

The Jefferson Independent

October 2005
Issue 3

Newsletter of the Jefferson PTA
For the 2005-06 school year



Boo-tiful Times at Halloween Fun Night

Come celebrate Halloween Jefferson-style on Friday, October 28 from 6:30-8:30 in the Cafetorium. There will be games, treats, crafts, a Haunted Hall and refreshments. It's fun and free.

Volunteers Needed: No previous Halloween experience required. You can help with a pre-planned game, activity or craft or think up one of your

own. We also need unfrosted baked goods and set-up/clean-up help. To volunteer, contact Christina Franco, cfranco@horizon.csueastbay.edu, or Chris Hoffman, 526-6982, chris.hoffman@berkeley.edu, or return the orange flyer to your child's teacher or to the Halloween box in the school office.

Jefferson Calendar

October

- 28 Halloween Party
- 31 Halloween Parade

November

- 1 - 3 Book Fair
- 3 Ice Cream Social
6:30-8:30 p.m.
- 4 Parent Conferences
(No school)
- 5 Play Yard Spruce Up
9:00-Noon
- 7 - 11 Shortened Days
- 10 PTA Meeting at 6:30
(Dinner at 6:00)
- 11 Veteran's Day Holiday
- 11- 14 Cody's School Benefit
Days fundraiser
- 24 -25 Thanksgiving Holiday

The Jefferson Independent is edited by Lucinda Sikes, lucsikes@sbcglobal.net. Please give her your submissions by the second Friday of every month. **The Jefferson Independent** is distributed during the third week of every month.

Jefferson Book Fair Fast Approaching

The Jefferson Book Fair is just around the corner. It's scheduled for Tuesday, November 1 through Thursday, November 3 in the cafetorium, with an Ice Cream Social on Thursday evening.

The Book Fair provides an opportunity for parents and friends to buy books for their children, and for their children's classrooms. The PTA gives each student a \$5 coupon toward the purchase of a book.

The Book Fair will be open for sales during the school day, after school and on Thursday evening. Each classroom has a scheduled visit to the Fair, so that students can select a book for purchase with their PTA-issued coupon. The Fair is also open after school for children to come with their families, and on Thursday evening, so that families can eat free ice cream while shopping for books.

Lots of volunteers are needed during the Fair, and for setup and breakdown. Volunteers perform several tasks, including helping kids find books, cashiering, and restocking books as needed.

Volunteer sign-up sheets are posted on the bulletin boards near the office.

Consider volunteering during your child's scheduled classroom visit, or signing up with a group of friends or fellow classroom parents. Times are flexible. The Book Fair can use help even for as little as a half hour to 45 minutes.

If you can't make it to the school to sign up, please call or email one of the Volunteer Coordinators: Sharan Ikeda, sharlei@pacbell.net, 525-9888, or Robin Miller, 559-8751, millerrossi@sbcglobal.net.

This year, Scholastic has a new way to bring more books to Jefferson – One for Books. Interested parents can distribute flyers at their workplaces asking people to donate just \$1. All of the money raised goes directly to purchase books for Jefferson. Scholastic Book Fairs will match the One for Books dollars raised with a donation of up to a million books to three non-profit programs devoted to improving reading skills among children: Kids in Distressed Situations, National Center for Family Literacy, and Toys for Tots. If interested, please contact Tim Arai, 527-8728, ryozo@mindspring.com.

Box Tops

Keep them coming! We've collected 1,000 box tops already. Clip them, save them, bring them to school and put them in the office or give them to your teacher.



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Sally Foster Gift Wrap Sales

Congratulations! We've raised \$6,000 for Jefferson. Thanks to everyone for buying and selling the gift wrap. You may continue to buy and sell on-line at www.sallyfoster.com. Sign in on Jefferson's account, 220835, before Jan. 15, 2006.

Mark your calendars! Gift wrap orders will arrive for pick-up at school the week of Nov. 7-10. When you come for your child's parent/teacher conference, you can easily pick up your order at the same time. If you have questions, call Pam at 524-8276.

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Join the PTA

The PTA needs you! Please join the PTA.

Only PTA members are eligible to vote. Please join, come to meetings, share your ideas and vote! The membership fee is \$12 (or whatever you can afford). Turn in the form, pay \$12 (if you can), and you're a member. Forms can be placed in the black PTA mailbox in the Jefferson office.

The College Corner Tip:

An Introduction to Saving for College

Last month's College Corner Tip emphasized that if our children are prepared for college academically, lack of money won't keep them out of college. This year, the PTA will provide more information on motivating our children to learn, helping them study effectively, and finding affordable enrichment programs for them.

More financial resources, however, can allow you and your child more options when choosing a college. Saving for your children's higher education can help launch them into successful careers.

It is never too late to open a college savings account for your child. Currently, there are compelling tax advantages for most of these accounts. Due to the favored tax treatment, the value of the accounts will be higher than that of standard savings accounts. However, there is a catch called the "sunset provision:" unless Congress acts, tax advantages may be substantially reduced after 2010. Four vehicles for investing for your child's higher education—Coverdell

Education Savings Accounts, 529 Plans, Independent 529 Plans, and accounts established under the Uniform Gifts to Minors Act (UGMA)—entail tax benefits. Each type has its advantages and disadvantages. In general, funds in these accounts are invested in one or more mutual funds, which can provide greater dividends than standard savings accounts but do entail some risk of principal. Most savings programs allow you to open an account and contribute to it online or by mail.

Each of these will be discussed in more detail in subsequent issues, followed by an overall summary and conclusions. For a good introduction online, go to <http://www.savingforcollege.com/>.

--Jon Squire



Jefferson Test Scores: How are we doing?

At the October meeting, the Jefferson PTA discussed the most recent test scores, how Jefferson students are doing, and how we can improve.

Jefferson students, as a whole, do well compared with students in California. One-half to two-thirds were at least proficient in English-Language Arts and math in 2005. But, depending on grade level and subject, one-third to one-half of Jefferson students are not scoring at the proficient level. We have far to go to meet federal goals for all students to reach proficiency in both subjects by 2014.

Economically disadvantaged and African-American students at

Jefferson achieve proficiency at much lower rates than other subgroups do. Many steps are currently being taken by the state of California, the district, and Jefferson to reduce this achievement gap, but more must be done.

Those interested in addressing the achievement gap should consider volunteering for the School Site Council, English Language Learner Committee, BSEP Committee or Student Advisory Committee – groups that work directly to address the gap. Or, volunteer in your child's classroom to help individual children and to free up teachers so they have more time to plan and teach.

Join Jefferson families, students and friends for a

Play Yard Spruce Up

Join Jefferson families for a few hours on Saturday, November 5, between 9:00 a.m. and noon to tackle the weeds and sweep the woodchips on the school's play ground area. All are welcome even if it's a small amount of time squeezed before, after or between those endless soccer matches. It will be fun meeting other Jefferson folks while making the playground look a lot better.

Dress to be outside and get messy. Bring your favorite weeding tools, gloves and push brooms. Coffee and snacks will be provided.



Heavy rain cancels but light rain just makes weeding easier.

Children welcome – we'll put 'em to work!

Student Voices:

What do you like about the Jefferson playground?

I like the backboard in the Little Yard because I like playing slaughterhouse. It's fun! --Destiny, Room 206

I like the monkey bars. --Miren, Room 205

I like the Little Yard because it has more stuff to do. My second favorite thing is that rocket-shaped climbing structure. I also like the dome and the rings. --Salim, Room 202

I like to swing on the rings, and then you can jump off the bar when you're finished. --Emily F., Room 107

I like to go into the Little Yard and play there with my best friend. --Emily Y., Room 107

I like to climb on the space ship and play tag. --Elliot, Room 103

I like the whole playground! --Joe, Room 207

My favorite things are the swings and the jump ropes, and the rings. --Sophie, Room 205

I like that you can swing on the bars, and then jump off. --Ruby C., Room 107

I like to run around the racetrack with my best friend. --Naeem, Room 104

I like to play over near the three trees. I play the Indian game there with my friends. And sometimes I like to play on the Little Yard. --Sarah, Room 200

I like the placement of the structures. I like climbing on the red dome structure. And I like hiding in between the three redwood trees. --Michael, Room 201

I like the rings, the Little Yard, and the spika. I like going on the spika with Anneka because she always makes me fall off. --Ming, Room 205

I like the three trees. It's fun to play in them. I like the swings, too. The high swings are the best. And, I like the sand box and the kick ball diamond. --Carlin, Room 200

I like two things. I like the track because I like running. And, I like the high-steppers. --Camden, Room 201

Hurricane Relief \$\$

The Jefferson community raised \$1,500 for hurricane relief by washing cars and selling used items at the Back-to-School BBQ in September. The PTA will send the money to a school or school district (or a non-profit that serves schools) affected by the hurricanes.

Cody's Books School Benefit Daze

Shop at Cody's Books Friday, November 11 through Monday, November 15 and Jefferson earns 15% of all receipts turned in.

Jefferson earns 15% on anything purchased at Cody's: books, calendars, stationery, special orders and gift certificates, too. You can spend your annual Cody's budget on a gift certificate during the sale and use it for gifts and your own use throughout the year (and Jefferson gets the benefit now). Purchases at any of the three Cody's stores, as well as those made online, count. Simply save your receipt, or online email confirmation and place it in the mailbox marked John Lyons-Gould/Cody's Fundraiser by the end of November.

Mayfair Quilt

Work on the annual Jefferson Mayfair quilt has begun. This year, the quilt design allows the whole community into the creative process. At the Cultural Night Potluck, parents and children designed many squares, but there are more squares to design and sew. And, more people will be needed to quilt. No prior quilting experience is needed.

Pick out quilting squares at the picnic tables after school, or contact Jennie Doyle at 526-1180, if you'd like to get involved.

PTA Officers

Please contact one of the officers if you have any ideas, questions or concerns.

Kate Gentry, Co-President
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524-1646

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From the Editor:
Your contributions to this newsletter are welcomed. Please submit notices about events, news items or story ideas to Lucinda Sikes, lucsikes@sbcglobal.net, or drop them off in the newsletter mailbox in the Jefferson school office.

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Electronic Scrip

Current eScrip families: Please renew your Safeway info today by going to www.escrip.com and clicking on the Safeway renewal link, YES! RENEW, or have your Safeway Club Card number handy and call 1-800-801-4973. Contributions to Jefferson will stop if you have not renewed by November 1, 2005.

Other families: Please sign up for eScrip for Jefferson! Go to <http://www.escrip.com> and sign up as a Jefferson Elementary PTA supporter (ID# 137588399). This takes only a few minutes to do, there is NO charge to you, and our school really benefits! Safeway shoppers need to make sure that their Safeway card is currently registered—Safeway requires that shoppers regularly renew cards with eScrip, or purchases are not credited. If you signed up over a year ago, your Safeway card needs to be updated. Please participate! Your contributions really add up to make a difference for all our Jefferson children. In past years, Jefferson has raised roughly \$6,000 from eScrip, so this is a big fundraiser for the school, yet it costs you nothing.

If you're interested in Natural Grocery Scrip, contact Sharan Ikeda, sharlei@pacbell.net, 525-9888.

Jefferson Marketplace

Do you have good used clothing or an automobile to sell? Or a pet who needs a good home? Advertise or post these items in this newsletter and our school community can contact you.

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Vacation Rental: Spacious Mountain Cabin in the Sierras; sleeps up to 16 people, very kid and pet friendly, 2.5 hours from the East Bay, 4 bdrms, 2 bthrms, skiing in the winter, lake fun in the summer, gorgeous weather and great hiking in the off- season. Check out the web site for 12 photos, rates, availability calendar, and lots more info: www.vrbo.com/35397 or call Leah (510) 543-3450.

To post your listing in the Jefferson Marketplace, fill out this form and put it in the Jefferson Marketplace mailbox in the office by the second Thursday of each month to have it appear in the next newsletter. Or email it to: WillAndLeah@aol.com by the same deadline.

Basic Description _____

Full Description _____

Contact Info _____