



The Observatory

Los Gatos-Saratoga Observation Nursery School ~ Issue 5 April 2005

The Greatest Job in the World

by Marie Imai, LGSONS Director

Dear Families,

My 31 year old daughter, Mieko, has been home visiting for six days in order to plan her wedding next fall. That turned out to be a more complex project than she expected – at least making the decisions as to place, time, guest list and style seemed overwhelming without further input from her fiancé and frustrating since she mistakenly brought both his and her cell phones home with her. They are living in Mexico for 6 months and have only their cell phones with which to communicate.

However, I was just delighted to have time together with her and I couldn't help think of how quickly the years have passed since she was at Mountain School. I remember about halfway through her year in the 4s class she rather abruptly decided to sit with me for long periods of time rather than play with her peers as she had done so independently in the fall. I never did understand what brought about the change but after a month or so of sticking very close by she eventually returned to her former comfort level of play with the other children. Then I, too, faced the difficult question of whether to send her to kindergarten the next fall or not. Her birthday is mid October and she is the third child of our family. I finally decided that she would probably be fine in kindergarten and that I didn't really want to spend a 4th year as a parent in nursery school so I sent her off and she was fine, thank heavens. I remember, too, that she loved the filmy dress up clothes and I can still see her flying around on the tire swing with a long pink skirt blowing in the breeze. Other classmates of hers were Greg Hyman, Jill and Bruce's son, and Nicole Engel, presently in the 4/5s with her daughter, Hannah.

Those were the years that I first began working as an assistant teacher. However, when Mieko graduated I stayed

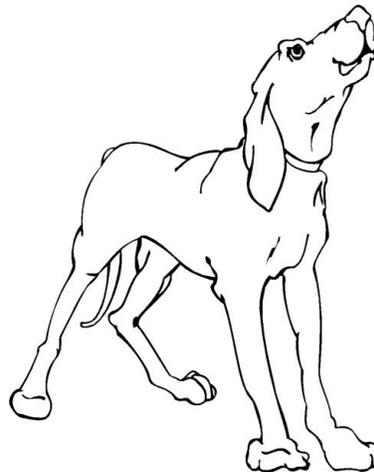
on and unbelievably I'm still there today. I can't really believe how fortunate I've been to have had the privilege of teaching at Mountain School for all these years.

Now I want to ask all of you – have you ever considered teaching at Mountain School? If you love and enjoy children (in addition to your own) I cannot imagine a more interesting and fulfilling job. It is part time, you get to work with children and their parents and make real friends with the families in your class. Playing outdoors with children in the sun and the rain and in the creeks and the woods is the greatest way to spend a day that I can imagine. Teaching here offers you intellectual, creative and physical challenges and a wonderful opportunity to belong to our very caring community of teachers and families. You are totally supported by the other staff and board members. Almost all of us began as parents in the school, some with previous teaching experience and some not. We all learned as much from the parents and children as we taught.

Right now I am looking for assistant teachers for the Saturday morning 2s and for a new class for 3s and 4s on Saturday afternoons. For the Saturday afternoon class I am also looking for a head teacher. Please don't be shy. Give me a call if you have any interest now or in the future or would like to recommend someone. I look forward to talking with you.

Love, Marie

p.s. Zipper, our new puppy is doing well. He's gone for 2 days without an accident in the house and he loves coming to school. 🐾



CONTENTS OF THIS ISSUE

The Greatest Job in the World

Page 1

Summer School Program

Page 2

Mountain School Spring Picnic

Page 2

Becoming More Involved

Page 3

Worth A Trip

Page 3

Living With Ticks

Page 4

Peace and Control

Page 5

Musical Memories

Page 6

Quinoa 3-Bean Salad

Page 6

Auction News

Page 7

Calendar

Page 7

Teacher Spotlight: Laura Snyder

Page 8

Summer School Program

Spots are still available for both sessions of Mountain School's summer school program with Teacher Amy. Currently enrolled families have priority registration until Friday, April 15th and is ongoing until June 1st. Family and friends that are not currently attending Mountain School are welcome to apply after April 15th. Tell your friends about this wonderful opportunity to experience our wonderful and unique preschool.

Session Information:

June Session - June 20th to July 1st

Mon., Wed. & Fri. 9:30am - 12:00pm

July Session - July 5th - August 4th

Tues. & Thurs. 9:30am - 12:00pm

Registration forms are available online at www.lgsons.com and at the Los Gatos Recreation Department. For more information call or e-mail Laura Snyder at 866-1879 (lgsnyder@sbcglobal.net) or Mary Matlack at 269-3710 (maryallicematlack@yahoo.com). ☎

Mountain School Spring Picnic

*Celebrate Spring at the
Little Red Schoolhouse.*

When: Sunday, May 1st

Time: 1:00pm to 4:00pm

Location: Little Red Schoolhouse



Enjoy the warm sun and the beautiful flowers with your family and friends. Come hungry and bring a dish for a potluck buffet. We will have music, May Pole dancing, spring arts and crafts and a scavenger hunt.

Questions? Contact Kristin Mitchell at 379-6673. ☎

Becoming More Involved

by Angie Davidson, Board Chair

Spring has just sprung and although it may seem early, we are already thinking ahead to the coming year! We're looking for people who would enjoy serving our school community in a more active way, on our LG-SONS Board.

There are a variety of positions still open, with a wide range of responsibilities and time commitments. Our voting board members attend meetings (which are honestly quite enjoyable) on the first Tuesday of every month, while the non-voting members are not required to do so. Some positions are busy on and off throughout the year, while others have one specific task that requires only a short period of time for completion.

Any current board member would be happy to discuss their position with you and their experience serving on the board. For me, it has been wonderful: I've gotten to know so many great people, come to know more of our fantastic teachers, and learned a lot from everyone. And in the process I've made wonderful friends, felt truly involved in our unique school and had a lot of fun.

As we are actively talking to people about positions, I won't list them here, but if you are interested in learning more about the board, what it does and what positions remain open, please feel free to call or e-mail one of our Nominating Committee members: Lori Lux (244-9605; lori@luxpr.com), Mary Matlack (269-3710; maryalicematlack@yahoo.com) or Angie Davidson (978-4702; angie_davidson@sbcglobal.net).

On behalf of all of us on the board, thank you!! ☺

Worth A Trip

by Sonia Casper, Editor

Hidden Villa is a wonderful 1600 acre farm and wilderness preserve in the Los Altos Hills. This is a wonderful time to visit Hidden Villa, there are babies animals galore to see: piglets, chicks, 4 lambs, 6 kids (baby goats, two sets of triplets) and a calf due in June. There are wonderful programs for children and adults, including programs on everything from guided hikes to composting, summer camps for kids, an Earth Day celebration on Saturday, April 23rd (there will be free classes that day), a Mother's Day Concert on Sunday, May 8th with the Banana Slugs String Band, hiking trails and much, much more. My daughter Megan and I attended their Cow Wow! program just this weekend and had a wonderful time learning how to milk a cow and make butter.

I strongly encourage you check out the baby animals soon...they grow so fast!

For more information go to: www.hiddenvilla.org, call (650)949-8653, or e-mail: communityprograms@hiddenvilla.org. Hidden Villa is located at 26870 Moody Road, Los Altos Hills, CA 94022. There is a \$5 parking fee.

The purpose of life, after all, is to live it, to taste experience to the utmost, to reach out eagerly and without fear for newer and richer experience.

☺ Eleanor Roosevelt

Living With Ticks

by Jody McCalmont

Mother of Yelena Bruder (F2's) and Claire Bruder (2000-2003)

What Is Lyme Disease?

Lyme disease (LD) is a tick borne illness caused by the spirochete (corkscrew-shaped bacteria) known as *Borrelia burgdorferi*. It is transmitted in our area by western black-legged ticks which are most commonly found in the coastal regions and the western slope of the Sierra Nevada range. The disease is named after the town of Old Lyme, Connecticut where the first outbreak was reported in a group of children in the 1970's. Frequently these ticks carry, and thus transmit, more than one disease.

Early symptoms of Lyme disease typically appear within 1-30 days of infection and may include flu-like symptoms; facial paralysis; palpitations or disturbances of heart rhythm, an expanding skin rash. Not everyone who contracts LD gets a rash.

Diagnosis and Treatment

Lyme disease is often misdiagnosed, and can be difficult to treat. The spirochete invades the central nervous system and soft tissues of the body potentially affecting heart, muscular, skeletal and neurological function. People with Lyme disease are often thought to have fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue syndrome, multiple sclerosis, lupus, Lou Gehrig's disease, or a myriad of other illnesses.

Unfortunately, there is a lot of misinformation and ignorance around LD. Thus, it is important to work with a Lyme-friendly and knowledgeable physician. If you are not able to get in with one of the few experts, be sure to provide your doctor with a copy of the ILADS Treatment Guidelines (see information section below). While your health insurance may not cover the cost, I also believe it is worth paying out-of-pocket to have testing for tick borne illnesses done at a reliable lab (see IGeneX below). The most commonly used test misses 35% of LD.

Standard treatment for Lyme disease is antibiotics. If

caught early and treated aggressively, LD can be successfully eradicated. When the bacteria have more opportunity to settle into the body, it can become extremely elusive. Chronic LD can require indefinite use of oral and/or intravenous or intramuscular antibiotics.

Prevention

- Perform frequent, thorough tick checks
- Wear light-colored clothes; tuck pants in socks
- When you get home, put clothes in dryer for 30 minutes to kill ticks
- If you are comfortable with using pesticides, there are products containing DEET for skin and Permethrin for clothes

Tick removal

When removing an attached tick, do nothing to aggravate the tick (i.e. do not burn or use any substances, do not grasp, squeeze or twist the body). Grasp the tick as close to the skin as possible with tweezers and pull straight out. Use antiseptic on the skin and disinfect tweezers. See a physician for possible diagnosis, testing and treatment. Save the tick in an airtight container with a moist cotton ball (no alcohol) and send to a tick-testing lab.

Amazing Little Creatures

Despite all the frustrations that have accompanied my living with a chronic disease for nearly two years, my family and I have marveled at the evolutionary adaptability of ticks. Ponder these facts...

·The little buggers that are most likely to transmit disease are nymphs who are no larger than the poppy seed on your bagel or the period (.) at the end of a sentence.



·Ticks are not villains, but are rather just living out their life cycles like the rest of us; they feed on a blood meal only once during each of their life stages (larva, nymph and adult).

·Ticks feed by inserting their mouth parts into their host and taking a blood meal. They beguile us by injecting an anesthetic and an anti-coagulant. Often, the engorged tick drops off after several days with its host still oblivious to the transaction. Despite popular opinion, they can transmit disease within a short time after attaching to their host.

·The bacteria which some ticks carry are able to mutate within the human body, taking on 3 different forms. In its cystic form it builds a wall which is extremely resistant to antibiotics.

Where to Find More Information

If you are seeking more information try the following web sites:

·Lyme Disease Association – www.lymediseaseassociation.org

·ILADS (includes Treatment Guidelines)– www.ilads.org

·IGeneX, Inc. (laboratory) – www.igenex.com

·Attend a local support group meeting – participants share a deep reservoir of information and experience

·I am certainly no expert, but have learned a lot along the way. Feel free to call me and I should at least be able to guide you to information you seek – 353-5476. ☞

Peace and Control

by Diane Marcus, Mother of Solomon (2000-2004), Caleb (4/5's) and Grace (coming fall 2005 F2's)

Tidbits on the issues of Peace and Control in child rearing:

Peace

It does not mean to be in a place where there is no noise, trouble or hard work. It means to be in the midst of those things and still be calm in your heart. (Unknown)

Control

“The rub, of course, comes from being bound between this impulse to control all matters of my children’s behavior and my understanding of the absurdity and futility of that impulse...So, I’m slowly learning to relax and make distinctions between actions that are inappropriate or dangerous and those that are simply manifestations of joy or curiosity or the peculiarities of personality. Only last week I was on the verge of calling down (my son), who was running through the house and whose voice was becoming loud enough to annoy me, when I heard him cry to (his brother), “I’m just so HAPPY!” and I understood that a voice raised in exuberance should not be hushed too quickly, lest it return less often and the joy that prompted it show itself only occasionally, like a timid house guest.”

(Excerpt from Control - *The Problem with Jumping in Puddles* by Mark Walters, [Brain Child](http://www.brainchild.com) Spring 2004. ☞

Note From the Editor

Do you have an article, calendar item or recipe you would like to submit for consideration? The deadline for the last newsletter of the year is Wednesday, May 11th. Please e-mail submission to mtnmama@garlic.com or call 408-353-9728.

Thank you.

Sonia Casper

Musical Memories

by Jane Johnson, mother of Jack (4/5's) and Janica

Bev Bos spoke to us in October about the importance of traditions in a very unique way. She had us reminisce through memories, smells, sights and sounds those things that reminded us of our childhood. One of the most striking things she and her son-in-law did for me (and I noticed at least a few teary-eyed friends in the audience, too!) was remind me of how important songs were in my family. I was raised with singing – my Mom used to sing with her own band in her high school years, and my Dad was always in a “glee club” of some sort or another. We would travel throughout the United States in our car singing to pass some of the time together as we drove to one vacation visit or another.

Bev reminded me that the songs you may have forgotten are still inside of you. And, if you can, now is the time to make sure you have them recorded – not just for your sake, but for your children and their children, too. They may not appreciate them when they hit those hip mini-adolescent through college years, but certainly when they have a family of their own, I'll bet it will hit them, maybe somewhere deep inside, like it did me.

I'm so very fortunate that my Dad & Mom, 79 and 75 respectively, are still here to share those memories. And, I realize, that as healthy & California-like as they've become in their approach to healthy living, our time here together is growing shorter with each passing year.

So I got the idea that now would be the time to record them singing the songs we grew up with and giving the gift of song to our children. I found out that BB Hayes** (4/5's class father) not only knew how to do this, but he actually records in a “real studio” – both at his home & at a colleague's studio in San Jose. We booked a session – on Christmas Eve no less – and my parents sang for 2 ½ hours straight filling a CD with songs and memories.

Our son, Jack, was so excited by the music that he asked that I play it in the car wherever we drove after that. And, one day for class sharing, he said that was the only thing he wanted to bring. He wanted me to play for the 4/5's class his Poppa & Grandma singing “You Are My

Sunshine”. For me, that song takes me back so, so many years. And now for him, it has its own memories. He sang right along with it the whole time it played. I did everything possible to hold back my tears, knowing this tradition will be a link from one generation to the next in my family.

In the hub-bub fast-paced life we all seem to be rushing through, this made me stop and really soak up a tradition. I hope Bev's talk touched you somewhere where the tradition & memory lie and reminded you to slow down, just for a moment, and catch the opportunity before it's carried away.

** BB Hayes can be reached at bbhayesbookings@yahoo.com. It's well worth the effort – check out the 4/5's children's CD and Teacher Jan's story time CD just for a sample. He also provides album & video transfer services in addition to recording studio services. ☞

Quinoa 3-Bean Salad

compliments of Teacher Jane and her daughter Liesel

2 cups uncooked Quinoa
4 cups vegetable broth
1 cup white beans
1 cup black beans
1 cup kidney beans
1 cup corn
2 cup chopped spinach
1 small bunch chopped basil
1/4 cup diced sun dried tomatoes

Cooking Instructions

Add all ingredients to pan. Cook 5 minutes on burner on high, cover, turn off heat, let sit for 15 minutes. Serve hot or cold.

Serves ~ 8

Optional: add * any vegetable of choice *toasted nuts (almonds or walnuts) or cheese of choice.. ☞

Auction News!!!

“Picnic in Paris” was everything that we had hoped, for the school, that it would be. We had envisioned a fun, comfortable evening with white twinkling lights, a romantic, garden atmosphere, some great auction items, good food, a fun band, and great friends laughing and enjoying the evening. In looking back at the great photos taken, it seems like all was accomplished! We are so appreciative of all of our committee heads: Lori Lux, Amber Shaw, Dan Shaw, Gillian Claus, Linda Aggarwal, Ellen Mapes, Nicole Frees, and Sue Jackson. If it weren't for our committee heads and their teams...the evening couldn't have been pulled off...Thank You! We have sold the large majority of items, we only have a handful left, so it seems as if everyone was in the spending mood that evening...LGSONS thanks you! Additionally, we had approximately 24 guests and 25 alumni come to the party, which makes up about 25% of our attendance! We had 193 guests in total that evening. While the final numbers are still being tabulated, it seems as if the financial goals of the event have been met, and surpassed. We will be letting you know those numbers as soon as they are in! Once again, thank you LGSONS for being the special place that you are and for supporting such a wonderful, community building event that all could attend. We'd like to thank YOU!

Heidi & Elissa ☞

Calendar

REGISTRATION

Saturday April 9th - mail in registration packets must be postmarked by Saturday, April 9th

Sunday, April 10th - Walk-in Registration at the schoolhouse

For more information call Amoreena Lucero at 408-379-8458.

BOARD MEETING

Tuesday, April 5th

7:30pm at Mary Matlack's house

for directions call Mary at 408-269-3710

SPRING BREAK

Monday, April 11th to

Saturday, April 16th

MOVE OUTDOORS

Monday, April 18th



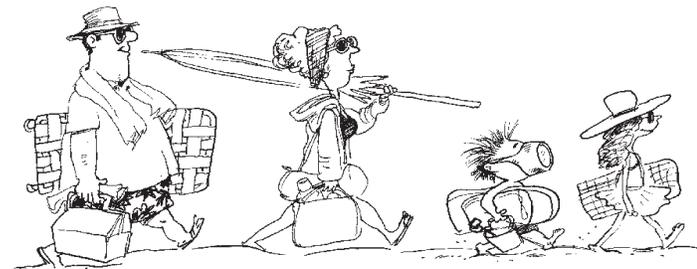
Get those backpacks packed with a change of cloths and those boots, or water shoes ready. Spring has sprung and it's time for some water fun!

ANNUAL SPRING PICNIC

Sunday, May 1st at the school house (See page 2 for more information.)

LAST DAY OF SCHOOL

Thursday, May 26th



Teacher Spotlight: Laura Snyder

by Sonia Casper, Newsletter Chairperson

Where did you grow up and what is your fondest childhood memory?

I grew up in Piedmont North Carolina and southwestern Virginia in the Blue Ridge Mountains. My father was a minister and a student so we moved around the state quite a bit. One of my fondest memories is of spending the summers with my great aunt Nora in Galax, Virginia. She lived in an old farmhouse in the country and cooked on a wood burning stove. We slept on feather beds and read lots of books. We took walks and talked about what was growing around us. We picked small, wild strawberries that are still the sweetest I have ever tasted. I think my love of nature stems from these memories and I try to share this with the children and my family.

What drew you to the field of teaching?

I think I always wanted to be a teacher and remember playing school with my younger sisters many times. Although I didn't study to be a teacher right away, it only took one year of teaching at the school to make me want to go back to college and study child development. Children fascinate me with their constantly expanding imaginations and curiosity and trusting natures.

How did you come to teach at Mountain School?

I have two children, Gina, 23 and Christopher, 21. I also have a 4 ³/₄ year old grandson, Austin, whom many of you know. We started nursery school when Gina was three and teacher Jan was our teacher. When Chris was four and in Marie's class I was asked if I would like to assist one day a week. This was the beginning of a long and joyful career. I have had the pleasure and honor to assist each of our fine teachers and have learned so much from them. One could not ask for more wonderful mentors.

What is your favorite thing about Mountain School?

My favorite thing (besides the children of course) about Mountain School is the environment. We are so blessed to have the location that we do and doubly blessed to have the opportunity to experience an outdoor program.

There is no other place like it. Much of my own growth and development has come from my experiences here. Where else can you slide down mountains and hike through tunnels?

What are your interests and hobbies outside of MS?

Outside of school I love to garden, read, and sew. In my next life I hope to quilt and have been saving fabric from all my projects since my children were babies. I hope to make them memory quilts someday. We also have ranches that we visit, one outside of Hollister near the Pinnacles and one in Los Banos. Each provides a unique nature experience of its own and we have learned much about the land and its animal residents.

What are your hopes and dreams for your future?

Mark and I dream of someday building a home in the gold country foothills. We love to plan and dream of this special house. We would like to travel and see our country. We hope to enjoy more grandchildren (our son is getting married this summer!). I would love to see Italy, Florence to be exact. We would like to create things from wood. There are just so many possibilities! I might even go back to school for something completely new.

What is your favorite restaurant?

My favorite restaurant is not local; it's a little Italian place in North Carolina called Vincenzo's. It's been there forever and is the first place we go when we visit, a family tradition. There are just too many restaurants here to name a favorite, we're still exploring!

What is your favorite dessert?

My favorite dessert is teacher Karyn's Macadamia Nut Tart

Do you have any words of wisdom for parents?

A few words of wisdom for parents: TRUST YOURSELF. Listen to your heart and know you are doing well and that your children are, and will be, OK. Slow down a little and do smell the flowers, those are the memories that last for children. Be grateful for every day and for the people in your life. Be kind to yourself, you deserve it! ☺