



Friends of Penngrove PTA
PANTHER PRESS

Volume 4

October 26, 2011

October 29th
Halloween Carnival
Penngrove Campus
11pm - 3pm

October 31st
Halloween Parades
11am - Kindergarten
1:30pm - 1st through 6th

November 7th - 18th
Conferences for grades
1-6 (early dismissal)

November 8th
Dine & Donate - Chili's in
Rohnert Park
11am - 11pm

November 10th
PTA Meeting and
Presentation on A/R
Math and Reading by
Jaime Johnson
7:00pm in the Library

November 11th
Veteran's Day
Holiday - no school

November 18th
Skate Night at Cal Skate
in Rohnert Park
5:30pm - 7:30pm

November 21st - 25th
Furlough Day / Holiday -
no school

Also visit
<http://penngroveelementary.org/Calendar.php> for a
complete calendar



Red Ribbon Week
October 24th - 27th

Celebrating Healthy Kids and a Healthy Planet. We are focusing on the small changes kids can make by exercise, healthy eating and recycling that can make a big difference in their lives and environment.

All week we will be collecting Cans for Camp. So please bring in your aluminum and plastic water/sport bottles. The recycling is being handled by our 6th graders so please bring your recycling to either 6th grade classroom. Monday we started our Exercise Challenge. The kids will be keeping track of their laps around the track for the week. For every 1,000 laps completed by the whole school, all students will get an extra minute of recess on Thursday, November 3rd. If you would be willing to help out we are looking for 3 parents to volunteer. Students will be given the extra recess based on the results of the exercise challenge. For Kindergartens - Teachers please plan the extra time at your convenience. Let us know if you need additional yard monitors. For 1-3 grade, the extra recess will be given before their normal 10:05 recess start time. For 4-6 grade, the extra recess will be given at the end of their normal 10:50 recess end time.

Today, Banana Ben paid a visit to all the classrooms and shared a healthy snack.

On Thursday we will be tallying all the laps and getting ready for some extra fun on the 3rd!

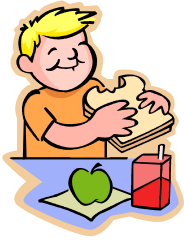
Halloween Carnival is
Saturday the 29th
11:00am - 3:00pm

Be part of the event that has been a Penngrove tradition for over 15 years. The School's upper playground will be transformed into a midway of booths. The 6th graders will once again be hosting the Haunted House. Visit the multi to try your luck at the Cake Walk. We request families to bring a treat if you can to help the fun last all day. Please bring your cake or baked goods to the cafeteria on Saturday.



This is a school community event and everyone no matter the age is encouraged to attend. There will be fun for all. Adults and children under 1 are free. Children ages 2 and up are \$3.00 each unless you're a PTA member then they are free! Not a PTA member yet...not to worry you can sign up for PTA at the Carnival!

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Fueling Learning in the Penngrove School Lunch Program

- Susan Wolsborn

Kids know what they like when it comes to food. In fact Penngrove students are well aware of which day of the week the sought-after submarine sandwich is likely to be on the menu for lunch. Menus are posted on the school's website, but word-of-mouth is another significant generator of interest.

Nutritious meals build strong bodies and help keep students alert and attentive in the classroom. It's in the best interest of the school for the students to be eating healthy choices at lunchtime. But nutrition doesn't come cheap. Good tasting, nutritious food needs to fit within parent and school budgets. Parents who are financially challenged can take advantage of the program at a reduced price, which is covered by a federal program. The schools can access inexpensive surplus farm products through a program sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, but balancing decisions about menus, nutrition, pricing, waste and the environment are complicated.

The Penngrove Elementary school lunch program is managed by the Petaluma City School district and Ray Digaiamo is the Supervisor of Food Services charged with balancing taste preferences with health and cost concerns. The *Panther Press* staff had a chance recently to speak with Mr. Digaiamo about his job.

[PP] *Could you describe for us your position as the Supervisor of Food Services for the Petaluma City Schools?*

My job encompasses responsibilities related to ensuring that all children we serve have access to nutritious school meals daily. Examples of my activities include planning menus meeting required nutrition standards, ensuring that programs meet all state and federal requirements, managing and training staff who prepare and serve the meals, meeting local, state, and federal food safety requirements, procuring foods needed for the program, and maintaining the food services budget.

[PP] *Are there statistics for the proportion of students that purchase the school lunch?*

We monitor statistics daily and work to promote access to the nutritious meals we serve. Currently, 100 of the students at Penngrove purchase the school lunch.

[PP] *Are there particularly popular lunches that students anticipate and are more likely to purchase?*

Popular lunch entrees at Penngrove include the chicken taco salad, teriyaki chicken and rice bowl, and the deli turkey sandwich.

Halloween cont.

Remember to come dressed up and plan to stay for the day, we will have lunch available to purchase. Lots of fun from a Costume contest to a Scarecrow contest. Each grade will be working on their scarecrows this week and on Saturday, we will have a silent auction at the carnival and the highest bidder will walk away with the scarecrow. All funds from the scarecrow contest will go towards the money needed for the school improvement project - covered seating on the picnic tables. The grade who's scarecrow receives the highest bid will win a PIZZA PARTY.

Candy & Prize Donations

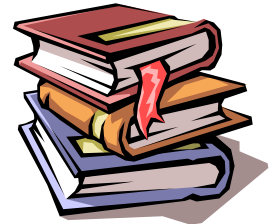
Are welcomed. Drop off in the office anytime.

Volunteers - Food Booth

If you are interested - please send e-mail to

shannon_carrancho@dell.com

Laurie Lutz's Library Corner



A "wish list" of books for the library. The following titles have been suggested by adults or requested by students. Books should be hard cover.

Getting ready for Thanksgiving.....
Turk and Runt by Lisa Wheeler

Big Nate: Out Loud by Lincoln Peirce

Big Nate From The Top by Lincoln Peirce

The Fablehaven Series by Brandon Mull: (Books 1 - 6)

Any Mario Brothers book (student request)

6 month subscription to "National Geographic for kids" \$15.00

6 month subscription to "Sports Illustrated for Kids" \$15.00

Memoirs of a Goldfish by Devin Scillian

Follow the Drinking Gourd by Jeanette Winter

The library still needs volunteers to help with check-in/check-out for the following classes:
Jimenez, Tuesday's 1:00pm-1:30pm
Albini/Sartori, Wednesday's 9:00am-10:00am
Boronkay, Thursday's 2:00pm-2:30pm

If you can help please let Laurie know!

Meet the Teacher!



Six questions
for Ms. Funk,
1st Grade Teacher,
Penngrove School

1. What are three things every teacher should own?

Each teacher is uniquely gifted so our "must have" lists vary. At first grade, I find an extensive library is essential to support budding readers. Having lots of free-choice activities and art & craft supplies helps foster creativity and self-confidence. Finally, I can't imagine not having up-to-date technology in my classroom. Every day I teach from on-line curriculum and students use internet-based learning programs that support individualized academic growth.

2. How did you know you wanted to be a teacher?

I have always loved working with children. As a young mom I became very involved in my children's classrooms and school, even filling little jobs such as after school tutor, office support, and computer tech. I dismissed the idea every time someone suggested that I should become a teacher. Then I went back to full-time work as an office manager and I really missed the children. I knew nothing else could be as fulfilling.

3. Do you have a teaching motto or philosophy?

Every school year I hold twenty plus futures in my hands. I have 177 days or about 850 hours with my students to make sure their futures remain wide open with possibilities. Gaps in academic learning or developmental progress now can equal loss of career or educational options in the future. As crazy as it may sound, this is the first thing I think of to keep myself on track each day. It motivates me to do all I can to connect with each child and his/her family; to utilize resources to build self-confident, eager learners; and to make school a fun, safe place to learn and grow. Secondly, if a child doesn't understand something I consider it my fault, not the student's. Each child is so unique. Motivations, personal interests, energy levels, attention spans, and so many other things influence how a student learns. I have to figure out different ways to explain, demonstrate and/or model what I am teaching so the content is accessible to every child. Sometimes that takes additional one-on-one time. At the end of the day, a little dark chocolate, a walk, or bike ride helps me keep things in perspective!

Cont.

4. Do you have any requests for the classroom?

I need some hanging file crates, six Page-Up document holders, and my students are quickly using up our supply of fine tip whiteboard pens and jumbo Crayola markers. Thank you for asking.

5. What are your hobbies, interests outside of teaching?

I love to ride my beach cruiser bike around town with my husband, go on adventures or just hang out with my two teens, eat yummy food, read character-driven books, and to do my art when I can find the time.

6. How have the children surprised you?

I am always surprised by the enthusiasm of a first grader. The littlest things that others overlook are a source of amazement and wonder for a child. Life is so full and exciting for a six-year-old. I love that.



Sunday, October 16th we had a great turn out. Our Development Team was all present and joined by a few new families which was really exciting.

Over the break, we received a donation of over 100 native plants from the Native Plant Society of Sonoma County. We planted almost all of the plants around campus, many in the area between the office and in the upper quad. The Alexander family (Pete, Theresa, Kenny and Kai) gave a gift of a permanent garden of red roses/poppies on the hill of Adobe and Petaluma Hill.

We were joined once again by our neighbor Jan Shaw - she has become a big supporter of our campus garden improvement!!

Before break, the Girl Scout troop did their community service by spreading mulch around the garden outside Ms Barrell's classroom.

This Thursday, Girls on the Run will do their community service project by planting more natives outside Ms Steven's class room.

'All human beings are born with unique gifts. The healthy functioning of our community depends on its capacity to develop each gift.' Peter Senge 'The Learning School.'

Lunch Program cont.

[PP] *Balancing taste, health, and cost must be a struggle. Do you have a strategy or guiding principles?*

Ensuring nutritious and delicious food offerings each day, that meet budget requirements, is a daily challenge. Fortunately, Petaluma is meeting this challenge through a variety of strategies. Whenever possible, we are increasing the use of less processed foods. We are increasing our use of locally grown foods and take advantage of special pricing on high quality, nutritious foods. We are using the expertise of our staff to create menus that both meet nutrition standards and reflect the preferences of our students. We have changed some traditional favorites, such as chicken nuggets, to a more healthy version, with no fatty breading and using natural, antibiotic free chicken. Our guiding principle is children first, ensuring that our meals not only meet children's' taste preferences, but also are the very best to ensure their optimum health to achieve their full potential.

[PP] *Does the district take advantage of the Commodity Distribution Program for surplus farm products and how does it help?*

We do take advantage of the Commodity Distribution Program, which has been renamed the USDA Foods Program to reflect the positive changes in this federal program. In recent year, the nutrition, variety, and quality of foods offered has been improved in many ways. For example, high quality fresh produce is offered through a partnership with the Department of Defense, to assist in improving children's fruit and vegetable selections. Fresh produce is used in Petaluma food offerings through this program. More information about the changes in the USDA Foods Program is available at:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/foods/healthy/Parents.htm>.

[PP] *What options are there for students with dietary restrictions (vegetarians, allergies, etc.)?*

We have designed our menus to have options available for children following vegetarian diets. Following federal requirements, we request children with allergies to obtain a written note from their doctors describing their dietary requirements, and we can then have their special meal available.

[PP] *The price of the lunch is quite reasonable at \$3. Can you tell me how it is advantageous for the school to achieve this?*

We strive to keep our prices as reasonable as possible to meet our goal of nutritious meals available to all. We know that, particularly for families with more than one child, the cost of school meals may be a challenge on family budgets in these difficult economic times.

[PP] *Do you have strategies to deal with ecological concerns (i.e. reducing packaging, composting)?*

Yes, we support changes to address ecological concerns, such as reduced waste by decreasing the amount of packaging used to prepare meals. Changes, such as reducing the amount of highly processed foods used in the program, help to support this goal. We support school gardens, and will assist any school interested in setting up a local composting program.

[PP] *Do you have a position on soda and flavored/chocolate milk?*

Soda: We support and follow state and federal requirements that prohibit the availability of sodas on the elementary school campus.

Chocolate milk: Offering flavored milk as a part of the school meal programs has been shown to increase milk and nutrient intake, thus increasing the intake of critical nutrients, important to children's health. Like unflavored milk, chocolate milk is a rich source of key nutrients, vitamins, and minerals. Milk and milk products are the main source of calcium in the nation's food supply, and milk products are a key source of a wide range of nutrients, and the consumption of milk products is especially important for children and adolescents who are building their peak bone mass. In addition chocolate milk is available in lower fat options, and the added flavor improves the acceptability of non-fat or low-fat milk. We believe that non-flavored milk is the best choice, but also that chocolate milk is a better choice than empty calorie soda or high-sugar beverages. So, offering a choice of milk beverages as an option for children who would otherwise not consume milk is the position that we favor.

[PP] *Are there other goals you hope to achieve for the program in the future?*

Yes, we hope to increase involvement of students in planning menus and nutrition education. In addition, we will continue to find ways to increase the variety of nutritious offerings available to children and to increase the number of children participating in the school meal programs.

The Panther Press

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