

Mt. Diablo Elementary School

# The Eagle's Press

Issue 7 — April 2009

## Principal's Message

Dear Mt. Diablo Elementary School Community,

Spring has finally arrived, and we are moving along at a quick pace with one trimester of school remaining.

Our "House of Blues" Auction Night was an absolute success with good food, tons of fun with family and friends, and lively, lucrative auctions. It was the result of many hours of work and generous donations provided by MDES parents, teachers, community members, and businesses. Thanks to your contributions, our dedicated PFC raised funds that will directly benefit the students of Mt. Diablo Elementary. Special thanks go to Beth Rutledge, Kerry Seastrand, and Krista Urteaga for coordinating this outstanding event. Monica Stellini and Tami Kratz played a huge role in tastefully decorating the Centre Concord facility. Many others volunteered behind the scenes to make this our most profit-

able, single day fundraiser of the year. Thank you all for your support and hard work.

Open House for Kindergarten and Second Grade will be held on Thursday, April 23. The Kindergarten time is 6:30-7:30 p.m., Second Grade will be from 7-8:00 p.m. Open House for Grades 1, 3, 4, and 5 will be on Thursday, May 21, from 7-8:00 p.m. Our students, faculty, and staff have been working extremely hard, and we are anxious to show you the fruits of our students' labor. We look forward to seeing you and your children at Open House.

STAR testing for grades 2-5 will be held from April 27-May 15. This state-wide assessment measures students' ability in English Language Arts and Mathematics. In addition, fourth grade has been tested on Writing, and fifth

*(Continued on page 2)*

## PFC President's Perspective

Dear MDE Community,

It can never be said enough how much we appreciate all of you; all of the effort you put in for our school and all of the time you spend making our school community the best it can be. It is truly awe inspiring. A quote I recently heard is that volunteers are not unpaid because they're worthless, but because they are priceless. It is true. We literally can not do what we do, without the help of many. Our PFC is

charged with the monumental task each year of raising over \$100,000 just to maintain our current programs, aides and level of support to our teachers. Most recently Beth Rutledge, our Auction Chair, led her committee in the planning and execution of our single largest fundraising event of the year. The sleepless nights, the stressful decisions and the strong desire to have it all perfect, all culminate in that one evening.

*(Continued on page 4)*



### 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

### April Life Skill

Patience

### Principal

Bob Dodson

### Vice Principal

Anne Eggleston

### Office Manager

Karina Hemby

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### Next Deadline:

4/25/09

# Principal's Message (Con't)

*(Continued from page 1)*

grade will be tested in Science. During the weeks of STAR testing please make sure your child arrives to school on time and attends every day possible. Refrain from making non-emergency medical appointments on the days of STAR testing, and make sure your child gets plenty of sleep and comes to school well-rested. They should also have a hearty, nutritious breakfast and snack on the days of testing. Please emphasize the importance of this test with your child, and instill confidence that they will do a great job on this "high stakes" exam. For more information about STAR testing and to view the released test questions, you may go to [www.star@cde.ca.gov](http://www.star@cde.ca.gov).

The state budget crisis has stripped our school of critical resources, personnel, and support for our students and employees. We lost 20-1 class size reduction in kindergarten and now have 32 students in our kindergarten classes for part of the day. We will not have a vice principal next school year at our school, which is nearly twice the size of the average elementary school in the country. We will lose an evening custodian next year, limiting classrooms to being cleaned every third evening. We won't have an Instruc-

tional Media Assistant in our library, and there is a 15% reduction to one of our major operating budgets limiting materials and supplies for classrooms, release time for planning and assessment, and professional development. While we thought we were at rock bottom, information from the state indicates that there may be additional cuts again next year.

Citizens United for Excellent School (CUES) has been established to campaign for a parcel tax for our school district. The proposed parcel tax could raise \$7,000,000 each year for the next five years for Mt. Diablo schools. For more information about CUES, how to get involved or make donations, contact Sue Berg at 682-8000 or [bergs@mdusd.k12.ca.us](mailto:bergs@mdusd.k12.ca.us).

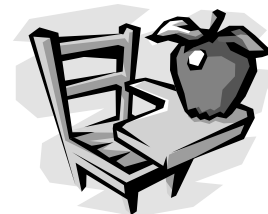
Thank you all for your continued support, and I wish you all a happy and prosperous spring!

Sincerely,

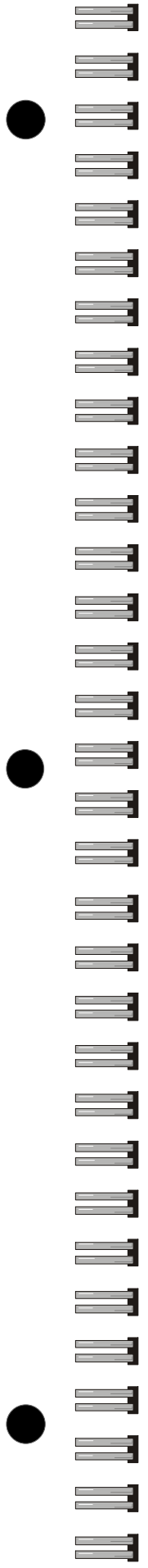
Bob Dodson  
Principal

## New faces Needed!

The Parent Faculty Club (PFC) is looking for new members to bring fresh ideas and smiles to our monthly meetings! If you are interested in shaping our school community and enjoy meeting caring individuals then this is the place for you! There are several positions available – no experience necessary! If you have any questions or would like to volunteer, please contact Melinda Morimoto at [melinda\\_morimoto@mindspring.com](mailto:melinda_morimoto@mindspring.com). The current board is looking forward to working with you!



- 1 **Co-President:** Conducts meetings and generally oversees functions of the Parent Faculty Club.
- 2 **VP Operations:** This position oversees 5th Grade Promotion, Insurance, Parent Packets, Movie Night, PFC meeting childcare, Fall Social, Disaster Prep, Room Parents, Landscape, Vendor Night, Hospitality and Staff Appreciation.
- 3 **VP Education:** This position oversees Faculty Liaison, PEP, Red Ribbon Week, Prep Day and Superintendent Liaison and Science Fair.
- 4 **Recording Secretary:** This person takes minutes at board general PFC meetings and submits them for review at the following meeting.



# Messages From The Office



## Save the Date for Open House!

Families are invited to come and see the many exciting projects students have been working on this year. This is always an exciting evening for students to 'show you around' their classroom so please mark your calendar!

Open House for Kindergarten and Second Grade will be on Thursday, April 23rd. Kindergarten will be from 6:30-7:30 p.m., and Second Grade will be from 7:00-8:00 p.m.

Open House for grades 1, 3, 4, and 5 are on May 21st from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m.

## STAR Testing Is Approaching!

STAR testing for grades 2-5 at MDES this year will be from April 27-May 15. We return from Spring Break on April 20<sup>th</sup> and will use that week for practice tests. Testing will generally be held on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, with make-up tests occurring the week of May 11.

You can help your student greatly by having them get to bed on time, eat a nutritious breakfast, and arrive at school on time everyday. Please do not

schedule non-emergency medical appointments during the weeks of STAR testing.

STAR testing is important, and we want our students to do their absolute very best on this "high stakes" exam.

To view sample test questions, Google "CST Released test Questions". Thank you for your continued support!

We would like to thank Elegant Occasions for returning as our catering sponsor for the MDES Benefit Auction !



*Elegant Occasions*  
Catering & Event Planning

[www.elegantoccasionscatering.com](http://www.elegantoccasionscatering.com)

## Have You Subscribed to E-News Yet?

Want to get helpful reminders and news about what is going on at school right in your e-mail inbox? Subscribe to the MDES PFC e-news! ***Even if you signed up for the directory listing this year, you still need to sign up for e-news.*** Subscribing is easy. Just go to the school website: [www.mdusd.k12.ca.us/mountdiabloelementary](http://www.mdusd.k12.ca.us/mountdiabloelementary). Then click on the icon on the left hand side. It will take you to the school's Constant Comment account where you can add your information. Or, you can click on the "update infor-

mation" link from the last e-news you received to update your information. In either case, be sure to click the boxes for the grades of your students. ***This is especially important if you have a 5<sup>th</sup> grader*** as there will be information on promotion parties and activities sent specifically to this group.



Subscribe to e-News

**CLAYTON VALLEY HIGH ALUMNI**

Mark Saturday, April 25th on your calendar!

Clayton Valley High School's 50th Anniversary (1958-2008) Arts and Academics Spring Gala will definitely be "A Night to Remember!"

Tickets are on sale now for \$25 per person. To learn more about this event and make your reservation, please visit [www.CVHS50.com](http://www.CVHS50.com)



**A NOTE OF THANKS!**

Girl Scout Troop 32386 recently held a sock drive to benefit the homeless. In total, the girls collected 225 new pairs of socks ~ many donated by Mt. Diablo families. The socks were stuffed with small items such as toiletries and candies, and were delivered by the girls to a local homeless shelter in March.

The girls wish to express their thanks to those who supported their efforts.

**PFC President's Message (Con't)**

*(Continued from page 1)*

To the rest of us, it looks effortless... perfect. It is only thru the tireless efforts of many, do events like this prove a success. Beth's committee including Sharon Degener, Dara Dunn, Tami Kratz, Tom Legault, Cyndi Moise, Kelly Pickolick, Kerry Seastrand, Monica Stellini and Krista Urteaga, led a group of enthusiastic volunteers - and for that, and for them, we are grateful.

I just want to let you know, that as this board is thinking of our turn over for next year, and as we fill our board positions with enthusiastic new faces, we still need new people to fill some important positions. You'll read more about them in this newsletter, but I wanted to tell you a little bit about the Co-President position. I became Co-President at the end of last year, after being at this school for only 2 months! I came from another very active elementary school within our district, and I just wanted to dive in head first. Our previous President, Kristy Smith, was a Kindergarten mom when she stepped into the President role! What I'm trying to say is that you don't need to have years here under your belt to jump in. In fact, the President position is one of the best to get to know everyone, to learn what the PFC does, to volunteer how and where you want, and to help pitch in

where needed. We run the monthly PFC general meetings, as well as the monthly executive board meetings. We oversee the other committees. As with all of our positions, you don't have to be at every meeting. Having a partner is fabulous, we fill in when one can't make it. The parents on our board are welcoming, kind and in short order, have become good friends. We want you to feel welcome, and we want you to jump in however you're comfortable.

Important planning starts now, beginning with budgeting for next year. We'll be recapping the results of our fundraising efforts and be looking at how we can sustain what we want to fund for next year. We'd love you to be included if you're thinking of joining our executive board. So call any of us for more information! A great way to volunteer for one of these positions is to "shadow" our current board member. We welcome all of our MDE community to the PFC general meeting the 3rd Tuesday night of each month. So tell a friend, and dive in, anytime!

Regards,

Cathy Myers, Susan Sovik  
PFC Co-Presidents

**Welcome Little Buitrago**

-by Student Reporter Cereen K.

Some of you may know that Mr. Buitrago has a new baby boy. André Amaru was born to Mr. & Mrs. Buitrago on February 15th, weighing 6.2 lbs and 17.5 inches tall. He was born in the John Muir Hospital.

Mr. Buitrago showed us his pictures, my favorite one was with the baby and a Teddy bear. The picture was so cute!! André is a nice baby, he only cries when he's wet or cold. Mr.

Buitrago looks very happy these days, I think it is because he has something great to look forward to at the end of the day. The baby is a little over a month old and is still too little to visit a classroom. Mr. Buitrago told us that he might bring him when he is a couple months old. Room 39 is eagerly looking forward to that day. Hopefully we won't have to wait too long!!

# From the Library...

Mark your calendars for two big events:

April 23 – Young Author showcase in the library

May 11-15 – Annual Scholastic Book Fair

Read to your child twenty minutes every day!

~ M. Schenke



## Box Tops Spring Into Action!



Thank you for all the 100 Box Top contributions! The following names are the Kindergarten through 5th grade drawing winners for a \$10.00 Clayton Books Gift Cards.

Kindergarten: Keaton Curtis

1st Grade: Miles Hann

2nd Grade: Jon Ritz

3rd Grade: Ryan Kearney

4th Grade: Jasmine Purzycki

5th Grade: Casey Smith

Thanks so much for your support of our Box Tops program!

## Fifth Grade Promotion Needs Volunteers!

Volunteers are needed to help with the 5th grade celebration on the last day of school, Wednesday, June 10th.

Two hour shifts are available starting at 6:00 a.m. ending at 12:00 p.m., or if available work the entire day.

We are also looking for volunteers to help with face painting.

Please contact Leala Duncan at [ljtg@aol.com](mailto:ljtg@aol.com) or 672-9219 if you can help.

Thank you!



## Father Daughter Dance



Dads grab your dancing shoes and your little princess as MDE presents its first Father Daughter Dance!

The dance will be held on Friday, May 29th from 7:00 – 8:30 p.m. in the MUR. Admission in \$20 per couple and \$10 for each additional daughter. Attendees must be MDE students.

Donations of drinks, desserts and paper products are also needed for this event. Please contact Heidi Celentano at 673-7277 or [jhcelentano@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jhcelentano@sbcglobal.net) if you can help. Thanks!

Mom's don't feel left out! Plans are in the making for a Mother Son Dance next year!



## SAVE THE DATE!

**Fifth Grade Camp**

4/6 to 4/10

**Spring Break**

4/13 – 4/17

**Young Author Showcase**

4/23

**Open House Grades K and 2**

6:30 – 7:30 p.m. (K)

7:00 – 8:00 p.m. (2nd)

**Star Testing**

4/27 to 5/15

**Annual Scholastic Book Fair**

5/11 – 5/15

**Spring Musical**

5/14 & 5/15

**Talent Show "Tryouts"**

5/13

**Open House Grades 1,3,4,5**

7:00 – 8:00 p.m.

**MDE Idol Talent Show**

5/22



**Mt. Diablo Accessibility Message:** Mt. Diablo Unified School District welcomes the participation of all students, parents and community members in all District-sponsored activities conducted on campuses or at off-site locations. The District will work diligently to see that these activities are not limited by physical access barriers, thereby ensuring the opportunity for participation by all in these activities.



# Fundraising Corner

## Thank You Beth!



MDE parents if you see her, be sure to give a big 'Thank You' to our House of Blues Auction Chair **Beth Rutledge** and her fabulous helpers for a wonderful auction!!! The online auction was super! Thank you Kerry Seastrand for taking on this huge task of online bidding! There are numerous volunteers that helped Beth make this a memorable event. Please watch for a separate thank you acknowledging our wonderful sponsors and volunteers for helping to make yet another memorable evening.

## Coupon of the Month...

**April:** You're Invited Value Guide, page 103: Clayton Valley Bowl. Purchase a game of bowling and get a game free!

## Brick Fundraiser Almost Over!

One last call out to our wonderful community: MDE brick orders must be received by April 8th! We are currently falling short of our 400 minimum order for free shipping. It would be great to see 250 more brick orders and to get free shipping. We hope you will order a brick for your family!! Questions? Contact Mary Del Monte at [marydm64@yahoo.com](mailto:marydm64@yahoo.com)



## Mt. Diablo Dinner and Talent Show

Mark your calendars for MDE's Talent Show! Please watch your Monday Mail for the Try Out Entry Form. Tryouts will be Wednesday, May 13th (everyone is accepted) and the show will be on Friday, May 22nd. To assist with this event, get more information, or donate raffle items, please call Lisa York at 673-7242. **All students and staff are welcome to participate in the Talent Show!**

## Turn in Your Used Cartridges & More

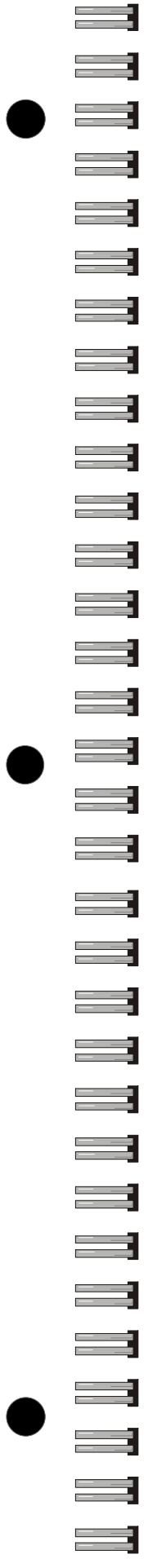
Parents, you can donate the following recycled items to the school office: empty inkjet cartridges (unfortunately no laser cartridges), used cell phones, digital cameras, iPods, and DVD movies.

Contact Karina Hemby for more information at [hembyk@mdusd.k12.ca.us](mailto:hembyk@mdusd.k12.ca.us)

**Spring Recess Dates:**

April 13th through April 17th. Students return to school on Monday, April 20th.

Have a relaxing and safe Spring Break!



## THE TIME IS NOW!! BECOME AN EAGLE SPONSOR!

With the current state of the economy, we need to think long and hard about how we spend our money. Times are tough, and to think about donating extra money to your child's school might seem like a luxury. But in times like these, it is more important than ever to step up and make sure our children's education do not suffer. And now with the recent drastic MDUSD budget Cuts, it is especially important to pitch in when we can.

Many parents help by donating to the school for the Auction, the wrapping paper sales, helping in the classrooms, going on field trips, etc. Our school is made special by all of you who donate their time and dollars to keeping our children enriched in every way possible!!! Let's keep up the fight!!

The Eagle Sponsorship program was created by the Parent Faculty Club to allow parents and other school supporters to make tax-deductible cash donations that assist in sponsoring various programs, special events, curriculum materials and other improvements that are available to Mt. Diablo Elementary students. Here are just a few of the programs that are funded by the Eagle Sponsors:

- New Library Materials
- Computer Lab Technology/Software
- Odyssey of the Mind
- 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Instructional Assistants
- Expanded Recess Supervision
- Disaster Kits
- 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Promotion
- Computer Lab Instructional Assistants
- Campus improvements such as Air Conditioning and Landscaping
- New Curriculum Materials (Updated Dictionaries,
- Science Kits, Leveled Readers, etc.)
- Kindergarten Assistants
- Psychologist Intern
- Kaleidoscope (Reading Assistance Program)
- Parent Education Program (Drugs, Bullies, etc.)

The PFC spends approximately \$150 per student each year to run all of these programs. **Every student** benefits from these programs and supplies. Our goal this year is 100% participation.

Please look for the form on page 8 of this issue. It is also available in the office and on the school website. Complete it and return it to your teacher or the school office with your check (or mail to MDPFC, P.O. Box 720, Clayton, CA 94517. Remember to find out whether your employer participates in a matching funds program! For further information, contact Jaimee Evans, Eagle Sponsor Chair at [jevans96@gmail.com](mailto:jevans96@gmail.com) or 925-818-6212.



Special Thanks to our “King of Blues Sponsor”  
**Tom Legault, Kropa Realty**

[www.TomLegault.com](http://www.TomLegault.com)



# Life Skill for the Month of April: Patience

During April, all of Mt. Diablo Elementary School will be focusing on the Life Skill of Patience.

In the classrooms, teachers will be working with students on what Patience is and how to be patient. Students will learn self-control, taking turns, how to utilize waiting time, and listening to instructions.

Patience is a Life Skill that requires practice and self-control. Children who learn to wait for what they want have a chance to develop patience and tolerance.

To teach children patience, you must give them practice in waiting as well as directions on what they can do while waiting. Below are a few suggested activities that can assist children in developing skills in patience.

Teach your child "goal setting". Have your child think of one thing they would like to do. Help them figure out how they

can achieve their goal and how much time it will require. Discuss the life skill of patience and tell them they may need to use patience while waiting and working on their goal. Usually things worth doing are worth waiting for.

As a family, discuss the strategies used to foster patience. Strategies such as taking a deep breath, focusing on something else, reading a book while waiting, are just a few that children can practice. Parents and children can practice these strategies for a week or more to really make the behavior a habit.

Play a board game with your family. This game should be one in which players need to take turns. Tell family members that when you play a game with other people you need to wait your turn and be patient. Playing games can help children to practice patience as well as enhance relationships among family members.

As a family, discuss times when people need to be patient at home, the community and at school.

For example: waiting for mom to finish a phone call, waiting in line at the grocery store, or waiting for your sister to finish practice. You may even ask your children to draw the situations.

Parents can instill patience in children by not responding to impatient behavior. Parents can ask children to wait patiently before getting that cookie or glass of milk, playing that game of catch or installing the new computer game.

Children can learn by your example. Say things like, "I have to finish this e-mail to my boss. When I'm done, I can install that program for you. I like to get the things that I have to do done first so I can enjoy doing the things I like to do."

## HELP US SOAR! BECOME AN EAGLE SPONSOR!

Please complete it and return it to your teacher or the school office, or mail it to MDPFC, P.O. Box 720, Clayton, CA 94517. contact Jaimee Evans, Eagle Sponsor Chair at [jevans96@gmail.com](mailto:jevans96@gmail.com) or 925-818-6212.

1. I would like to donate the following amount to the EAGLE SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM (Suggested amount is \$75 per child if also participating in other fundraisers and \$150 if participating in Eagle Sponsor alone. However, any amount is appreciated!):

\_\_\_\_\_ \$75      \_\_\_\_\_ \$100      \_\_\_\_\_ \$150      \_\_\_\_\_ \$200      Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

2. I will designate MDPFC as the recipient of my United Way Donation for \$ \_\_\_\_\_

3. I will contribute \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to MDPFC and my employer will match this amount.

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher \_\_\_\_\_