

The Jefferson Independent

May 2005
Issue 9

Newsletter of the Jefferson PTA
For the 2004-05 school year



Jefferson Calendar

May

- 17 Name Change Educational Community Meeting 6:00-8:30 p.m.
- 19 OPEN HOUSE
- 30 NO SCHOOL Memorial Day

June

- 10 Family Dance 6:30-8:30 p.m.
- 14 PTA Meeting 7:00 p.m. in Library
- 16 Fifth Grade Promotion
- 17 Teacher Appreciation Luncheon & Last Day of School

The Jefferson Independent is edited by Lucinda Sikes, lucikas@sbcglobal.net. The Jefferson Independent is distributed during the third week of every month. This is the final issue of the 2004-05 school year.

Every Child, One Voice: An End-of-Year Message from your PTA Co-Chairs

Last month, a collective of parents, students, and teachers from Berkeley attended the "Caravan for Kids" state PTA rally in Sacramento. The purpose of the gathering was to protest the proposed cuts in education funding. Rousing speeches were delivered and resounding choruses of the national PTA slogan "*Every child, One voice; Every child, One voice*" could be heard around the capitol building.

The Jefferson students who attended the rally joined the chorus of voices while holding their signs high in the air, their faces flush with excitement. They understood the importance of the event and were glad to be part of it. In between chanting sessions, one student turned and said, "What does that mean, '*every child, one voice*'?"

A good question to ask, standing amidst the crowd of people surrounding us that day. There were many children, many adults, and many voices. Yes, we were all shouting in unison; yes, we were there to promote the welfare of children and youth; yes, we were there to support achievement for all students. But ... is this really possible? Can we do this in a place as diverse as California? What does "one voice" really mean?

Perhaps one way of exploring this is by looking back at our PTA sponsored activities during the past year. One of many vivid images that come to mind is the recently held Walkathon, where different patterns emerged as children,

teachers, and parents made their way around the block, over and over and over again. The kids walked in groups, they walked in pairs, or they independently moved through crowds of peers by themselves. Some formed new groups, sped-up, slowed-down, smiled, laughed, frowned. All in all, they formed a continuously moving collage of sizes, shapes, and colors.

Our dedicated PTA volunteers have worked together and spent countless hours on planning, communicating, and coordinating activities all year long. Our efforts are multi-faceted and have served different purposes: enrichment activities for students, educational forums for parents, fun-filled events for families, and fundraisers to help support it all. This is essential work and every little bit we do helps strengthen the ties in our school community. We must continue our efforts and keep making new ties and new connections.

You are a truly incredible group of parents, guardians, teachers, and staff. There are many voices and needs within our school, but all of our voices speak on behalf of supporting educational and social opportunities for our children. Thank you for giving your time and your love.

Sincerely,
Allison Murray & Kate Gentry
PTA Co-Chairs

Students Walk 770 Miles & Earn \$6000

People driving down Sacramento or Rose on April 29 were treated to the sight of dozens of Jefferson students walking happily down the sidewalk. All told, the students walked 770 miles, and collected pledges of \$6,000 to support field trips. Thus far, \$5,000 has been turned in – be sure to collect and turn in all those pledges.

More than 75 adults volunteered or walked with the children during the Walk-A-Thon. The lucky winner of the \$50 gift certificate to Transports was Ann Phillips, mother of Sashko in room 204.

In Memoriam: Alice Polk

Alice Polk, our crossing guard at the Rose and Sacramento intersection, recently passed away. Alice was a welcome presence as she helped escort students across the street everyday. Prior to working as a crossing guard, Alice was a longtime bus driver for the public schools. She had many friends and enjoyed traveling all over the world - in fact she went to Australia last year and rode a camel. Our community will miss Alice Polk.

The College Corner Tip:

This month's College Corner Tip provides resources for parents to begin investigating the whys, whens, and hows of getting their children to, and through, college. Although these resources are designed primarily for parents of high school students and high school graduates, there are some tools that parents of elementary age children will also find useful.

First, the federal government's website offers a comprehensive look at preparing children for college at <http://www.ed.gov/pubs/Prepare/index.html>. Although a bit old, written in 2000, this site starts at the very beginning, explaining the benefits of attending college, the types of colleges available to students, academic preparation (in school and outside of school) for a college education, the costs of attending college, and ways to pay for college (including an explanation of the federal financial aid system). Although the rules will no doubt change between now and when our children are ready for college, it is useful to understand the federal financial aid system when setting up a

plan to finance your child's education. Federal financial aid includes grants, work-study employment, and subsidized loans that make college much more affordable than it would otherwise be for many students and families.

A second resource is the College Board, which governs the SAT (a college entrance test that many students take before applying to 4-year colleges). The College Board's website (<http://www.collegeboard.com>) provides a great deal of information for students, parents, and educators about the types of colleges available, how to think about choosing a college, and preparing, academically and financially, for college. The site includes calculators that can help you estimate what the cost of attending a particular kind of college will be when your child is ready for college (<http://www.collegeboard.com/parents>). Other calculators help you estimate what your family's expected contribution to a child's education would be, depending on your family's income, family expenses, and the cost of the institution the child will attend.

Mayfair Celebration Entertains All

A big thank you to all the volunteers who worked to make the Mayfair a great success. So many people pitched in to make it a fun day for all the children and their families that there's not enough space here to list them all. Even Mother Nature smiled on the Mayfair, by providing the only sunny day of the weekend.

Kids had fun playing carnival games, participating in the water balloon toss and relay races, decorating cakes for the contest, doing the cake walk, creating frames for photos, choosing prizes and eating delicious food. Everyone marveled at the terrific performances – African Dance and Hip Hop by Jefferson students in the East Bay Center for Performing Arts

classes, Jazz by Heptet, and in-the-air routines by aspiring aerialists from Trapeze Arts. Gardeners purchased beautiful plants for their gardens or potted plants for themselves or their mothers; readers purchased books for summer reading.

The raffle raised more than \$11,000, thanks to all the students who sold raffle tickets. The top-selling students were Morgan Clark in room 200 (17 books); Isaac and Isabella Rothenberg in rooms 204 and 107 (19 books); and selling the most, Eli Baum in room 204 (36 books). The beautiful quilt was won by neighbors of Peter Lyons-Gould (room 204) and the Disneyland trip went to the family of Jennifer (room 202) and Ryan (room 105) Neumann. Congratulations to all the winners!

Focus on the Jefferson Office

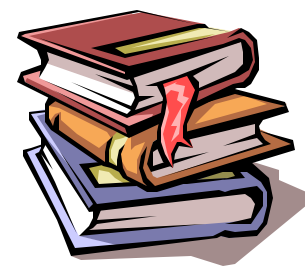
Principal Betty Delaney

Betty Delaney has been Jefferson's Principal for four years. She came to Jefferson with a wealth of teaching and administrative experience – all in Daly City. She taught 2nd-6th grades for twelve years, served as a reading specialist for six years, and for ten years, served as an Assistant Principal in both an elementary and middle school and as Principal in an elementary school.

Principal Delaney grew up in San

Francisco. She graduated from UCLA, and received both her Masters in Education and her Administrative Credential from San Francisco State University.

Her favorite thing about being Jefferson's Principal is being an advocate for children. "That's what I love most, and why I decided to become a principal," she explains. In her free time, Principal Delaney loves to read and enjoys travel.



Marie Ferguson, School Secretary

Marie Ferguson has served as Jefferson's School Secretary for 4 ½ years. She grew up in Richmond, and came to Jefferson after having worked at Longfellow Middle School.

Marie enjoys her job because "there is never a dull moment." She says that every

day is interesting. In addition to her office duties, she has stepped in as the unofficial "nurse" for sick and injured students. And, as all parents and students know, she is always available to respond to their questions or needs with a friendly smile. In her free time, Marie enjoys shopping, going to movies and going out to dinner.

This month we interview the Office Staff & ask students for their impressions.

Morris Norrise, School Services Assistant

Morris Norrise, or "the Greatest" as many students call him, has been Jefferson's school services assistant for seven years and the director of the Voyager after-school program since it began three years ago as an out-growth from a Healthy Start grant.

Morris is a Berkeley native, having attended Le Conte, Malcolm X, West Campus, Willard, and Berkeley High. He's in his 17th year of working with Berkeley's Parks and Recreation Department. Morris is a sports lover – he loves playing, watching and managing sports in his spare time.

Student Voices - What do you like about the Office Staff?

I like Mrs. Delaney's smile and how she laughs.

--Lillian, Room 203

I like Morris because he lets kids chase him. I like Mrs. Delaney and Marie because if someone gets hurt, they put band-aids on them.

--Kelin, Room 101

Marie's nice. Whenever I get hurt, she fixes them with bandages.

--Cindy, Room 202

What I like about Morris is he's cool, and he plays with us. He gets us on bench, but he's good. What I like about Mrs. Delaney is she's good to people.

--Kahlil, Room 207

I like Morris because he lets me get balls from off the stage. I like Mrs. Delaney because she tells people to be nice.

--Taheed, Room 101

What I like about Morris is he gives me hugs.

--Dalano, Room 104

Marie has to do SO much. She's the nurse, and the secretary!

--Camden, Room 203

I like Morris because he's really funny and he makes nicknames for people who he likes. Today I saw him skipping with one of his friends. And, my nickname is "Red."

--Sabrina, Room 203

Morris is nice. He's funny and cool!

--Sevena, Room 205

Announcements

PTA Officers

The following officers were elected during the May PTA meeting to serve during the 2005-06 school year. Please contact one of the officers if you have any ideas, questions or concerns.

Kate Gentry, Co-President
katgen@dslextreme.com or
524-1646

Robin Henke, Co-President
rhenke@mprinc.com or
524-5659

Marian Berges, Treasurer
841-1402

Chris Hoffman, Co-Secretary
Chris.hoffman@berkeley.edu or
526-6982

Adam Sanchez, Co-Secretary
adammili@pacbell.net or
849-1743

Jon Squire, Parliamentarian
jonsquir@attbi.com or 525-1610

Thanks to Outgoing Officers, Co-Chair Allison Murray and Treasurer Nancy Hoeffler, for all their work this year!

Newsletter Editor: Lucinda Sikes
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Calling all Fourth Grade Families! Provide Food for the Fifth Grade Promotion Ceremony

It's been a long-standing Jefferson tradition that the fourth grade families provide food for the fifth grade Promotion Ceremony. Fourth grade parents willing to donate finger food or fresh fruit for the Promotion Ceremony should call Wilma Wyss at 525-4828.

The Promotion Ceremony will be held on June 16 at 9:00 a.m. in the cafetorium. You can drop off food at the cafetorium when you drop off your child at school on the morning of June 16.

Teacher Appreciation Lunch on June 17

Another long-standing Jefferson PTA event is to acknowledge and thank our teachers and staff by treating them to a nice luncheon in the library on the last day of school. Families provide the food. Sharan Ikeda and Wilma Wyss (Hospitality Co-Chairs) will decorate and set up the library.

Please sign up to bring your favorite salad, appetizer or main dish by calling Wilma Wyss at 525-4828. You can drop off your dish at the school library when you pick up your child on June 17. Mark your dish with name and phone number and Wilma will return the empty dish to your home later in the afternoon.

PTA Volunteers Needed for 2005-06 Year

The PTA is looking to fill the following positions for the 2005-06 school year:

- ? Auditor
- ? Historian (keeps track of PTA events and procedures)
- ? Garden Coordinator
- ? Room Partner Coordinator
- ? Kindergarten Picnic Coordinator
- ? Scrip Sales
- ? Publicity (creating and distributing flyers for events)

If you're interested in learning more about any of these positions, please contact Allison Murray (528-0905) or Kate Gentry (524-1646).

Kids Carpentry Summer Camps

Kids Carpentry -- one of the most popular after school classes at Jefferson -- offers a summer camp at the Tannery (730 Gilman Street, at 4th Street, in Berkeley). These 4-day camps offer children two different class times: 9:30-11:00 and 11:00-12:30. For more information and to register for the camps, parents can visit the web site www.kidscarpentry.net or call Michael Glass at 524-9232.