

REACH

A Creative Arts Magnet Program
Brook Haven Middle School, Sebastopol, California

Monday, March 3, 2008

A Weekly Newsletter from the REACH Parent Foundation

Twelfth Night



The 6th graders had an opportunity to experience Shakespeare's Twelfth Night in an abridged production at the Wells Fargo Center for the Arts Friday, 22.

There were only four actors in this amusing interpretation of the classic comedy.

Our very own Rachel Scherrer had a brief appearance as the priest marrying Countess Olivia and Sebastian (the believed -to-be

drowned twin of Viola).

With the exception of one of the four performers, all were rather young and had been acting in a variety of different venues since they were twelve.

The students seemed to enjoy the ranting and carrying on of Sir Toby and the most ill-treated "Madly Used Malvolio" in his shameful attempt at appealing to Olivia in yellow stockings and cross gartered.

—*Claudia Dalessio*

Parent Meeting Update

At last week's Parent Meeting we were fortunate to be visited by therapists Judy Fiermonte and John Alilovich, who have both been working with children for at least 20 years. There was an easy, valuable dialogue established and almost all parents present contributed with a question or issue relating to parent/child interactions. Following are some of the highlights gleaned:

When Your Child Presents a Problem to You – Offering empathy and listening are two key approaches. The book, *How To Talk So Kids Will Listen and Listen so Kids Will Talk* was referenced as a great 'manual' in this.

The adult needs to model how to go about solving or handling the problem, so staying 'emotionally regulated' is key. Try to stay calm. When your child tells you something that is distressing to you, the appropriate response, instead of exhibiting upset, is to say, "Thank you for telling me."

In order to help your child locate their feelings, try to suggest to them the feelings they might feel. If you're off, they'll tell you. If you're correct, they may experience and express more feeling. Here it's best to stay present, to listen, to offer your support non-verbally. They may share more about the issue. And in the best of cases, they



www.reach-program.com

Mark Your Calendar

Wed. March 5
No RPF Board meeting

**Sun. Apr. 13-
Fri. Apr. 18**
8th grade to Yosemite
Drop off 6:30 a.m.
Pick-up 11 p.m.

**Mon. Apr. 21-
Fri. Apr. 25**
7th grade to Ashland
6th grade to Marin
Headlands

Sat. May 10
REACH Party with a tropical theme!

All current and alumni
REACH parents are invited.
More details to follow.
May 10th from 7-10 p.m.
The Tansil House





then are ready to move through it.

Judy shared that girls in particular really need to feel connectedness to their parents. When they feel deeply listened to, they feel this connection.

Offering stories or examples from your own experience are ways to model empathy.

Doing a role play with your child about a difficult situation was also recommended. Judy stressed that at times it is valuable for the parent to take the lead even if the child

resists. If the child says, “I don’t want to do this!” simply respond with “I know you don’t want to do this!” and continue on.

Try to extend the conversation through questions and listening, rather than ‘teaching.’

In order to clarify what role the child wants the parent to play in the issue being discussed, you can ask, “Are you asking for me to help here, or do you just want me to listen?” It was suggested that sometimes it’s appropriate to say to the child, if their difficult issue is at school or among their peers, ‘If you’ve tried everything you know on your own to deal with the situation, and it hasn’t helped, then you need a grownup to help you.’

Lying – It was mentioned that what lies beneath the habit of lying is the struggle to feel good about oneself.

When You Need to Discuss a Misbehavior with Your Child – It can be difficult for the child to take in a parent pointing out that they did something ‘wrong,’ without them confusing this and interpreting it as if they are ‘wrong’ to the very core. To help prevent this, first offer a positive reflection to your child with a comment or two about something good you’ve noticed about them recently, something you’re proud of, or that you or someone else has noticed. This helps situate them inside themselves in a positive way, and then they can more easily separate out their ‘wrong’ behavior as not being a threat to their self-esteem.

For Children Who Are Slower at Making Social Connections –It was suggested that parents take an active role in reaching out socially to the families of their child’s classmates, to try to help foster connections outside of school. For some children, who are considered ‘neuro-

atypical’, it is advised that the parents take an even greater role in helping guide the child socially. For children with Aspergers and non-verbal learning disorders, there is a place in Santa Rosa called Transitions, which offers groups run by Stephanie McGlynn. Judy and John said you can find out more from her website (stephaniemcglynn.com).

When the ‘Internal Weather’ is Too Stormy! – There are times when discussion is not the right thing. The child may be overwhelmed, confused or too upset. In these times the parental support they need is more non-verbal: food, massage, a bath, music, or sleep!

Recommended Reading:

Queen Bees and Wanna Be’s, by Rosalind Wiseman (creator of the Empower program)

My Secret Bully, by Trudy Ludwig

How Girls Thrive, by JoAnn Deak

Girls Will Be Girls, JoAnn Deak

– Diana Badger

Preschoolers Pay a Visit

With a twinkle in their eyes, the three, four, and five year olds of Castle Preschool welcome the sixth graders to their classroom. These little ones gaze at the older students as though they float, rather than walk. Our visits are approximately twice a month.

On Friday, 29 the sixth graders and I were able to create most intriguing works of art with the assistance of the students at CASTLE. Their artistic interpretation propelled forward in colorful markers on white paper and meritment was contagious, even for the more apprehensive preschooler, initially thwarted by intimidation of the sheer size and number of the older students.

It is a fortunate experience to have the pleasure of connecting with precious little people who view the world so differently than most. —*Claudia Dalessio*

Fun With Pizza

We had a lot of FUN!

Mary’s Pizza has great food and to top it off we made a 20% profit for our school funds from each flyer used! It was nice to see so many families and familiar faces I hope we can do this more often. My mom said we made 391.00 dollars. Thanks for making this possible.

—*Roy Van Anda.*



Leeches Are Cool

Erosion, life cycles and Native Californian games were the highlights of our visit to Darwin's Workshop this week. Ms. Discoe prepared great lessons to support our in-class learning about habitats and Native Californians. Our class had the opportunity to observe erosion in action when we followed the banks of a creek to see how the banks were undermined and caving. We then explored a seasonal habitat where leeches, insects and frogs begin their life cycle. After making many observations, the students collected different leech and tadpole specimens. They were later observed under microscopes and saved to be brought back to class. The students then finished out the day by playing Native Californian games that helped them understand how even game playing helped young Californians learn important hunting and survival skills.

On a follow-up class visit, Ms. Discoe brought in tadpoles, algae, an aquarium and everything else needed so that the students could have a long-term opportunity to watch how a frog develops throughout its life cycle.

Ms. Discoe added a story from *Among the Pond People* by Clara D. Pierson about the morphing abilities of a frog. We also learned how to use a key to find different types of seeds, which supported our habitat learning.

The students loved the hands-on, interactive activities guided by Ms. Discoe. Our field trip covered so much learning that could not be captured in the classroom. She even fit in bird watching, animal print observations, checking soil for the correct pH balance for planting and one of her chickens laid an egg while we were there. It was an instant lesson and the kids loved it!

—Melissa Hall and Violet Cole



What a great way to make money for our school, socializing, eating and making merry. Thank you to all those who came to dine, take out or had food delivered. For those who wanted to, but couldn't make it to Mary's, we missed you and hope to see you next time.

—Bonnie Van Anda

Chess Anyone?



Register for the first ever rated tournament for kids in Santa Rosa!

WHEN: March 15, 2008, 10am. Please arrive by 9:45!

WHERE: Rincon Valley Christian School (Santa Rosa Bible Church, 4575 Badger Road)

WHO: Must be a US Chess

Federation member, and in Kindergarten through 12th grade. Non-USCF members can join the USCF (\$17 a year for a 1-year membership including "Chess Life for Kids" magazine). This is a great tournament for players to start developing a chess rating. All players will compete in all three rounds, against players of the same rating and/or grade level.

REGISTRATION: Registration must be received by March 14th. There is no same day registration for this event

INFORMATION: Contact CHESS FOR KIDS at (707) 527-6427 or (707)540-1831, email at chessforkids@hotmail.com

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Attend a Town Hall meeting and save our state parks!

On January 10, 2008 the Governor released a budget proposal that calls for closing 48 State Parks and reducing lifeguard services by 50% from Santa Cruz to San Diego. This list includes Armstrong Redwoods State Reserve and Austin Creek State Recreation Area!

Let your voice be heard at a townhall meeting hosted by Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods on:

Thursday, March 13th from 7-9 pm at the Guerneville Vets Building

Archy & Mehitabel in Shinbone Alley - Camp Rose Players presents musical story of Don Marquis' comic characters Archy the Cockroach and Mehitabel the Cat. Reservation required. Ending Mar 6; Fri-Sat at 8; Sun at 2. \$12. Camp Rose Theater, 2140 S Fitch Mountain Rd, Healdsburg (North Bay), 707.473.0616.

A Perfect Ganesh - Terrence McNally's story of two suburban housewives' journey through India. Through Mar 22; Thurs-Sat at 8; Sun at 2. \$15-\$18. Pegasus Theater Company, 20347 Hwy 116, Monte Rio (North Bay), 707.522.9043.

The Golden Dragon Acrobats - Santa Rosa

Family Series production. Acrobatics, traditional dance, spectacular costumes & theatrical techniques. 6:30 p.m. \$15 Child, \$20 Adult. Wells Fargo Center. 546-3600. www.wellsfargocenterarts.org

Creeks Are For The Birds - Santa Rosa

See what birds are using Santa Rosa Creek as their habitat. Bring binoculars. Ages 12 & up. 8:30-10 a.m. Free. Olive Park Footbridge near W. 3rd St. 543-3845. www.srcity.org

Free Evening Hours - Santa Rosa

5-8 p.m. Charles M. Schulz Museum. 579-4452. www.schulzmuseum.org

Parents Place - Nonsectarian parenting classes; registration required unless otherwise noted. Wed at 1, postpartum blues and depression support group for moms and babies. \$15. Fri at 10, drop-in playtime for ages toddler to five years. \$6. JFCS Sonoma County, 1360 N Dutton Ave, Ste C, Santa Rosa (North Bay), 707.571.8131.

Fairies of Boglewood - Santa Rosa

A greedy person tries to steal fairy gold from Boglewood and is met by some unusual characters. Fri: 7:30 p.m., Sat: 1 & 3:30 p.m., Sun: 2:30 p.m.



Thru Mar. 22. \$5. Steele Lane Community Center. www.atfc.pon.net

Want to Advertise?

REACH classifieds for for-sale items, events, and interest matches are free for individuals in the REACH community. We also have business classifieds. If you'd like to advertise your business in the REACH News, it's \$10 a month or \$50 a year for a classified ad or \$100 a year for a 2" x 2" ad. Kid businesses advertise free.