



The Observatory

Los Gatos-Saratoga Observation Nursery School ~ Issue 3 November 2006

Life Cycles

by Marie Imai, Lead Teacher

Dear Families,

Our little red schoolhouse welcomes all of us once again as it has done every fall for 33 years. Thanks so much to our facilities chair, Rebecca Curran and her husband Dave who try their best to keep everything in working order and to Tessa Arguijo who organizes the workdays to clean and repair our school. Thanks also to Claudia Yore, our social chair, for the lovely fall picnic at Saratoga Springs last Sunday. The children always enjoy the creek and the campfire and the singing and the hiking almost as much as those of us who are young in heart rather than in years. Fall is a very special season for young children, I think, because they can easily see and feel and changes around them – especially the falling leaves and the acorns nestled on the ground which make tiny treasures for little pockets. It is also a great season for introducing the circle of life and death that governs all living things. Leaves die every fall and are reborn, so to speak, each spring; plants in our gardens dry up and stop producing and we must plant new seeds to begin the cycle again. These are visual and tactile examples that young children can easily comprehend. At nursery school we try and take advantage of the deaths of any school animal – a chicken, rat, guinea pig or whatever else can be found to help the children and their parents be more familiar and comfortable with the naturalness of death. When Teacher Jill's cat leaves a dead mole or gopher on her porch she brings it in to share with the children. It's much easier to satisfy one's curiosity about these animals when they are lying still on a table instead of hiding underground. In fact, it's the beginning of scientific investigation. I certainly regret the occurrence of West Nile Virus in Santa Clara County which now limits the collecting and burying of certain dead birds.

On a whole different level I think that experience with death of all kinds in nature prepares us for the inevitable deaths we must face within our own families and community as life progresses. Last summer my mother died at age 93 in Portland where she lived in the Alzheimer's unit of her retirement home. She herself chose

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Let's Hear It

by Tracy Halgren, Board Chair

Dear Families,

Over the past few years, some parents at Mountain School have worried that their voices are going unheard. Suggestions and comments may sometimes seem to get lost when mentioned at a circle meeting or during a class. Sometime parents may not know who to approach to discuss a personal issue or concern regarding their class or the school.

This past year, the board decided to make some headway in easing the process of communication within our little community. We decided to create a new position within the school, one that focuses on listening and on hearing. That is the role of our school Ombudsmen. We hope that this new position will help bridge any perceived gaps between the voice of the parent and the collective ear of the board.

Ombudsmen carved out their niche in universities, corporations and hospitals by facilitating the process of solution. Should parents have a suggestion about a field trip or fundraiser, it is the duty of the ombudsman to not only listen, but to bring the idea to the board. Have a question? Ombudsman. Have a concern? Ombudsman.

The beauty in creating this position is confidentiality. Parents, and whomever for that matter, are by all means encouraged to make themselves heard, and dialogue with

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Time to Order Your T-Shirts!

by Wendy Grant-Richards

T-Shirt/Sweatshirt Sales Chairperson



Los Gatos-Saratoga
Observation Nursery School

Order Deadline:

Monday, Nov. 6th

T-Shirt/Sweatshirt order forms have been emailed to the Mountain School mailing list and are available at the schoolhouse through November 6th. We have beautiful new schoolhouse artwork for the front of the shirts and an updated version of last year's 50th anniversary shirt backs, all done by Aimee Frank. Sweatshirts are available in red, T-shirts are available in red or forest green, and long-sleeved shirts are available in navy blue. Feel free to call Wendy at 408/353-9093 with any questions. ☞

Upcoming Workdays

by Tessa Arguijo, Workday Coordinator

Hello Everyone,

Thank you to all who attended the recent workday. It was a great success with basically everything on the list being finished. What a great start!

For those of you who were unable to make this first workday there are two additional ones scheduled, Saturday, January 20th and Sunday, March 18th. PLEASE NOTE DATE CHANGE, the date for the March Workday has been changed because of the Auction being scheduled for March 3rd. We didn't want to spoil the late night fun because folks had to get up for a work day the next day!

The work day requirements are 4 hours per family (4 hours for 1 person or 2 hours for 2 people). Those families with more than one child attending need only complete one workday requirement (4 hours). Families may elect to buy out for \$150.00. Please notify Rebecca or Tessa if you intend to buyout or are unable to attend your workday at least 7 days beforehand or you will be required to pay an additional \$15.00. Voting Board members are exempt from having to fulfill their work day requirement because of the additional hours their positions require.

If you have any questions please contact:

Tessa Arguijo, Workday Coordinator 408/356-2478 arguijo@comcast.net

- or -

Rebecca Curran, Facilities Chair 408/353-4443 rebecca@rkg.com ☞

Auction 2007 Update

by Ann Du Bois and Sherry McNamara,
Auction 2007 Co-Chairs

Plans are moving along smoothly for the LGSONS Auction to be held on March 3, 2007. We were very pleased to receive such positive and enthusiastic responses from the LGSONS community regarding this year's Auction plans. We really appreciate your support! Please continue to keep your ideas, questions and feedback coming. THANKS!

Everyone's committee jobs of course vary in terms of when the volunteer hours will be done. Some people will be completing their committee job this Fall while others will primarily contribute their time and talent during the day and night of March 3rd. Whatever committee job you take on, there are a few things all of can do now to support the Auction:

Make sure your calendars are marked! Save the evening of March 3, 2007! Our Auction is going to be a blast! You can also invite special friends and family members to come to this fun, adults'-night out event. Official invitations will be sent out in the new year.

Start thinking about what you could contribute to the Auction! Each LGSONS family is required to contribute \$50 worth of goods or services to the Auction. Detailed ideas will be sent your way later this year. But the possibilities are endless. You might consider pooling resources with friends to contribute a special something for the Auction.

We all can also start thinking about possibilities for class projects. Class projects have traditionally been hugely popular items at the LGSONS Auction. In the past, classes have created special projects that evoke memories and the special spirit of Mountain School. We can all start talking with our fellow parents to get some ideas cooking! Class projects are a special part of the Auction offerings and can be lots of fun to put together!

Please let us know if you would like to discuss anything with us. Thanks again for all your support!

-Ann (408/279-2092; annmariadubois@yahoo.com)
-Sherry (408/353-3556; sherry@scsi.com) ☞

Watsonville "Christmas Project"

by Stevie Caseres,
Community Service Liason

Watsonville Farm workers gift drive begins early November through mid December. Please look for "gift angels" in the parents room soon and consider donating a requested gift for those who may not have gifts this Christmas. Gladys, the volunteer organizer we are working with, is very excited to have us join her team this year. The Mountain School has been involved with the "Christmas Project" many times in the past. Here is an excerpt from Gladys's thank you letter from 2004:

"On Wednesday, December 24th at 11am a caravan of 15 cars and trucks loaded with beautiful wrapped gifts and sparkling new bikes departed for the migrant Labor Camps of Santa Cruz County. Although it was raining and we got pretty wet loading up the trucks and cars, it was impossible to ignore the excitement and joy beaming from everyone's faces.

As we arrived at our first destination we were greeted by a throng of anxious children bristling with anticipation....I wish you could have been there to see the joy in the eyes of the children as a huge bag, packed with Christmas gifts, was delivered to their front door.

This year, your selfless love and dedication has made it possible for over 300 needy families, consisting of over 1500 individuals, to share in the celebration and joy of Christmas. Your gifts have brought happiness not only to the children who received them, but their parents as well, who were able to see the sparkle in their eyes as their Christmas wishes were realized."

I hope each family will consider making a small donation to help those families less fortunate than we are. We are a community blessed in so many ways...our little school house a magical place, so safe and loving for our children to explore and learn. Let's spread a little magic this year....

Look for more information in coming e-mails. Questions? Please feel free to contact at: stevie@slaughters.com. ☞

Shopping For The Holidays Fundraiser

by Tracy Halgren, Board Chair

*Wednesday, November 15, 2006
10 am - 8 pm*

Learning Express and All Ears Audiobooks will donate 20% of total purchases made by LGSONS families, friends and faculty back to the school.

Learnings Express

1350 El Paseo de Saratoga, San Jose 408/871-0499

What you will find at Learning Express:

- Free Gift Wrapping
- Toys that inspire creativity & stimulate child development
- Great games and Dazzlin' Dress up
- Awesome art supplies and sensational science kits
- Personalized paraphernalia
- Outrageous outdoor gear
- Creative construction

All Ears Audio Books

*1026 El Paseo de Saratoga,
San Jose 408/370-7003*

What you'll find at All Ears:

- 900+ Children's and Young adult titles for sale or rent
- Classics, best sellers, new releases
- 20% off special orders (Friday delivery)
- Unlimited rental plan gift certificates
- Wide holiday gift selection for grown ups too!

Shop anytime between 10 am & 8 pm and just tell them you are with LGSONS or Mountain School and we will get 20% back on all purchases! ☺



(Let's Hear It, continued)

the ombudsman is completely confidential.

A suggestion/comment box will be placed in the parent's room. Any concerns, questions, suggestions, kudos may be placed in the box and it becomes the job of the ombudsman to review all items within. From there, one of two things happens: the two ombudsmen review the content and bring it before the board, or they will address and answer the question through direct correspondence. But remember, all contact with the ombudsmen can be confidential if you so choose.

At this point, I would like to recognize, salute and introduce two wonderful Mountain School women who have agreed to be our school's ombudsmen. Jody McCalmont, mother of Yelena Bruder in the 4/5's class has been a long time Mountain School parent. Jody's eldest daughter, Claire, is an alumni of the school and is in third grade. Jody has served on the board in many capacities throughout her Mountain School tenure and I know she will be a wonderful resource for parents. Our other ombudsman is Angie Davidson, head teacher of the 3/4's Monday class. Angie is also a long time Mountain School parent. Both her daughters, Julia who is now is 2st grade and Sophie who is in kindergarten, are alumni of the school. Angie has also served on the board in many capacities, including chair for two years. She was also the lead teacher in the Saturday 2's class last year. Angie not only has knowledge as a parent, as a past board member but as a teacher. We are very fortunate two have found such capable women to fill this role. I encourage you to utilize them when and if you feel the need.

Keep in mind; you are always welcome to approach any board member, teacher or your class rep with any concerns or questions. But the ombudsmen are there if you feel you need a confidential ear.

-Tracy Halgren, Board Chair ☺

(Life Cycles, continued)

not to continue eating and drinking so her death was not unexpected but I happened to be back here at home when she died. I asked my brother to please make sure her body was not removed until I could return to say my last goodbye. After a quick flight back to Portland I was able to be with her for the whole afternoon. As my brother and I packed up her clothes and personal things I could stop and give her another hug or share some thoughts. And even though it was only her body that was left I still felt comforted in some strange way. During this fall my thoughts have turned to my mom more frequently and I've recently come to the conclusion that my years at nursery school sharing dead animals, having funerals for them with the children and burying our 3 family dogs down in the woods below our house were wonderful preparation for accepting my mother's death more easily. So when your child finds a dead butterfly, fish, mouse or whatever, examine it respectfully, wash your hands and give it a loving funeral. In such simple ways you are preparing your family for the big issues to come.

Love, Marie

.....

A Note from Teacher Jill:

This is from a letter written to me by a parent.

"Tonight our dinner conversation turned to guardian angels. I asked if she remembered who mine was. "Your grandma," she said. Then I asked, "Who is yours?" She thought a minute and said, "the dead squirrel."

This squirrel had been brought to school in the beginning of the previous year, its meaning still reverberating. She used the event of caring and grieving for a dead animal to help bring understanding to the recent death of her uncle. Her compassion, and ours, is not limited. Bringing animal beings is a way to encourage its expression.

Love, Jill



Homes for the Holidays

by David Casper, Animal Chairperson

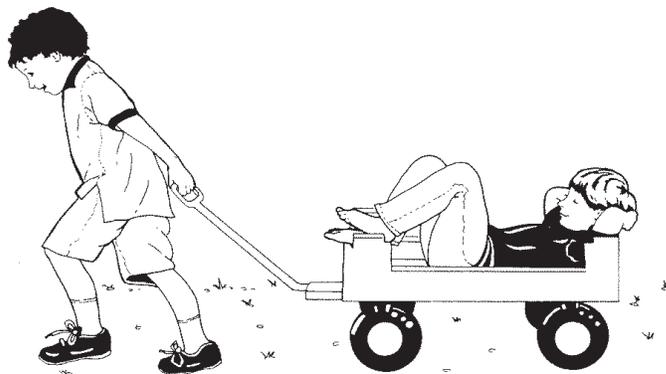
I hope that everyone has had the opportunity to meet our schoolhouse animals by the time you read this. The guinea pigs, Cinnamon and Cocoa, and the chickens, Poppy, Tallulah, and Alice, have returned from last year. The three rats, Larry, Moe and Curly, are new this year - thanks to Teacher Marie's neighbor.

As you probably know, the animals spent most of the summer away from the schoolhouse. The chickens went back into the coop in our backyard. They rejoined their sisters with a minimum of fuss and provided us with plenty of eggs! I want to personally thank the Mountain School families that helped us to take care of the other animals. Laura Grant took the rats into her home for quite a while (and was reluctant to let them go!) and the guinea pigs spent time with Teacher Jutta and with JoAnn Lambkin & Jim Gensheimer from the 4/5's class.

We're now looking for volunteer families to host our rats and guinea pigs over the holidays. There will be one week over the Thanksgiving Recess (November 20th to November 26th) and two weeks over the Holiday Break (December 20th to January 2nd).

If you would enjoy some cute and furry visitors for all or part of this holiday season, please let me know! This is the perfect opportunity for your child to experience having a pet, without the long-term commitment.

David Casper
david@clancasper.net
408/353-9728



Keep It Clean

by Bruce Hyman; 4/5's Assistant Teacher

Over the past several years there has been an influx of antibacterial hand soaps on the U. S. market. Common sense might suggest that this is a great idea to limit the transmission of viral or bacterial diseases through the hands. However, further evaluation has shown problems with these products. Most of the products contain either Triclosan or Triclocarbon. The soaps tend to be drying to the skin and can cause eczema type reactions as well. Even more importantly, they can cause resistance of more powerful bacteria to our systemic antibiotics. This also can effect the environment as these antibiotic chemicals are delivered to our water treatment plants.

When I was in my medical training, good old soap and water was the first choice of treatment for superficial wounds and even surgeons at the time scrubbed with soaps containing no antibiotics. While a case can be made for the use of antibiotic soaps in the medical field, its use for routine hand washing is not necessary and in fact may be detrimental.

We have started to wash with Castile soap and water at school. All it takes is a bottle of water, a drop of the condensed soap and a rinse and this has worked well. It works well on the road as well. Liquid Dr. Bonners or other castile condensed liquids are available at drug stores and Trader Joes's. This can then be transferred to a small plastic container for the road and any source of water used before and after the soap is applied.

Try it out. ☞

From the Editor

This is the last issue of the Observatory for this calendar year. The deadline for the next newsletter is Wednesday, December 20th. Distribution is planned for early January. Please send all submissions for consideration to mtnmama@garlic.com.

Happy Holidays!

*Sonia Casper
Editor ☞*

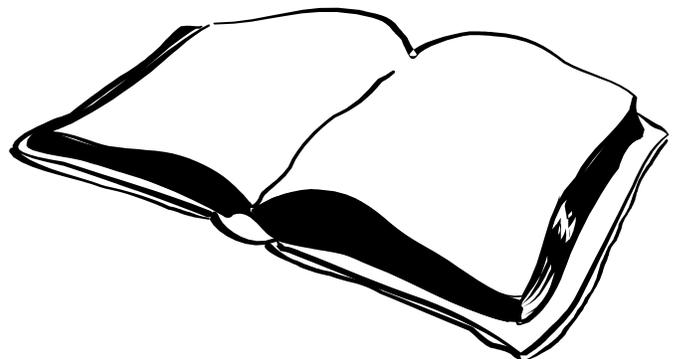
Scholastic To Donate Books On Our Behalf

by Jane Johnson, Scholastic Book

If we read 100 books to our children by December 31, 2006, Scholastic will donate 100 books on our behalf to kids in need! Simply let me know at the end of each week by email (jcwjohns@yahoo.com) how many books you have read that week. Once we hit the 100 book goal, I'll let both our community and Scholastic know and they'll do the rest. This is in conjunction with other schools across the U.S., up to 1 million books total donated through their Literacy Partners: Hello Friend, First Book, Reach Out and Read, and Save the Children. You're welcome to learn more about these charities at www.Scholastic.com/ClassroomsCare.

Our next order deadline is November 16th. Keep an eye out for the new flyers. What a wonderful gift for our school and these families. When placing your order please consider adding a book to your order to donate to the "Watsonville 'Christmas Project' ". If you'd like a head start, look online at www.Scholastic.com/parentordering and enter our ID: LGSONS and Password: Books. You can place your order at any time up until the 16th. Orders will arrive at school by the beginning of December (usually 2 weeks after the school's orders are placed).

So far this year we've been able to acquire for the school a copier and laminator, in addition to great books for our kids and teachers. All of these are at no charge to our school due to the points we've accumulated through our community's book purchases. Thank you, thank you, thank you very much! ☞



Roasted Fall Vegetables

from Sonia Casper



Ingredients:

- 2 lbs butternut squash (about 1 medium), peeled, seeded and cut into 1 1/2 - inch pieces
- 2 lbs red new potatoes (scrubbed and quartered)
- 1 lb medium red onions (about 2-3), peeled and quartered
- 1 lb carrots (6-8 medium), halved lengthwise, if thick cut into 1 1/2 inch lengths
- 4-6 cloves garlic, peeled and smashed
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- course salt and pepper
- herb of choice, rosemary or thyme are excellent (optional)

Directions:

- ① Preheat oven to 450 degrees.
- ② Divide vegetables and garlic between two rimmed baking sheets, dividing evenly, toss with olive oil and 2 tsp salt, 1/4 tsp pepper, and herb if desired.
- ③ Roast until vegetables are tender and beginning to brown, 40 - 50 minutes, tossing them and rotating sheets from top to bottom halfway through.
- ④ Serve hot or at room temperature. (To store: Let cool, place in an airtight container, and refrigerate up to 3 days. Pour off any accumulated liquid before using.)

Note: can also be used tossed in green salads, on top of pizzas, in lasagna or blended with water or broth to make soup.

Enjoy! ☞

Calendar

MAKE AN ADORABLE SOCK HORSE - MINI-COURSE

*Thursday, Nov. 9th
7:00pm - 9:00pm at the Little Red Schoobouse*

For more information see page 10

VETERANS DAY - NO SCHOOL

Friday, Nov. 10th

LEARNING EXPRESS & ALL EARS SHOPPING DAY

*Wednesday, Nov. 15th
10 am - 8 pm*

See page 6 for more info.

HOLIDAY SCRIP ORDER DUE DATE

Friday, November 17th

Info and order forms should have been handed out at your last Circle Meeting. Please contact Marie Crawford (408/371-4322) or Shilpa Young (408/559-3767).

THANKSGIVING BREAK - NO SCHOOL

*Tuesday, Nov. 21st to
Sunday, Nov. 26th*

LOS GATOS HOLIDAY PARADE

Saturday, Dec. 2nd

BUILDING HEALTHY FAMILIES - MINI COURSE

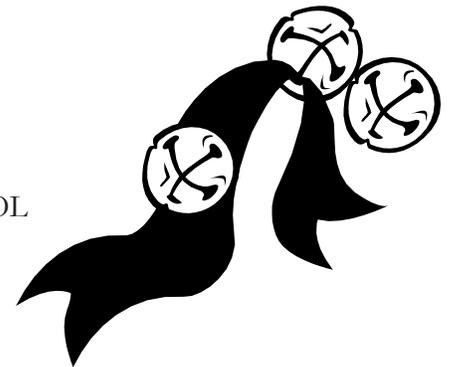
*Tuesday, Dec 12th
7-9pm, location TBD*

For more info see page 10.

HOLIDAY BREAK - NO SCHOOL

*Wednesday, Dec. 20th through
Tuesday, Jan. 2nd*

School will resume Wednesday, January 3rd.



A Day In The Life Of Bev Bos

from a recent email sent by Bev Bos

Dear friends,

“You have to come over here, right now!”

It was Bev calling from the pre-school to insist that I come see what the kids had created at the art area. I dropped what I was doing and hustled over. Good thing I only live two minutes away because as I drove up I saw that Bev and six of the children had been sitting out in front of the school watching for me the whole time. As I pulled up I could tell from their excitement that whatever it was, it was going to be good.

“Yea! Come on!”

“Hurry!”

“Come see what we did!”

I followed them into the school and as I turned toward the Art Area I came upon what I can only label as a real masterpiece and, judging from the scale, it obviously involved equal parts inspiration and perspiration. The entire table was covered with color and nearly every possible piece of art material they could lay their hands on. I was at a loss and could only utter, “Wow.” I soon noticed that everyone standing there had begun a slow procession around the table -- at times looking, shaking our heads, pointing here and there, and talking about what went on. There were all kinds of colors (I honestly couldn't tell if it was tempura or liquid water color) and as I looked

close I could make out confetti, and plastic springs, feathers, various pieces of colorful wood, and paper -- an amazing medley of painting, sculpture and collage.

It wasn't too long before the kids ran off to pursue other things and I was left standing there with Bev and Lori, the parent who was in charge of the Art Area that morning. I asked Lori if she remembered how it all got started. She told me one of the young boys had accidentally tipped over a small cup of water color. He immediately looked up at her and she could tell from the look in his face that he assumed he had done something wrong.

She grabbed a towel and lay it over the spill. After sopping it up, she held up the towel and said to him, “Well, let's see how my towel looks, now.”

He looked at the towel and then back down to the table and nonchalantly tipped over another small cup of color. He began spreading the paint out over the table, gradually mixing in more paints until the entire table was awash in color. A group of girls noticed what was going on and asked if they could join in. “No, I'm not finished yet,” he insisted. Every few minutes they would ask, “How about now?” Nearby the adults had already begun clearing off a table for the girls to use. But before things could really get going on the second table, the boy relented, “If you still want to paint here it's okay now.” Thus began a wholly collaborative effort of transforming the art table into an extravagant work of art. I purposely chose the word “extravagant” to

describe the results because, as many of you know, children are “good starters, but not good stoppers” -- one of many realities I learned about young children from Bev. This moment could easily have progressed to the point where everything in the school that was not nailed down could have ended up on the table. It took some masterful guidance on Bev's part to gently rein-in the process without stifling their enthusiasm. “Let's take a good look at what we've done so far.” What ensued from this suggestion was that the children made the subtle passage from “reaction to reflection” -- something that is nonexistent in 3 year-olds, rare in 4 year-olds, but magically begins to blossom in 5 year-olds.

“Could it ever be called wasteful if it nourishes the creative spirit and soul of a child?” -- Bev Bos

Another of the pithy statements from Bev that has stuck with me, which also fits here is, “children have to use too much.” Experience, whether it entails amounts of effort or materials, has to approach extremes in order for a child to determine in the end what is suitable for them. A mom at the school shared with me that her son painted his entire body after a reading of the children's book “I Ain't Gonna Paint No More.” The next day he was content to just dab a little on his wrist. And, after that, it ended. He had sorted out what felt right for him.

To Lori's credit she decided to leave cleaning the art table until the very

(continued on pg 9)

(A Day In The Life Of Bev Bos, cont.)

last moment. The afternoon class would be coming in just 20 minutes but she knew that this was a moment worth preserving for as long as she could. (I'm sure she wouldn't mind me adding that this probably would have happened much differently when she was new to the school). Which brings me to a few more of the important phrases that Bev always peppers her parent education moments with, "Will the end of the world come if I let this go?" and "Could a child possibly learn something from this?"

Of course, the answers are "no to the first question and yes to the second."

This also addresses a notion I fear is shared by a lot of people who have never visited this preschool-- that it's "anything goes" here. This is not true at all. It's frustrating to know that so many share the image of children running helter-skelter, parents and teachers frazzled, chaos reining inside and out -- which is simply not the case. A much more accurate description would be; children thoroughly engaged in whatever they have chosen to do, parents observing from the periphery but,

at the same time, making sure the children don't lack for materials or attention, and the teachers sharing their guidance with both children and parents, in an environment alive with a genuine buzz of sound, movement, laughter, discovery and play.

From the September issue of the Educational Leadership Journal comes the following quote attributed to Jean Piaget, "The principle goal of education in the schools should be creating men and women who are capable of doing new things, not simply repeating what other generations have done."

Had the kids ever done this before? Nope. Will I ever witness another tabletop art masterpiece on the order of what happened today? Maybe not.

But, I am sure there will be something equally as remarkable and unpredictable in the days to come -- if only we adults can find ways to be supportive of the children, understanding of their idiosyncrasies and curiosities and not so quick to focus on moment-killing, spirit-robbing concerns like, "Well, who cleans up?"

You know what I've realized? When we all pitch in it just doesn't take that long. But what is far-reaching is knowing that as we turned and walked out the door, a half dozen children were taking home a memory of this incredible day that they will remember for a long, long time.

Michael

A Note from Bev -

This kind of play experience is made possible and affordable the more we have relied on recycling places for our art supplies. We have three places we depend on and whenever we are in a town that has a recycling place, and if time allows, I always stop by. Many times I will pick out bags of stuff and have them shipped home. Other times I will just send them a check and tell them, "I need some stuff." Once you've established a relationship with them, it's a wonderful feeling to trust them to come through for you. Our staff looks forward to the boxes arriving to see what we got. The anticipation of getting some stuff these kids can really use often makes it feel like every holiday rolled into one.

Love, Bev ☞

Annual Holiday Parade... Mark Your Calendars!!

The annual Los Gatos Holiday Parade is Saturday, December 2nd. Let us gather together with our families and friends that morning and show off our Mountain School spirit by marching together in the parade. LGSONS red t-shirts &/or sweatshirts are perfect attire to show that spirit. So if you have one, wear it, if not put in your order.

If yours is in the laundry come parade morning, just don your favorite red shirt/top and come on down. Start looking for bells to shake, wagons to decorate and friends and relatives to take pictures as you all go by!! More info to follow soon. ☞



Upcoming Mini-Courses

by Linda Agarwal, Programs Co-Chair

Make an Adorable Sock Stick Horse

Thursday, Nov 9th

7-9 pm at the little red school house

Instruction by Teachers Jan and Karyn

Cost: \$10

Just in time for the holidays, join our annual festive tradition with Mountain School Teachers Karyn and Jan to make an adorable sock stick horse. Made out of old socks or new, stitched and stuffed to become a horse with bridle and rein. Each one is a bit different than the other, ears back or ears forward, old buttons or new, yarn manes and forelocks -- a special treasure for a child to ride and play with again and again. Please bring your own sock to decorate, strong upholstery thread, long (doll) needle, yarn, lace, buttons and other favorite notions to decorate with. Wooden stick and stuffing will be provided as well as a selection of materials from past years, if needed.

Building Healthy Families – Especially During the Holidays

Tuesday, Dec 12th

7-9pm (location TBD)

Speaker: Stephanie Barry Agnew, B.A.

What exactly is a “Healthy Family”, and what can we as parents do to create one? Of course, the answer to that question is different for every family, but in this workshop you will explore what it might mean for yours.

With Stephen Covey’s “7 Habits of Highly Effective Families” as a foundation and incorporating Mary Pipher’s “The Shelter of Each Other”, and the ideas of others we will discuss how to create a family environment where there is communication, trust, respect, affirmation and support for all the members – (especially including parents!). You will learn about how to develop a “Family Mission Statement” and how important it is to balance work, family, and personal time by setting priorities, and particularly during the holidays, the critical role that family rituals, traditions, and stories play in the creation of that “Healthy Family” we all strive for. We will also discuss ways to “de-commercialize” the holidays and really enjoy the time together.

Bio: Stephanie has an extensive background in Early

Childhood Education with 20 years of teaching experience in Palo Alto area schools. She was trained at Bing Nursery School while getting her degree at Stanford and has taught all preschool age groups. She owned her own small preschool in Palo Alto for 5 years and worked as a parent educator at The Children’s Health Council for 6 years where she was also the director of the Parent Education Program for 2 years. Since 2002 she has been working independently and for the Parents Place in Palo Alto as a Parent Educator and Preschool Consultant. Stephanie’s specialties include young child behavior management, Kindergarten readiness, school choices and preschool teacher training and support. She teaches parenting classes, gives one-session talks, leads teacher-training workshops, observes children at home and at school and offers individual parents information and support about a wide array of parenting issues. ☞

Open House

by Aimee Frank

Marketing Communications



Sunday, January 21, 2007

11:00am - 2:00pm

at the schoolhouse

The Open House is a great opportunity for interested families to visit our schoolhouse, meet some of our wonderful teachers and learn more about our unique program. Families will have a chance to experience our school environment and activities firsthand. Have your friends mark their calendars! Please note that priority registration begins in January as well. Please encourage anyone you know who is interested in our school to get their applications in during the priority registration period.

For more information please contact Aimee Frank at: 408/371-6882 or afrankdesign@sbcglobal.net. ☞