

# THE OBSERVATORY

Welcome to the 2016-2017 School Year!

## Calendar Highlights

- SEPT 25** Logo Gear Order Due
- OCT 15/16** Fall Photo  
Mini-Sessions
- NOV 6** Turkey Trot
- JAN 19** Winter Raffle Begins
- APR 30** May Faire

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## Dear Families,

Even though I'm never quite ready to let go of the last lingering days of summer, once we have our first staff meeting and meet the new families at orientation, I suddenly transition and find myself eager to jump in to a brand new year! I hope you are too. With that in mind, and on behalf of all the teachers, let me warmly welcome you to a year of adventure and discovery at Mountain School!

For the first time in 20 years, we will be starting school in a brand new place, the Cooley area of Stevens Creek Park. The teachers have been exploring this new outdoor play area and are looking forward to sharing some special spots with you and your children. Water, sand, rocks, trees, critters...it has it all! However, along with the splendors of nature, come some risks. Be sure to read the article on ticks in this issue so you'll know how to avoid them, how to do tick checks and what to do if you find one. Being prepared is your best defense.

We also have some new teachers and assignments this year. We welcome Carolyn Mulcahy back to Mountain School to teach the 3s class. She found that being a student at SJSU didn't necessarily have to preclude teaching! Debra Brender who taught with us years ago is back as an assistant in the Saturday 2s class. Her 2 sons, now in college, are Mt. School alum. Welcome Debra! Teacher Lilo has moved from assisting in the 3/4s to being the head teacher of the Wednesday 2s and will be assisted by Tricia Sunderland who formerly worked in the Saturday afternoon class. Your children will surely benefit from the love these wonderful teachers have to share with them as you will from their experience and knowledge.

There is one other item I wish to let you know about up front so any rumors you might hear won't worry you unnecessarily. We have been lucky to have the little red schoolhouse as our home for almost 40 years. Lakeside School is our landlord. Last year, they had a bond measure fail by a slim margin. The funds they had hoped to raise this way are necessary for their survival. Thanks to the hard work of a group of



dedicated parents, the measure will appear again on the November ballot. We are hoping it passes this time so Lakeside can continue serving the mountain community. Should it fail, there is a good chance the school would be closed and the land sold. We have some ideas on the back burner about what we might do if this comes to pass. For now, we will support them in any way we can so we can call the little red schoolhouse home for years to come.

I'll leave you with some provocative reading which came my way through the Community Playthings newsletter. Many early childhood programs have had mandates imposed upon them to push academic skills at the expense of play. Luckily, in our association with LGS Recreation, we are free of these mandates and can pursue a developmentally appropriate and play-based curriculum which gives children the opportunity to learn through experience. If you are interested in this topic or would like some research-backed information to "defend" your choice of a play-based school to family or friends, please read Diane Levin's article about the vital role of play in the lives of young children at <http://www.communityplaythings.com/resources/articles/2016/endangered-play>

*Love, Leslie*



# Health and Safety

Jane Auh, Health and Safety Coordinator

## Outdoor Glitches: About Tick Unhitches and Poison Oak Itches!

### TICKS

*"I found a tick imbedded under my armpit which I wanted to have tested. My husband took it to the Santa Clara County lab and it was negative for Lyme disease. I want you all to have this info at hand if you should need to do the same. Remember to check yourself and your children thoroughly every time you come in from the outdoors. I changed my clothes but not my bra and that is where it was hiding."*  
 - Teacher Marie

The start of the new school year is a great time to review a couple of outdoor hazards.. As Teacher Marie notes, you should do a thorough check of yourself and children after possible tick exposure. You can use a full length mirror to check all parts of your body. When checking children, remember to look under arms, in and around ears, inside the belly button, behind the knees and between the legs, around the waist and in hair. Also remember to examine your gear as ticks can come into the home on backpacks and clothes then attach to you later. You can put clothes in a dryer on high heat for 10 minutes to kill ticks on dry clothing after you come indoors. If washing is needed, use hot water to wash them. If clothes cannot be washed in hot water, then tumble dry on low heat for 90 minutes or high heat for 60 minutes until clothes are warm and completely dry.

#### To Remove a Tick:

- Use tweezers to grasp the tick as close to the skin surface as possible. If you do not have tweezers, use your fingers protected with a tissue or paper.
- Pull straight up using gentle but steady firm pressure. Do not twist or jerk.
- Do not crush or squeeze the tick.
- Wash affected skin and your hands thoroughly after removing the tick.
- Do not use alcohol, petroleum jelly or a hot match to remove the tick.

A handy tool for removing ticks from pets (and people) is available online and at feed and pet stores. Dispose of a live tick by wrapping it tightly in tape, placing it in a sealed ziploc bag, or dunking it in alcohol. Never crush a tick with your fingers.

The bacteria which causes Lyme disease is spread through the bite of infected deer ticks or western blacklegged ticks. In most cases, the tick must be attached to the skin for 36-48 hours or more before the Lyme disease bacteria can be transmitted. Most people are infected through the bites of immature ticks called nymphs which are the size of a poppy seed (while the adult tick is the size of a sesame seed).



Duration of tick attachment is important to determine the risk of Lyme disease. A tick walking on the skin surface or that is easily removed has not yet starting the feeding process and is not capable of causing Lyme disease. If the tick has been attached for less than 36 hours, it is unlikely to have transmitted disease. Please consult with your doctor if you have questions.

#### Tick Testing:

- Place the whole tick, preferably alive, in a ziploc bag with a moist cotton ball. Keep in the refrigerator or freezer until you are able to submit it to the lab.
- Download a tick submittal form from the Santa Clara County Public Health Department website.
- Mail tick and check for \$15 to Santa Clara County Public Health Laboratory at 2220 Moorpark Ave, 2nd floor, San Jose 95128 (408-885-4272). You can also drop off the tick directly to the lab.
- Ticks are tested every Tuesday. The lab will call you on Tuesday if it is positive. If negative, there will be no phone call and they will mail you the lab report.

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### POISON OAK

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Many people are sensitized to urushiol which is the allergic compound found in poison oak. Touching poison oak can cause red, itchy skin which can progress to skin swelling or a rash of red bumps or blisters. "Leaves of three, let them be" is a helpful reminder to identify and avoid poison oak. But poison oak can look different depending on the season. Poison oak can grow as a dense shrub or as a climbing vine. The color of the leaves can be bronze, bright green, yellow-green or reddish. The plant can have greenish-white or tan berries.

After a known exposure, you should take off any contaminated clothing and gently wash the skin with mild soap and water as soon as possible. Fingernails should be washed carefully to remove any urushiol under the nails. Vigorous scrubbing is not recommended as this can worsen possible skin symptoms.

Skin symptoms usually start within four hours to four days after urushiol exposure. Sometimes the rash can occur at different times in different people: a rash can occur on a different part of the body (for example, the arms) several days after the initial rash on the hands. This does not mean that the reaction is spreading from one area of the body to another. Poison oak is not contagious and cannot be passed from person to person. But urushiol can be carried under fingernails and on clothes; if another person comes in contact with the urushiol, he/she could develop poison oak rash.

Poison oak dermatitis usually resolves in 1-3 weeks without treatment. To help relieve itching, oatmeal baths, cool wet compresses and topical steroid creams can be used. For blisters, astringents such as Burow's solution or Domeboro may help discomfort. Oral antihistamines do not tend to help relieve itching caused by poison oak but the antihistamines that cause drowsiness (such as Benadryl) may help you ignore the itching while sleeping. For severe poison oak dermatitis, consider seeking medical help.

We're all looking forward to a fun, educational and healthy school year!



# Health and Safety

Jane Auh, Health and Safety Coordinator

## No-Nut Policy



Mountain School is a **peanut- and tree nut-free school**. We ask all families to avoid nuts and nut products in all cooking projects and in any snacks or lunches brought to school. This includes the schoolhouse, the outdoor school sites, and any school family picnic. This is in deference to children with extreme, often life-threatening, peanut or tree nut allergies.

Soybean butter and sunflower seed butter (“sunbutter”) are safe, nut-free alternatives.

## Sick Policy

Children (and adults) should come to school only when healthy. Then, they are happier and full of energy for play, projects, and hikes. If they are sick, they have difficulty enjoying their day. They also put other children, teachers, and adults at risk for becoming sick.

Please use these guidelines to identify when an illness is contagious. Remember, this is in your child’s best interest as well as in the interest of protecting other children from unnecessary exposure to illness.

### Fever

A fever of 100° F. or above means a child is infectious. The child may return to school when her temperature has been below 100° F. for 24 hours without the use of medication such as Tylenol or Motrin, and her appetite and activity level have returned.

### Eye Infections

Most eye infections are highly communicable. The child may come to school only after redness and drainage have resolved.

### Ear Infections

A child with an ear infection is not usually infectious. He may come to school as long as he is feeling well enough and is fever-free.

### Nasal Congestion and Cough

Many types of viruses cause colds and coughs, with some resulting in serious illnesses. Please keep your child home if she has a persistent runny nose (other than clear discharge) and/or persistent cough.

### Skin Infections or Generalized Rash

A child with an unexplained rash or skin lesions that are draining should be evaluated by a physician. He may come to school after appropriate treatment or with his physician’s consent.

### Sore Throat

A child with a fever and sore throat should stay home until her temperature is normal and she is feeling well.

### Vomiting

A child can come to school once he has been free from vomiting for at least 24 hours.

### Diarrhea

Diarrhea is defined as two or more loose, watery, or mucous stools in a 24-hour period. A child who has had diarrhea should return to school only after all three of these conditions are met:

- Temperature is below 100° F.
- Stools are normal when eating a semi-solid diet
- She is feeling comfortable.



# Fundraising

Tuan Pham, Fundraising Chair

## Funds Raised and Volunteer Recruitment

It was a pleasure coming to all the circle meetings and highlighting our fundraising model for the 2016-2017 school year! This model was so successful last year, that we will continue to follow the same recipe for success. Last year, we raised a total of over \$61K for our wonderful school! Our three main events brought in over \$16K for Turkey Trot, almost \$19K for Winter Raffle, and over \$11K for May Fair! This success was due to all the hard work of the Fundraising committee, the Fundraising Liaisons, and all the dedicated families! All funds raised goes into our general fund that pays for operating cost for our school! With everyone's continual participation, we will have another successful year in fundraising!

In order to do that, we still need some crucial roles to be filled. If you are interested, have any experience or willing to learn, please let me know. These following positions are still open and needs to be filled immediately:

Fundraising Liaisons, Solicitations, May Fair Co-Chair, Buy A Spot Team, and Food and Beverages Services.

## Get Your Logo On!

Jen Jewell-Larsen, Logo Gear Sales Coordinator

## Mountain School Logo Gear is now available to order!

Please visit <http://www.freewebstore.org/LGSONS> to order.

- **Orders are due by 5pm on Sunday, 9/25.**
- We expect garments to be at school for pickup by the **second or third week of October.**
- All profits go directly to the school!
- Please email Jen at [jenandnls@gmail.com](mailto:jenandnls@gmail.com) with any questions.



# Basecamp Tips

Ky and Tania Vong, Webmasters

Whether you are an old pro, or are new to using Basecamp, the members of the Board thought it would be prudent to outline some things to keep in mind when using this service. The “All School folder” goes out to everyone in our community which is about 200 people. Be aware that any comment or reply you make to a topic in this folder will be sent to all 200 people unless you change some settings. If sending your reply to 200 people is not your intent, here are some ways to avoid it:

- Avoid replying to the Basecamp thread through your e-mail. Your reply will go to everyone.
- If you add a comment through the Basecamp app on your cell phone, it will send it to everyone by default. If you scroll to the bottom of the “Add a comment” section, you can see who will receive your comment. There is a link at the very end allowing you to change the recipients.
- Using the web interface on your computer is similar. It will by default send your comment to everyone. After you click on the field to make a comment, scroll to the bottom to see or change who will receive your comment.
- If you would rather just send an e-mail directly, you can click on any member’s Basecamp icon (picture) to see their e-mail address (on your computer.) Copy and paste to send an e-mail.

## Discuss this message



**Bold**   *Italic*

- 

 Bullets   

- 1

 Numbers   Quote

To attach files drag & drop here or [select files from your computer...](#) or [G](#)

Your comment will be emailed to: Christi Zenteno/Forms Chair, Derek Almeida/Wallace / Board Chair, Jordan Emmart, Kerri Webb, Ky Vong/Webmaster, Lanyll Marissa Tuttle, Michele Moore, Patricia Darby, ~~Padra~~ Perez / Facilities Chair, Tai Hayden/Registration Chair and Thuan Pham ([change](#))

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# Our School Library

Courtney Boitano, Librarian

The new school year is an excellent time to check out some new books! We have a wonderful collection of books in the Parent Library for you to check out and enjoy. Topics range from child development, sensory processing, and learning, to popular titles such as "NurtureShock."

The Teacher Library is a shelf of large picture books also located in the schoolhouse parent room and was recently updated. Although the books are not on loan to enjoy at home, they can be read while you are at the schoolhouse with your child. Some of the social emotional books are excellent to help your child as they experience different transitions throughout toddlerhood. We also have books on nature, gardening, food and many animal books to fit each child's unique interests.

I will be showcasing books in this library column of the newsletter and would love book recommendations from Mountain School families! We recently checked out at the public library and enjoyed, "School's First Day of School," by Adam Rex.

On top of my pile of books is "The Conscious Parent" by Dr. Shifali Tsabary. Dr. Tsabary expounds on the parent-with-child relationship shifting away from the traditional parent-to-child approach.

What are your favorite back to school books? What's on your list of books to read?

Please send any recommendations to [cdboitano@gmail.com](mailto:cdboitano@gmail.com). To check out books from the parent library, please refer to the instructions on the parent library cabinet.



# Photo Opportunity

Kellie Kirby, School Photos Coordinator

## MOUNTAIN SCHOOL FALL FAMILY MINI SESSIONS

WWW.PAPEROWLSTUDIOS.COM

\$200

INCLUDES

30 MINUTE SESSION

10-15 HIGH RESOLUTION IMAGES

FOR DOWNLOAD

OCTOBER 15TH AND 16TH

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BOOK BY OCTOBER 1ST

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