



Volunteering at Mountain School: A Love Story

Happy New Year! I wish everyone in our community a happy, healthy, and peaceful 2012!

The start of a new year opens a period of reflection for me on the many areas of my life. What's working? What could use some attention? What do I need to let go? Inevitably, how I spend my time, one of my most precious resources, commands the majority of this reflection period.

From the beginning of my time at Mountain School, I became involved, first as a Committee Lead for the Auction and the following year as a Non-Voting Board member. When I reflect on what drew me to take on leadership roles in my early Mountain School days, it was as an intellectually stimulating outlet – a chance to lead, organize, and communicate as I had when I

was a high-tech professional before starting a family. After spending all day feeding, changing diapers, and nurturing my young boys, I felt rejuvenated to exercise a part of myself that had been dormant for three years. I also liked that these roles had flexibility and the understanding that motherhood always came first. As our family became more entrenched in the program, a desire to give back for all of the ways Mountain School had enriched our lives became my strongest motivator. Other benefits to becoming involved that emerged included the ability to meet other parents across the different classes and engage with them socially at the monthly Board meetings and to serve as a role model of the importance of service for my children.

Now that two of my children are in elementary school, I have felt a very strong pull to put my volunteer time there. After all, that community has many needs as well. Yet, I have continued to volunteer at Mountain School because of a deep love and appreciation for its purpose, its ideals, and the deep commitment I have observed from the teachers and the school's Director. Our program is unique and it is special; there is no other preschool in this area that offers families the kind of

The ABCs of cooking

Always fresh

Buy local

Choose whole foods -
(mostly fruits and vegetables)

Volunteering (continued)

program ours does. After reviewing the Parent Handbook for an update this past summer, I fell in love with Mountain School and all it represents all over again, and I felt a recommitment to choosing to give my time and talents to help keep our school running smoothly.

So wherever you are in your parenting and Mountain School journey, I encourage you to reflect on whether serving your child's nursery school in some volunteer capacity can find a place in your life. The Board of Directors handles the mechanics of running the school, and we are in need of talented and caring parents to join our working Board. The Nominating Committee will begin Board recruitment for next school year in earnest within the next month, and there are a variety of roles to consider. Some positions are busy on-and-off throughout the school year while others have a specific task that requires a short amount of time and energy to complete. Each position is important to help keep our beloved school going. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have a question or interest in a particular Board position.

-Priscilla Amend, Board Chair

Community Service Update

Mountain School families donated a total of 46 gifts to the Christmas Project this year! Thank you all so much for your generosity.

Coming up next we will host a Second Harvest Food Bank Food and Fund drive. 1 in 10 people in Santa Clara County are served by Second Harvest. We are so fortunate that our families are not hungry, together with our children let's help others with a basic need. A large bin will appear in the school house early February. Please consider non perishable, non glass containers.

- Basics List:
- Meals in a can (stew, chili, soup)
 - Tuna and canned meat
 - Peanut butter
 - Canned foods with pop-top lids
 - Low-sugar cereals
 - 100% fruit juices in single serving boxes
 - Canned fruit packed in juice
 - Canned vegetables (low salt)

- Child Friendly Foods List:
- Pop-Top Tuna
 - 100% Fruit Rolls
 - Raisins
 - Graham Crackers
 - Unsweetened Applesauce
 - Cheese and Crackers
 - Fruit Cups
 - Low-sugar Cereal Bowls
 - Pretzels
 - 100% Fruit Juice Boxes
 - Granola Bars (without peanuts)

Guinea Pigs

We would like to thank Howard, owner of Pets and More, for donating our lovely little guinea pigs to our school. You can visit the store for hand raised pets and pet supplies at 841 W Hamilton Ave Campbell, CA 95008.

The 4/5's class has finally chosen the names. We would like to introduce "Sunny", our multi-colored piglet and "Foggy", our grey piglet. Both are males.

We encourage the kids to bring greens from home or the garden to feed them during class. Guinea Pigs are one of only two mammals that don't make their own vitamin C (the other being humans). The best way to make sure that guineas get enough C is to give them fruits and veggies that contain C. Some good foods for guineas are: kale (great for everyone), kiwi fruit (more vitamin C than oranges), carrots, chard, dandelion greens, parsley, strawberries, oranges, melon, "cuties" are a favorite of guineas (limit the amount of fruit, just like humans they can get used to eating too much sugar). Be sure to wash all fruits and veggies.

Do Not Feed:

Moldy or soiled hay, peanuts, lettuce, spinach, beet tops, potato greens.

The guinea pigs should always have Timothy hay so if you see there is none in their cage, please add some, they would LOVE that!

Thank you for all your love and care of our school house animals.

Picture Days are coming!!!

Mark your calendar:

Sat., Mar. 3 - Both Sat. Classes

Wed., Mar. 7 - W2 & 4/5's

Thurs., Mar. 8 - 3's & 3/4's

Fri., Mar. 9 - F2's

Individual and class photos will be taken in color in an outdoor setting on your class photo day about 15 minutes after the start of class.

Sibling and or buddy photos can also be taken upon request.

Please dress your children in colorful play or dress clothes.

Proofs will be delivered approximately one to two weeks later and orders can be made at that time.



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.

Diversity

*I pledge to use my words to speak in a kind way.
I pledge to help others as I go throughout my day.
I pledge to care for the earth with my healing heart and hands.
I pledge to respect people from each and every land.
I pledge to join together as we unite the big and small.
I pledge to do my part to create peace for one and all.*

Every morning my grandchildren gather with their schoolmates to sing this peace pledge and share the flag, anthem and greetings from different countries (one each week). They attend a public school that is wonderfully rich and diverse (children from 45 different countries); and where staff and children alike 'walk their talk.'

Mountain School might not be as diverse; but our greater community and world certainly are. What can we do as parents and teachers to embrace diversity and inclusiveness? How can we help our children appreciate differences and the richness of our world?

Here are a few ideas....

1. Acknowledge our own biases based on our backgrounds; and influenced by the larger culture. (e.g. I know I have benefited from 'white privilege.')
2. Expand our intellectual and social world through conversation, reading and reaching out to others.
3. Talk openly with our children about what we see and what we believe.
4. Listen to our children and their observations and questions.
5. Read books, travel, visit exhibits, attend festivals that will broaden our worlds.
6. Attend our General Meeting on February 16 (yes, it is one of your requirements!) to hear our speaker discuss identity formation and engagement with diversity. (Many of you filled out the survey in preparation for this meeting - thank you. You raised interesting and important questions that our speaker will incorporate into her presentation.)

A consultant will meet with our staff this month. We will focus on diversity and multi-cultural education.

*Boring, boring, boring
That's what my world would be,
If everyone looked and talked,
And acted, just like me.
-Judy Lalli*

I am not into 'boring.' I want to increase my understanding and embrace change and diversity. I hope you will, too.

-Teacher Jane

2012 Auction: Magical Mountain School Moments

Saturday, March 24th, 2012

Dear Mountain School Families,

Thank you so much for your continued support. This year's auction is shaping up to be a great event with many exciting items up for bid! As a reminder, there are activities coming up in the next few months that require your attention.

Each family has been assigned to an auction committee and four vendors to contact for donations. You have likely already been contacted about both. Please also remember to complete the Family Donation Survey and participate in your class donation. If you find that your family is too busy to fulfill its auction duties for 2011-2012, please read the FAQ to find out more about the full buy-out or family donation buy-out options at LGSONS.org

If you have any questions about the auction, please do not hesitate to ask.

Thank you!

2011-2012 Auction Co-Chairs

Amy Attard (3s) amy3614@aol.com

Ramanan Radharamanan (3/4s) rramanan@gmail.com

Karen McVay (3/4s) mcvay_karen@yahoo.com

Rusti Icenogle (F2s) ricenogle@mac.com

Walking

Walks and hikes are an important part of Mountain School - they are movement for the body; stimulation for the senses; and nourishment for the soul. I like this quote from Lloyd Jones. It is wonderful how our children help us walk at a "manageable pace."

"The moving landscape provides an absorbing diversion which frees the mind and gives us a fresh viewpoint, and we're most at ease with the world when we walk because everything is happening at a manageable pace."

Books

from Hicklebees: "A heartfelt Hicklebee thank you to you and your community for continuing to support Hicklebees. The school's portion of the proceeds added \$410.00 to your account."

A portion of your purchases enables us to add new books to our library. THANK YOU - and I am sure your children (and friends) received some wonderful new books, too. -jk

Parenting

Parenting is full of surprises! We have all experienced changes in "our itineraries" - sometimes small, sometimes large. The journey with our own unique child(ren) is what is important. (This came from a friend - and former Mountain School mom.) -jk

Auction Deadlines:

JAN 15

COMPLETE FIRST ROUND OF VENDOR CALLS

FEB 1

\$50 FAMILY DONATION BUYOUT CHECKS ARE DUE TO AVOID LATE FEES

\$450 FULL BUY-OUT DONATION CHECKS ARE DUE TO AVOID LATE FEES

COMPLETE SECOND ROUND OF VENDOR CALLS

CLASS DONATIONS DUE AT STORAGE LOCATION

FEB 15

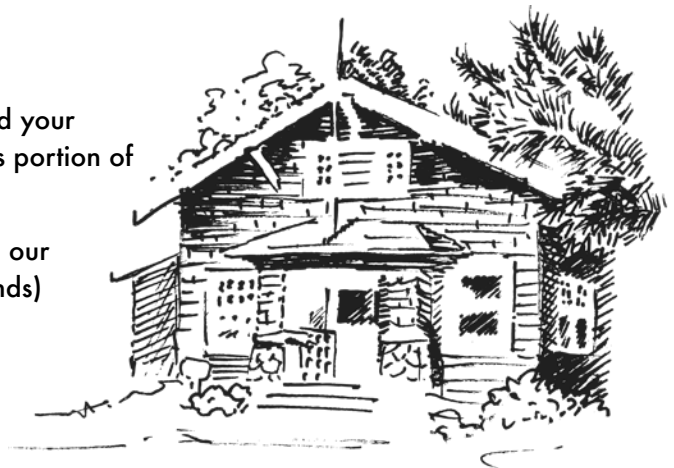
COMPLETE THIRD ROUND OF VENDOR CALLS

MAR 1

VENDOR DONATION DUE AT STORAGE LOCATION

MAR 24

2012 AUCTION!



Los Gatos-Saratoga
Observation Nursery School

WELCOME TO HOLLAND

I am often asked to describe the experience of raising a child with a disability to try to help people who have not shared that unique experience to understand it, to imagine how it would feel. It's like this....

When you're going to have a baby, it's like planning a fabulous vacation trip to Italy. You buy a bunch of guidebooks and make your wonderful plans. The coliseum, the Michelangelo David. The gondolas in Venice. You may learn some handy phrases in Italian. It's all very exciting.

After months of eager anticipation, the day finally arrives. You pack your bags and off you go. Several hours later the plane lands. The stewardess comes in and says, "Welcome to Holland."

"HOLLAND???" you say, "What do you mean Holland? I signed up for Italy!! All my life I've dreamed of going to Italy."

But there's been a change in the flight plan. They've landed in Holland, and there you must stay.

The important thing is that they haven't taken you to a horrible, disgusting, filthy place full of pestilence, famine and disease. It's just a different place.

So you must go out and buy new guidebooks. And you must learn a whole new language. And you will meet a whole new group of people you would never have met.

It's just a different place. It's slower paced than Italy. Less flashy than Italy. But after you've been there for a while and you catch your breath, you look around and you begin to notice that Holland has windmills. Holland has tulips. Holland even has Rembrandt.

But everyone you know is busy coming and going from Italy, and they're all bragging about what a wonderful time they had there. And the rest of your life, you will say, that's where I was supposed to go. That's what I had planned.

And the pain of that will never, ever go away, because the loss of that dream is a very significant loss.

But if you spend your life mourning the fact that you didn't get to Italy, you may never be free to enjoy the very special, the very lovely things about Holland.

Author Unknown

Los Gatos-Saratoga Observation Nursery School

Spring Programs for Parents

It is our pleasure to introduce the line-up of our 2011-2012 spring semester programs. Be sure to check our school website for more detailed course descriptions and updates at: www.lgsons.org

It has been our goal to provide a great mix of topics that will benefit not only your child, but you as well. Feel free to attend as many programs that are of interest to you. But please remember that all enrolled families are required to attend the General Meeting and one Mini-Course per semester.

Thank you!
Liz Basallaje and Yumi Hiroshima
Programs Co-Chairs

January

31 - 7pm Good Kids! Inspiring Integrity & Inner Discipline
by Barbara Coloroso

Saint Andrew's Episcopal School, 13601 Saratoga Avenue, Saratoga

*A fee of \$20 will be charged at the door

RSVP to Yumi Hiroshima: yumi.hiroshima@gmail.com

February

1 - 9am Good Kids! Inspiring Integrity & Inner Discipline
with a Special Session on Bullying

by Barbara Coloroso

Phillips Brooks School, 2245 Avy Avenue, Menlo Park

*A fee of \$20 will be charged at the door

RSVP to Yumi Hiroshima: yumi.hiroshima@gmail.com

9 - 7pm The Case for Make Believe:

Saving Play in a Commercialized World

by Susan Linn, PhD

Mulberry School, 220 Belgatos Road, Los Gatos

Co-sponsored with Hillbrook School, Los Gatos Parent, and Mulberry School

RSVP to Yumi Hiroshima: yumi.hiroshima@gmail.com

16 - 7pm Spring General Meeting

When to Say What: Talking to Children about Identity and Diversity

by Alison Park, founder of Blink Consulting

Van Meter Elementary School, Cafeteria, 16445 Los Gatos Blvd, Los Gatos

March

26 - 7pm Peaceful Parenting:

Creating the Change You Want to See in Your Family

Interactive workshop with Amy Williams and Kirsten Cameron

Van Meter Elementary School, 16445 Los Gatos Blvd, Los Gatos

* Attendance limited to 16

RSVP to Liz Basallaje: elizabeth_mcauley@yahoo.com

April

10 - 7pm Raising Girls: What Parents Need to Know
by Sheila Dubin

Van Meter Elementary School, 16445 Los Gatos Blvd, Los Gatos

RSVP to Liz Basallaje: elizabeth_mcauley@yahoo.com

23 - 7pm Create Your Own Picture Frame

with Teacher Karyn Cline

The School House, 19601 Black Road, Los Gatos

RSVP to Yumi Hiroshima: yumi.hiroshima@gmail.com

CHILDREN'S BOOKS

Here are a few of my favorite books on diversity – we have most of them at school. -jk

The newest one is What Does It Mean To Be Global? By Rana DiOrio

Cannon, Jenell, Stellaluna

Story of bat raised by birds. Same / different.

Cheltenham School Kindergartners, We Are All Alike...We Are All Different

Ways we are alike/different.

DiOrio, Rana, What Does It Mean To be Global?

Celebrates diversity; inspires protection of environment.

Fox, Mem, Whoever You Are

Children all over the world - different houses, schools, foods, clothes, paths

Giles, Andrea, Giraffes Can't Dance

We can all dance; we just have to find our own kind of music. Everyone is unique.

Hoberman, Mary Ann, All Kinds of Families

Celebration of families in rhyme.

Intrater, Roberta Grobel, Two Eyes, a Nose and A Mouth

Photographs and simple text of wide variety of peoples.

Katz, Karen, The Colors of Us

Everyone has their own special color.

Kissinger, Katie, All the Colors We Are

Pictures and text regarding differences.

Lallie, Judy, I Like Being ME

Poems about feelings and getting along.

Otoshi, Kathryn, One

How to stand up; how to be inclusive.

Parr, Todd, The Family Book

Childlike drawings – celebrates families of all kinds.

Parr, Todd, It's Okay to Be Different

Childlike drawings - fun - celebrates differences.

Parr, Todd, The Peace Book

Childlike drawings - title describes it all - practical ideas.

Pfister, Marcus, The Rainbow Fish

The most beautiful fish is lonely until he share his 'scales' with other fish.

Raschka, Chris, Yo, Yes

One boy reaching out to another; they become friends.

Reider, Katja & VonRoehl, Angela, Snail Started It

Snail criticizes pig, who ridicules rabbit, etc....and when it comes full circle, everyone apologizes.

Okay to be who you are.

Silverman, Ilyssa, It Feels Good to Be Let In

What it feels like to be left out; how to join in the play;; how to invite others in.

Spier, Peter, People

How people are different - yet the same.

**Los Gatos-Saratoga Observation
Nursery School
Open House
January 22 -- 11AM to 2PM**



Looking for a unique preschool for your children?

You are invited to experience an afternoon at the little red schoolhouse. You'll have a chance to meet teachers and families, tour the school, and see what makes the Mountain.School a unique educational experience for children and their parents.

Accepting applications for children ages 2 through 5

- Developmental curriculum
- Self-directed play
- Beautiful outdoor setting
- Field Trips
- Strong Community
- 1:6 teacher-child ratio
- Circle Time
- Nature walks
- Balance of social, physical, and intellectual stimulation
- Charming 100 year-old schoolhouse
- Parent participation
- Art and Music
- Science and Cooking

Join our Preschool Open House on Sunday, January 22nd!

Hwy 17 South-Exit Bear Creek - Straight over overpass - Left on Black Rd

Directions, applications and information available at:

www.lgsons.com or 408-395-2892

LGSONS • 19602 Black Rd. • Los Gatos, CA 95033

A Talk by **DR. SUSAN LINN**



Dr. Linn is Associate Director of the Media Center at Judge Baker Children's Center, Instructor in Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, and Co-founder and Director of the Campaign for a Commercial Free Child.

She is the author of *the Case for Make Believe: Saving Play in a Commercialized World* & *Consuming Kids: The Hostile Takeover of Childhood.*

THE CASE FOR MAKE BELIEVE

Saving Play in a Commercialized World

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 9th

7-9 p.m

MULBERRY SCHOOL
220 Belgatos Rd
Los Gatos

(408) 358-9080

Sponsored by:

Hillbrook School
Los Gatos Parent (LGPNS)
Mountain School (LGSONS)
Mulberry School