Doors open at 6:15 p.m.

Movie starts at 6:30 p.m.

Pick up at 9:00 p.m.



- Admission is \$7.00 per person, payable in advance. Parents get some Christmas shopping done while we entertain the kids. You can't beat the price for 3 hours of care PLUS a fantastic movie & snack.
- MDE kindergarten through fifth graders only, please.
- Parents must sign children in at the door and sign them out at pick-up time (9:00 p.m.).
- Popcorn and a juice drink will be served at intermission.
- Each child may bring a pillow OR blanket to sit on.
- Please, no electronics, stuffed animals, sleeping bags, food or drinks. Pajamas are okay, but footwear is required.
- If you have questions or would like to volunteer at this event please

Brought to you by MDE PFC

Holiday Craft & Gift Boutique

Date: December 3
Time: 1:00-7:00 pm
Multi-Use Room

With 38 vendors, this year's boutique promises to be the best yet! Make a list, check it twice and shop the boutique for handcrafted and unique gifts for everyone on your list.

Clayton Books will be there along with author, Daniel San Souci, who will be signing his fabulous children's books. Clayton Mind & Body Connections will also be on hand, offering chair massages for weary shoppers, as well as gift certificates for those stressed-out people on our lists.

Back by popular demand, the Children's Secret Shoppe will provide kids with an opportunity to purchase allowance-friendly gifts for parents, grandparents and siblings. An envelope will be coming home to help your children plan their purchases.

Clayton Books
Handmade Jewelry by Edie
Creative Memories
Mary Kay Cosmetics
Royal Rooster
Pampered Chef
Clayton Mind and Body
MDES Spirit Wear
MDES Sweet Shoppe
Mama's Homemade Jams & Jellies
BeautiControl
Galvanic Wrinkle Iron
Southern Living at Home
Usborne Books
Lia Sophia Jewelry
Casserole Covers & Scarves
Cookie Lee Jewelry
Traveling Trainers/Arbonne
"Miss Delacourt Speaks Her Mind"
Premier Jewelry
Tastefully Simple
HOPE Clothing
The Glass Guru
Doggie Doo Drain
Bloom
Tupperware
Proforma
Longaberger Baskets
Gold Canyon Candles
Silpada Jewelry
Avon
Cookies by Lori Brook
Discovery Toys
Bling on a Budget
Carol Anderson By Invitation Clothing
Mementos Designs
PartyLite Candles
Thelma's Beaded Creations

Table fees & donations benefit the Mt. Diablo Elementary School Kaleidoscope Reading Program