



Nixon News

A Nixon PTA Newsletter

May 15, 2009—Issue 10

Principal's Corner *By Mary Pat O'Connell*

Dear Nixon Parents,

International Night – I had an absolutely wonderful time at my first Nixon International Night celebration! The booths, the food, the entertainment, the clothing and, most importantly, the people made for such great fun and fellowship. We are very fortunate indeed to live in such a diverse community. I am feeling very inspired to visit more countries around the world. What a gift it is to our children to attend school and find it so very commonplace to have friends from all across the globe. Many thanks to all who made this evening possible and in particular, Megan Cox, Kristina Hayes and Gioia Allegretti.

Field Day on Thursday, June 4 – We have another community building event for all students (K-5) at Nixon this year coming up on June 4. Field Day is being planned by teachers with help from our Student Council. Our goal is a morning of fun and good sportsmanship, building a sense of belonging to Nixon School across the grade levels. Students will rotate through a variety of field activities organized into three teams by color. We need about 25 parent volunteers to help with this fun event from 8:15 in the morning to about 11:30 AM. Please let us know if you can be there to help. As we get close to the day of the event your son or daughter will be finding out from his/her teacher which "Team" s/he is on – RED, PURPLE or GREEN. If s/he has a T-shirt or something in the appropriate color to wear, please plan to wear it on Thursday, June 4th. Please do **not** go out and buy anything new for this event.

Student Information Sheets - As we plan our final activities for this year, I know that many of you begin to think about next school year and wonder who will be your

child's teacher. This raises the question, "Can we request a teacher for our child?" My answer must be to ask you to refrain from making a request for a particular teacher. Nixon teachers and I will work hard to create groupings of children that enable effective instruction. I will do my best to complete this task before I leave at the end of June, but it always possible that further adjustments will need to be made in August as enrollment continues to change. We consider a wide variety of factors in making class groupings. These are listed on the accompanying green page. If you feel that you have some important information about your child that we may be unaware of, please take the time to fill out the form and return it to your child's teacher or the school office by May 29. **The form is optional; it is not required. Please do not request a particular teacher or the form will be returned to you.**

School supply orders for next year – Once again, we are offering parents the opportunity to preorder a set of school supplies selected by our teachers for each grade level. We are grateful if you can choose to participate in this, but it is entirely optional. We hope that it can save you time from running around and shopping during back to school week next fall. Supplies will be available for pick-up on the same day that students find out their class assignments for next year.

I will be out of town Friday, May 15 and Monday, May 18 attending my daughter, Maura's, college graduation in Washington. (Deb Lipari and Becky will deal with any emergencies while I'm gone.) I know that

Continued on page 2.

CALENDAR

Fri. May 22

Last Day to Vote for
Site Council

Mon. May 25

Memorial Day
No School

Mon. – Fri. May 25 – 29

5th Annual
Book Exchange
Nixon Library

Mon. Jun. 1

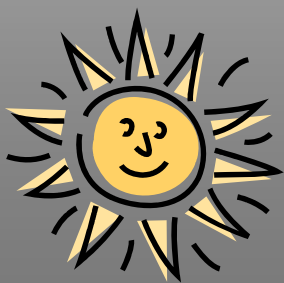
Site Council Meeting
2:40 p.m.

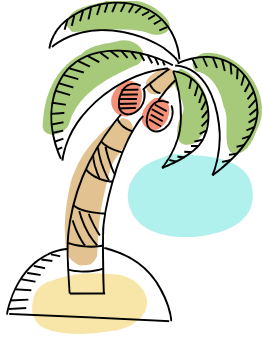
Wed. Jun. 3

4th and 5th Grade
Spring Music Concert
8:45 a.m.

Thurs. Jun. 4

Field Day
8:15 – 11:30 a.m.





About *Nixon News*

Nixon News is a PTA funded newsletter, designed to serve as a parent educational and information resource. It is published on Friday (except when holidays interfere) every three to four weeks. Submissions should be sent via e-mail to the editor, Vicki Dempsey. Either type the text directly in the body of the e-mail or attach a Microsoft Word Format file. If your article is on paper and cannot be submitted electronically or if you have a photo or graphic, please contact the editor for instructions. Deadlines are announced on page 2 (see below) of every issue. They are normally (but not always) the Thursday the week before publication. Articles may be edited for spelling, grammar, clarity, and length. All submissions must include your name and contact information.

Information in this newsletter is provided as a community service. The mention of any business, service, or organization in this newsletter does not imply endorsement by the Nixon PTA or the PAUSD.

Next Publication: Fri., Jun. 5
Deadline: Thurs., May 28
Principal: Mary Pat O'Connell
PTA President: Gioia Allegretti
Editor: Vicki Dempsey
Layout: Liz Fendorf

Principal's Corner *Continued from page 1.*

college graduation seems a very long way off for many of you who are busy parenting young children. However, it does not seem very long ago to my husband and I that Maura was in elementary school, practicing math, searching out new books in the library, writing ever longer stories and making friends, some of whom remain very important to her today. Enjoy each age and make the time to spend with your children sharing the things that you love to do. I treasure those memories of elementary school with Maura and know that she does too.

I look forward to thanking many of you in person at our Volunteer Appreciation luncheon on May 28. Thanks for all of your tremendous support of the students of Nixon School.

Mary Pat O'Connell



BE A PART OF THE NIXON PTA!

We are grateful for the many parents who volunteer to improve our children's experience at Nixon! There are still a few openings available:

- Back-to-School Picnic Coordinator
- 5th Grade Promotion Activities Chair
- Nixon Night Out Rebate Coordinator
- Co-Chair Gift Wrap Fundraiser
- Co-Chair 3rd Grade Bike Safety

For more information contact Leisa Waschura.

Thank you!



PTA President's Letter by Gioia Allegretti

As the school year comes to an end I am reminded just how grateful I am for the fantastic Nixon community. All the special events and activities that have taken place over the past year could not have happened without the continued support and participation of all the members of Nixon family (children, parents, teachers, staff and friends). Please continue to be involved in our school as much as you can as it benefits our children and us.

This year we welcomed our new principal, Mary Pat O'Connell. What an incredible job she has done here at Nixon. Her wonderful experience and gifts are apparent, as she has led the school with a balanced and thoughtful approach.

I want to thank the PTA board and chairs for all the effort they have put into work for the school. I am in awe of the talented and inspirational parents we have here at Nixon and I want to extend a most heart-felt thanks for sharing those gifts with all of us.

Another group that I'd like to welcome and congratulate is the incoming Nixon PTA Executive Board and the Chairs for 2009-2010. Our nominating committee did a fantastic job. Thank you.

I hope you will support these people next year as they work hard to make sure that the Nixon community stays strong and enriched. They cannot do this job alone so please volunteer to help where you can.

Congratulations and thank you for volunteering to be next year's leadership. Your 2009-2010 Executive Board members are:

President	Daisy Zook
Exec. VP	Gioia Allegretti
VP-Student Programs	Suzie Lincoln
VP-Family Programs	Catherine Matterson
VP-Fundraising	Sheryl Humble
VP-Communications	Tim Edmonds
Treasurer	Karen Jacobsen
Financial Secretary	Joyce Hung
Secretary	Harriet Roeder
Auditor	Emilie Lind
Historian	Jo Marcus
Parliamentarian	Leisa Waschura
PTA Council Rep	Gioia Allegretti
PTA Council Rep	Kim Bomar

A final thanks to Vicki Dempsey who has edited the Nixon News for the past 3 years. She has constantly strived to make it the best it can be and her efforts have made our paper an accurate and entertaining source of information.

Gioia

Children and Trees

A Perfect Combination to Celebrate Earth Day

Photos by Kevin Stevens

Nixon celebrated Earth Day on April 22nd by planting trees next to the 4th and 5th grade play structure. Chuck Mac-Donnell of PAUSD organized the landscaping, irrigation and the delivery of two beautiful Chinese Elm trees. Sharon Kelly of the non-profit, CANOPY, www.canopy.org, showed the children how to plant the trees and gave a brief talk on environmental benefits. Students who participate in the after school ceramics class run by PAPPAs Art have fired "Earth Day 2009" tiles that will be set around the base of a tree to commemorate the day. Thank you Annie Godfrey-Weber and the Nixon Green Team for organizing the event.

(Photos removed)

Future Nixon Student? C. Has Arrived!

News to share from Stephanie Han

C. C. was born to teacher Marie Legrand on March 22, 2009 at 7:08pm. She weighed 8lbs. 3oz. And was 21 1/4 inches long. Both Marie and C. are doing great and at home. Marie is looking forward to returning to Nixon next school year. The staff and community eagerly await Marie's return, but for now we wish them both the best and a good night's sleep!

SAVE THE DATES: TO ALL 5TH GRADE FAMILIES

From Shali Miklos

It is hard to believe but our 5th graders will graduate from Nixon in just over 3 weeks. They will have the opportunity to participate in several events that are intended to celebrate their achievements and provide a lasting memory of their elementary school years. These will include a promotion day ceremony & reception that is open to all fifth grade families, a swim party and a karaoke party. Finally, a Nixon Yearbook and Slide show (aired at the Promotion ceremony) are created to capture memories your fifth grader has of their friends and teachers at Nixon. Please mark your calendars with the following dates:

MEET THE TERMAN PRINCIPAL: Tuesday, May 19, Nixon Library from 7:00- 8:00 PM. (4th grade invited too) Parents will have an opportunity to meet with Terman principal Carmen Geidt. Ms Geidt will offer an informal introduction for parents, to Terman Middle School, and answer questions about the transition. Parents will have another opportunity to learn about Terman in the fall at Back to School Night.

STUDENT FIELD TRIP TOUR OF TERMAN MIDDLE SCHOOL: Friday, May 29. 5th grade classes have been invited to spend a morning at Terman Middle School as the school's guests. The purpose of the day is to give the Nixon fifth grade students a tour and general information secession to introduce them to the school. The result will be to facilitate a smoother transition academically and emotionally for all students. Students will use school bus transportation.

SPRING MUSIC CONCERT: Wednesday, June 3 at 8:45 AM. 4th and 5th grade students invite you to attend the Spring Music Concert. Please come and enjoy the music by our school Band, Orchestra, Beginning Strings, and General Music classes.

KARAOKE PARTY: Friday, June 5 from 6-9 PM in the Nixon Theater. If you would like to help please contact Silvia Griswald.

SWIM PARTY: Monday, June 8 from 10:00-1:30 at Fremont Hills Country Club. If you would like to help please contact Beth Most.

PROMOTION CEREMONY: Thursday, June 11, from 8:30-10:00 in the Nixon theater followed by a short reception. If you would like to help please contact Shali Miklos.

School Supplies for 2009-2010

A PTA Sponsored Program

With the busy lives we lead, why not let the Nixon PTA do your Back to School supplies shopping for you? The school supplies order form went home last week. More are in the front office. This order form will list all the school supplies you need by grade level.

Buying your school supplies through this avenue is so much easier on your pocket (gas prices, wear and tear on the car and you). No more running around to 3 or 4 stores to get the list of supplies for school. This year we are also offering the option of ordering your supplies online. Go to www.innisbrook.com to order. Click on: Buy School Supplies.

If you prefer paper – complete the form, attach your check, and forget about this until August when you come back for another fantastic year!

Questions? Please contact our chairperson: Judy Koebel.

Student's Speak

The May question was: Please recommend a book (or two or more!) for other students to read over summer vacation, and briefly explain why you recommend the book(s).

Responses are from:

L. S. - Kindergarten

I recommend Where the Sidewalk Ends by Shel Silverstein for 3 reasons:

- 1-He is a silly author
- 2-He writes poetry
- 3-This is my favorite poem:

*HAT
Teddy said it was a hat
So I put it on.
Now Dad is saying,
"Where the heck's
the toilet plunger gone?"*

A. O. - Grade 1

I recommend Old Turtle's 90 Knock-Knocks, Jokes, and Riddles because I like it and I think the school would like it.

S. C. - Grade 5

How would you feel if your mother died? And your dad moved you away from somewhere you've always loved? Then you were totally wrapped with a series of mystery with the disappearance of your best friend's mother. This is not a usual story at all.

This is the sad plot of Walk Two Moons, by the Newberry Medal Winner Author, Sharon Creech. As the young girl took a trip with her grandparents to Idaho, Salamana Hiddle discovered many aspects of life, friendship, happiness, and sadness.

I recommend this book because it was heartwarming, emotional, and I was very touched by the show of true feelings expressed in the book.

E. T. - Grade 3

I recommend the book Island of the Aunts. I recommend this book because it's funny, the author uses good detailed descriptions, and because she makes you want to keep reading. Once you start reading, you'll never want to stop, and once you stop, you'll wish the book were part of a series.

P. F. - Grade 3

I recommend Brisingr by Christopher Paolini because the story is exciting. It offers dragon rides, battles, magic and lots more. You will love this book!

A. T. - Grade 1

I would recommend any Roald Dahl book because they're funny and they make your imagination go wild! It's hard to pick a favorite, but my favorite would be Fantastic Mr. Fox because it is very, very funny!

CONGRATULATIONS to L. S., whose name was drawn from the group of contributors this month! L. will receive an item from the Nixon Spirit Shop. There will be a new drawing from next month's contributors . . . it could be YOU!

Question for June: What are you most looking forward to doing over summer vacation?

PLEASE VOTE!!!!
SITE COUNCIL ELECTIONS FOR THE 2009/2011 TERM

From Beth Most

The Nixon Site Council consists of an equal number of parents and staff members and is primarily an advisory group that provides staff and parental input on Nixon programs. Site Council is also responsible for developing a school plan, assessment criteria, and a budget to support the plan. Site Council is critical for school planning and program implementation.

For this election, we need to fill three parent vacancies. The Site Council candidates this year are Rika Bosmans, Alli Deeter, and Julie Tomz. Please read the candidate statements below and circle up to 3 of your choice, using this paper as your ballot, and return it to the Nixon office. Or, vote in the Nixon office by May 22.

Thank you for participating

Site Council Candidate Statement – RIKA BOSMANS

I am the parent of a Nixon first grader and an incoming kindergartener next school year. I have enjoyed volunteering in my son's classroom and have been room parent twice. Nixon is wonderful, diverse community and I would like to be a positive contributor to the school's Site Council.

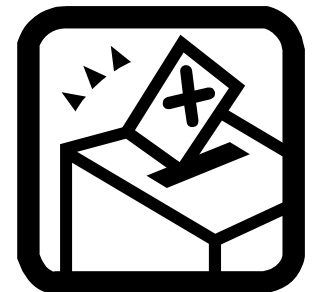
Prior to starting a family, I worked as a translator and event planner for a lobby office towards the European Union in Brussels, Belgium. I am now working part-time as a reference content consultant for Education.com, an education and child development site for parents. I am very interested in actively participating in Nixon's school planning and program implementation.

Site Council Candidate Statement – ALLI DEETER

I have been a Nixon parent, and active member of the Nixon community, since 2005. My oldest son is in 3rd grade, my daughter is in 1st grade, and my youngest son will be a kindergartner next year. For the past 4 years, I have volunteered in the classroom on a weekly basis, and like a lot of parents, have driven on almost every field trip possible. Most recently, I've also been an active participant in organizing and supporting the classroom as room parent for both my kids' classes. In addition, I served on the Nixon nominating committee, and have volunteered to coordinate next year's school assemblies. Professionally, I have a degree in political science/economics and a master's in psychology. I feel lucky that I can volunteer at my kids' school, and I treasure my time in the classroom. I welcome the chance to take my efforts a step further by serving on Site Council. I would love the opportunity to respond to the needs of the school, to help to create new initiatives, and to continue to foster a cohesive and thriving Nixon community.

Site Council Candidate Statement – JULIE TOMZ

I am excited about the possibility of serving as a member of the Site Council. I would bring to the Council my experience as a Nixon parent. I have two daughters -- a third-grader and a first-grader -- at Nixon, and my son will enter kindergarten in two years. I have volunteered in the classroom, at Nixon events, and most recently with the Nixon newsletter. In addition, I think the Council could benefit from my business background. I earned an MBA in 1998 and worked for seven years in management consulting before deciding to stay home full-time. Finally, I think my interest in journalism -- and my role as next year's editor of the Nixon News -- will enable me to communicate effectively with the Site Council and the broader Nixon community. Nixon is a wonderful school, and I would welcome your input about how to make it even better.



Nixon International Night 2009

By Gioia Allegretti

There is only one word to describe our Nixon International Night....WOW!! We had fantastic weather and a record turn out.

Our wonderful school and community come together to make this a special day. Thank you to the families who coordinated cultural booths. The booths were spectacular in colors, maps, crafts, clothes, games and many included wonderful samplings of treats. I can't think of a better way to learn about different cultures and history than in this engaging and fun environment. I know the effort was huge but the payoff was superb.

Thanks also to all the families who cooked dishes to share in the International buffet. We so appreciate the time and effort in sharing these incredible foods. A big thanks to the teachers who served dishes and joined in the coordination.

We are honored to thank the fantastic performers who were kind enough to share their wonderful talents with us. How lucky we are to have these cultural treasures enrich our lives. Our own Nixon Indian dancers performed in beautiful costume to get the entertainment off to an energetic start. The French Can Can dancers kept the energy going with their fun and colorful dance routines. The Stanford Talisman singing group wowed us all with their beautiful and amazing singing. We all wanted to head off for salsa lessons after watching the Stanford Salsa group dance so wonderfully. Mrs. Kaye's Orff various Nixon Orff Ensembles were a crowd favorite with dance routines and Orff music that got everyone on their feet. Finally the Japanese Taiko drummers ended the evening with a bang. Some lucky Nixon children even got a chance to try the drums.

A special thanks to Megan Cox and Kristina Hayes who worked with passion to make this event a total success. They inspire us everyday to be a welcoming and inclusive community. They went above and beyond to make this an enriching and special event for everyone.

(Photos removed)

Nixon International Night 2009 Continued...

(Photos removed)

In The Spotlight

**A New Nixon News Feature*

Ladera Oaks Junior, C. R., Wins “Little Mo” Northern California Tennis Sectionals

On Sunday, April, 19, 2009, C. R. of Los Altos Hills defeated #1 seed from Sacramento to win the "Little Mo" boys 10 and Under Northern California sectionals at Diamond Hills Sports Club in Oakley, CA. C. won his match 6-3, 6-1. C. is an active member of the Ladera Oaks Swim and Tennis Club junior tennis team in Portola Valley, CA and is coached by the club's Tennis Director and Head Tennis Professional, Ray Bilsey.

(Photos removed)

C. R. with his trophy at the “Little Mo” Northern California sectionals.

“It’s been a pleasure coaching C. and I believe he’ll be one of Northern California’s top junior players for years to come. Our entire club will be rooting for him at the ‘Little Mo’ regional’s,” said Coach Bilsey.

The top 8 junior players in Northern California for the boys age division “10 and under” were invited to play in the “Little Mo” sectionals at Diamond Hills. With this victory, C. will represent Northern California at the “Little Mo” Western Regionals at the California Tennis Club in San Francisco, CA on July 3 - 5, 2009. The “Little Mo” is a program of the Maureen Connolly Brinker Tennis Foundation, which furthers junior tennis development for boys and girls 8, 9, 10, 11 & under. The “Little Mo” is a nationwide tournament culminating in a national champion being crowned in each age division. Ladera Oaks runs a highly competitive junior tennis program, featuring numerous ranked Northern California juniors.

POSTCARDS FROM AFAR

From S. D., 3rd Grade

Hi from Western Australia -

I am living in Perth with my family while my dad teaches at the university. They call it the uni. We have met lots of interesting animals. We have seen lots of kangaroos like the one in the picture. They have sharp toes but are gentle. We took a boat to an island called Rottnest and saw a new animal called a "quokka." The only live on this island and are endangered, but there are thousands of them here. They are like mini-kangaroos that hop all around and are about the size of a small rabbit. I got a bike with gears and rode all around the island. There are no cars here. I can't wait to get home and see my dog and friends at Nixon.

5th Annual Book Exchange May 25 – May 29

From Janice Mulholland

Bring in your gently used books and trade them for "new – to- you" summer reading. Pick out one more book than the number you brought in to exchange (up to a 10 book limit per child). Books should be appropriate for K – 7th grade.



A Highlight from the 110th California State PTA Convention

April 30-May3, 2009 San Jose, Ca

Shared by Daisy Zook

PTA is essential to California's commitment to high standards in education, Jack O'Connell, California Superintendent of Public Instruction, told delegates from throughout California at the first general meeting this afternoon of the annual state PTA convention. "The PTA has long played a vital role in helping us to stay the course with programs that are working to help our children succeed," O'Connell told the PTA members, representing the organization's nearly 1 million volunteer members. "Without the PTA, we could not have made the important progress we've made in raising standards in our classroom and helping students achieve those higher standards," O'Connell added. The superintendent explained how he sees parental involvement as key to the state PTA's effectiveness. "Supportive parents are the backbone of educational success," he said. "We want our parents to remain engaged." O'Connell spoke of the need to redouble parental, school and community efforts to combat the achievement gap in education, which he described as a troubling and persistent problem. "It's the biggest civil rights issue of our time," O'Connell said, describing it as a matter of moral and economic imperative.

This was the 110th annual convention of the California State PTA, the state's largest and oldest children's advocacy organization. Delegates at the convention guide the organization, electing officers, voting on policy resolutions, and attending workshops with more than 80 to choose from.

Classroom Happenings

1st Graders Jam with GarageBand

From Joe Young

Drum roll please, ...1st graders finished their music instrument unit concluding with a field trip to Davies Symphony Hall. This week I introduced a new music unit with an aspect many of the students haven't experienced before. The students had fun checking out one of Nixon's COWs and learning how to make their own songs with the computers using the program, GarageBand! It was great to incorporate technology into our music curriculum and work on this special project. I especially enjoyed seeing the students explore the program, listen to and add different musical loops, and enjoy each other's songs.



Our Nixon Students Love to Read!

From Donna Rumwell

Did you know you can order books from the Scholastic Book Clubs website? It is now easier than ever to get books right into your child's hands. Here is how to get started: Go to www.scholastic.com/clubparents and register for your own username and password. When prompted enter the class code (get it from your teachers). You can then order books anytime 24/7. Every time you order, you help the class earn free books and learning materials for the classroom (as you do when ordering from the catalog.) Enjoy this convenient way to order books all summer and remember to update your class code each year.

Beyond Nixon

Sports Opportunities for Kids

For current sports opportunities, visit: palylink.paloaltopta.org/pages/sports.html

Parent Education

For current parent education opportunities, visit: www.paloaltopta.org

It is time to Honor Our Teachers!

"Whoever first coined the phrase 'you're the wind beneath my wings' most assuredly was reflecting on the sublime influence of a very special teacher." --Frank Trujillo

The Honor Your Teacher (HYT) campaign -- a Palo Alto tradition for over 20 years is in progress. Please honor the teachers who are making a difference in the lives of our young by donating to the HYT Fund. Proceeds from this fund support PiE's Teacher Grant Program. To ensure the teacher you honor is listed in an ad in the Palo Alto Weekly on June 5th, make sure your donation is received by us by May 29, 2009.

To donate, please visit
HYT Donation

Donations to PiE are 100% tax deductible.
Our Tax ID is 77-0186364

PAUSD Youth Art Show 2009

May 10 - May 31, Palo Alto Art Center, 1313 Newell Road, Palo Alto

Tues. - Sat. 10am-5pm, Thurs. 7-9pm, Sun. 1-5pm

Youth Art is an annual exhibit of artwork from PAUSD students grades K - 12 along with Cultural Kaleidoscope, collaborative artworks by Palo Alto and East Palo Alto students.

Opens Mother's Day, May 10. Opening night reception Wed. May 13, 5:30 - 8:00pm
Award presentation at 6:00pm: PAAC Foundation Graduating Senior Awards, Public Art Commission Youth Art Awards; Hands-on workshop for high school students, Pre-registration through Palo Alto high schools.

Sponsored by PAPP and PAAC, www.paacf.org, 329-2366.

Info: PAUSD Art Education, 329-3939