

SEPTEMBER
2011

The Observatory

LOS GATOS-SARATOGA OBSERVATION NURSERY SCHOOL



Memories

I have recently been thinking about memories: their power, their healing qualities. And then at our first Staff Meeting of the year, a 7 year old alumna came up to the Schoolhouse to play while we were preparing. She said, "Oh good - this is the place of my best memories when I was a little girl."

It reminded me anew that as teachers we are creating memories for your children here at Mountain School. I can't think of a better place - it is such a magical place for children where they can truly be children!

Memory is a way of holding onto the things we love, the things we are, the things we never want to lose.

The majority of the teachers are themselves alumni. We hold on to the memories of our own children at two and three and four and five. Some of you are alumni and are returning with your sons and daughters. I wonder what memories you have from your childhood here; and what memories your children will carry forward? What a wonderful shared legacy.

Your written observations (10 per semester!) become a precious history of your child's first schooling. I was flooded with memories when I read the observations I had written when our daughter was at Mountain School. I was able to reminisce with her about the experience; and also look with a keener eye at her children. It was fun to observe some similarities and then some traits unique to them.

I love the words to the song by Tom Hunter:

*May the memories wrap their arms around you,
May your childhood take you by the hand.
May what you remember find healing when it hurts,
So the memories will protect you when they can.*

Welcome! I look forward to another memorable year here at Mountain School - our 56th!

-Jane Krejci

The ABCs of cooking

Always fresh

Buy local

Choose whole foods -
(mostly fruits and vegetables)

Family Photo Days

Fall Family Photo Days are here for all Los Gatos-Saratoga Observation Nursery School current families and teachers. School Photographer Susan J. Weiland will take beautiful outdoor portraits of your family at Oak Meadow Park in Los Gatos on the following dates:

Sun. Sept. 25th

Sat. Oct. 1st

Sun. Oct. 2nd

Sat. Oct. 8th

Sun. Oct. 9th.

Contact Susan to schedule your appointment directly Monday through Friday between 10am and 8pm. Call 408 996-1933 or email sweiland@ix.netcom.com. Appointments are booked on a first come basis so if you plan to do a session book ASAP.



Nut Policy

We ask all families to avoid nuts and nut products in all cooking projects and in any snacks or lunches they bring to school.

This is in deference to the children with extreme (and life-threatening) nut allergies. Thank you.



Thank You Volunteers!

I am constantly amazed and grateful for the many moms and dads who share their time and talents for the good of our Mountain School community. Many of you have worked over the summer in preparation for the new school year: the Turkey Trot team, the Auction team, the Board. Thank you!

"...Community means strength that joins our strength to do the work that needs to be done. A circle of friends."

-Starhawk

One definition of *volunteerism* is "work on an impromptu basis, recognizing a need and filling it." Volunteerism and service is about giving and so much more. It is really a two-way proposition. I know when I give, I also receive much in return. Sometimes it is new friends and contacts; sometimes new insights and challenges; and sometimes something I cannot even articulate. It often results in my personal growth.

So, whether you open your home for a Circle Meeting or Chair a major committee, I hope you will not hesitate to give a little extra of your time and talents. Your children will learn early that reaching out to others is a good thing and an integral part of life.

"Service is the rent we pay to be living. It is the very purpose of life and not something you do in your spare time."

-Marian Wright Edelman

-Jane Krejci

Mind the Gap

Just a quick reminder about the importance of fundraising to the financial success and stability of Mountain School. Each year the Board sets a budget that has a gap between known income and known expenses. To help keep tuition costs at current levels, fundraising must bridge that gap. And so the goals are set for the Turkey Trot/Raffle in the fall and the Auction in the spring. There are Board committees dedicated to putting on these events, but it takes the entire community's support to make them a success.

-Priscilla Amend

Beginner's Mind

On behalf of the Mountain School Board, welcome to the 2011-2012 school year! I hope your summer was fun and relaxing, and you have arrived at the new school year ready for all the joys and challenges it will inevitably bring.

Our family returns to Mountain School in the 3's class with our third son, Charlie. Having had two other sons go through Mountain School, I have many memories of my time spent at school with each of my children. But as I anticipate beginning another year at Mountain School, our 6th consecutive one, I will practice a Zen state of mind called beginner's mind. Beginner's mind is bringing to a situation an attitude of eagerness, openness, and a lack of preconceptions. I find it helpful to think of beginner's mind like the mind of a small child, full of curiosity, wonder, and amazement.

I am an old hand at the Mountain School routine, having packed many backpacks, changed wet kids, written observations, cooked and assisted, washed countless loads of after-school laundry... the list can go on and on. Yet if I can cultivate a mind innocent of preconceptions, expectations, and judgments of what a day at Mountain School is like or who my child is, I will discover a new world full of possibility. I will find freedom to explore, observe, and see things as they are in the present moment.

I invite you to begin not only this year as a new year, but to look at each time you are at school as an opportunity to look at things as if they are new, as if you have never had the experience before. What will you see? What will you hear? What will you smell? What will you feel? Notice these things without prejudgment, without preconception, without fixed views.

As the Zen master Suzuki Roshi said, "In the beginner's mind there are many possibilities, but in the expert's there are few."

-Priscilla Amend

See with Wonder...as a Child

When a child plays, he plays for the sake of play.
He is enchanted by the moment, the timeless time, the eternal now.

All that surrounds a child is a source of wonder.
She walks and moves and looks with great wonder in her eyes.

A child's eyes are like a mirror, reflecting what is there.
All is mysterious, surprising, fresh and new.

Let's not forget how we walked with our eyes wide with wonder...
"What's this? What's that? I never saw it before!"

How wonderful it is when we experience life with freshness,
amazement and wonder...as a child.

-Jane Krejci

Turkey Trot Time!

Mark your calendar for everyone's favorite annual fall event, the Turkey Trot! There will be food, music and fun for everyone. Great prizes will be awarded to the top male, female and child finishers!

This year's Turkey Trot 5K Race & Family Fun Run will take place on Sunday Nov. 6th at Vasona Park in Los Gatos. You can pre-register at active.com, or by downloading a registration form from the school website LGSONS.org, or contact Tracy Pingree at tracypingree@yahoo.com.

Price for registration increases after October 12th.

Race Day Schedule:

9am: Registration begins
11am: 5K begins
12-2pm: Food & fun at Gateway Pavilion

Sponsors Needed!

Want to advertise your business at this event? Sponsors will have their name/logo placed on runners' t-shirts. Please contact Tracy Pingree for more information.

Deadline for sponsorship is October 12th.

Volunteers Needed!

Interested in working with a great group of people on Race Day (if you have a high school student it's a great way for them to earn community service credit!)? We are still searching for several volunteers! If interested in any of these volunteer positions, please contact Tania Vong as soon as possible at chiomi@gmail.com.

Los Gatos-Saratoga Observation Nursery School

| Fall Semester Programs | September | November | December |
|--|--|---|---|
| <p>We are excited to introduce the line-up of our fall semester programs. This is a preliminary list meant to give you an idea of what is being planned. Be sure to check LGSONS.org for updates and additions.</p> <p>Please remember that all enrolled families are required to attend the General Meeting and one Mini-Course per semester. Attendance at evening meetings is just as important as your participation at the daytime classes. This will benefit not only your child, but YOU as well!</p> <p>Thank you! Liz Basallaje and Yumi Hiroshima programs co-chairs</p> | <p>27 Mini Course: LAUMC Children's Center Preschool presents Heather Hansen, LCSW "Behavior 101: Separation anxiety, avoiding the power struggle and understanding your preschooler's behavior in the first few months of school" 9:00-10:30am, The Redwood Room, Los Altos Methodist Church, 655 Magdalena Avenue, Los Altos Free child care is provided. To attend please RSVP to Jenny Morgan: jennifermorgan@laumc.org</p> | <p>3 Mini Course: Martina Kocianova Taking a holistic approach towards nutrition 7pm, Van Meter Elementary School</p> <p>9 General Meeting: Janis Keyser, MA Author of "Becoming the Parent You Want To Be"</p> | <p>13 Mini Course: Juliana Scalise "Oxygen Mask Parenting: Integrating the Power of Self-Care Into Your Life as a Parent" 7pm, Van Meter Elementary School</p> |
| | <p>October</p> | | |
| | <p>4 Mini Course: Common Ground seminar with Paul G. Stoltz, PhD "True Grit: Inspiring Resilience & Optimism" 7pm, Harker Upper School, 500 Saratoga Avenue, San Jose</p> | <p>14 Mini Course: CPR & First Aid course An informational presentation of CPR & First Aid for infants, children and adults 7pm, Van Meter Elementary School</p> | |
| | <p>17 Mini Course: Dr. Jerrold Shapiro "What Boys Need" 7pm, Van Meter Elementary School</p> | <p>30 Mini Course: Mother Nature's Child A film that explores nature's powerful role in children's health and development. 7pm, Van Meter Elementary School</p> | |

2011-2012 Mountain School Board

I am proud to serve Mountain School as this year's Board Chair, and I am very excited to be working with such a talented, dedicated, and diverse group of parents who make up this year's Board. I appreciate the generosity of time each parent volunteer is willing to give to help our school run smoothly.

To let the whole community know who is helping to keep the school going this year, I wanted to list each Board position and the parents who are filling those roles. If you have a question or concern, please do not hesitate to contact them or me. If you are interested in becoming involved, I would love to hear from you as well.

-Priscilla Amend

Newsletter Info

Articles for the next newsletter are due Wednesday, October 26th. Please email any articles or photos you would like to be included in the next newsletter to Michele Moore at michele.moore08@gmail.com.



| Voting Board (* Denotes Executive Board Positions) | | Non-Voting Board Members | |
|--|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Chair* | Priscilla Amend | Alumni Liaison | Ashleigh Coffeng |
| Treasurer* | Peter Savich | Animals Chair | Julia Lombardi |
| Information Membership* | Nicole Engel | Family Partnerships Coordinator | Alison McElravey |
| Registration Membership* | Martina Kocianova | Community Service Liaison | Mira Bullis |
| Secretary | Jean Lattie | Garden Coordinator | Robin Horton |
| Auction Co-Chair | Amy Attard | Garden Coordinator | Cathy Spears |
| Auction Co-Chair | Rusti Icenogle | Go Green Advocate | Angie Giacalone |
| Auction Co-Chair | Karen McVay | Grant Writer | Margaret Pettit |
| Auction Co-Chair | Ramanan Radhakrishnan | Health Coordinator | Taffy Dugan |
| Facilities Chair | Mark Modeste | Librarian | Tara Sturtevant |
| Programs Co-Chair | Yumi Hiroshima | Marketing | Annelies Ransome |
| Programs Co-Chair | Elizabeth Basallaje | Misc. Fundraising/Raffle | Amoreena Lucero |
| Newsletter | Michele & Derek Moore | Misc. Fundraising/Raffle | Kuniko Shira |
| Forms/Correspondence Chair | Shelly Moss | Misc. Fundraising/Scrip/eScrip | Stephanie Snow |
| Purchasing Chair | Sherri Ingrassia | Mountain School Parties Coordinator | Margaret Pettit |
| Webmaster | Vaughan Sheridan | School Photos Coordinator | Anne Warner |
| | | Social Chair | Ann Osborne |
| | | T-shirts/Sweatshirt Sales Coordinator | Anne-Michelle Frances |
| | | Turkey Trot Committee Member | Patricia Niemeyer |
| | | Turkey Trot Committee Member | Tracy Pingree |
| | | Turkey Trot Committee Member | Tania Vong |
| | | Turkey Trot Committee Member | Rosa Zavatteri |
| | | Workday Coordinator | Tandem Hayden |

The 2012 Auction: Magical Mountain School Moments

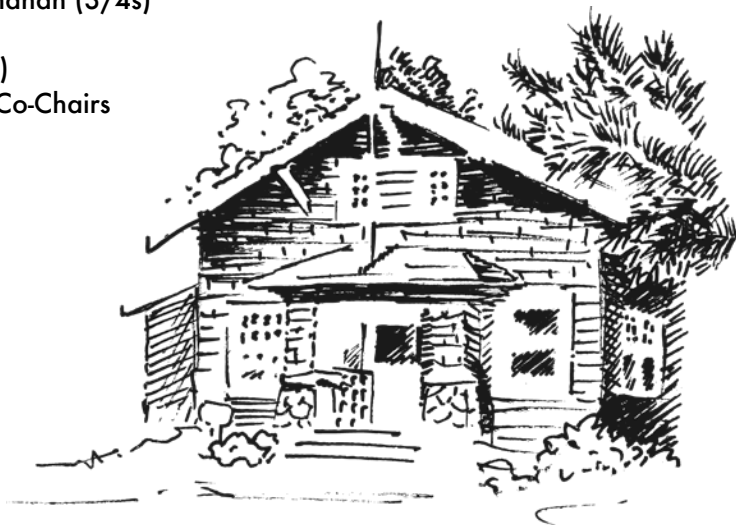
The annual auction has been a Mountain School tradition for over 20 years. This year's auction will take place on March 24, 2012 and will celebrate the "Magical Mountain School Moments" we all share by being part of our very special school. The evening's festivities will include wonderful items up for bid, great food, home-brewed spirits, decorations capturing all the little things that make a day at Mountain School so unique and of course the chance to visit with new friends and old.

For more information, please visit the recently posted Frequently Asked Questions document now online at: LGSONS.org.

This document was created to help families understand the scope of the event, clarify auction responsibilities and highlight changes being made this year. Stay tuned for more information about this key fundraising event in the coming weeks.

We look forward to sharing this exciting event with the Mountain School community and sincerely appreciate your support in making this another successful auction.

Amy Attard (3s)
Ramanan Radharamanan (3/4s)
Rusti Icenogle (F2s)
Karen McVay (3/4s)
2011-2012 Auction Co-Chairs



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