

EAGLE PEAK MONTESSORI SCHOOL

800 HUTCHINSON ROAD, WALNUT CREEK, CA 94598
P 925-946-0994 F 925-946-9409

FRIDAY FOLDER NOTES

(ALSO ON THE WEBSITE)
NOVEMBER 20, 2009



**Happy Thanksgiving
No School
November 23rd thru 27th**



Silent gratitude isn't much use to anyone.

~G.B. Stern

The only people with whom you should try to get even are those who have helped you.

~John E. Southard

He is a wise man who does not grieve for the things which he has not, but rejoices for those which he has.

~Epictetus



Notes from Michelle

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! The staff and I felt so appreciated this week during the lovely luncheon that the parents supplied for us. We want to make sure that you know how much we appreciate everything that you do for us. In addition to this very special Wednesday lunch, every Wednesday we know there will be something from our parents in the staff room just waiting for us. I don't know of any schools whose parents are so faithful in showing their staff how much they care.

On a related note, it is wonderful to see so many families donating to the food drive! This simple act helps so many families across the area. By Tuesday the classrooms were full and needed to move their cans into the office. Thank you for your generosity in this area as well.

As I have mentioned many times in this little section, I have the fortune of talking with many different schools and administrators. This always reinforces how thankful I am for Eagle Peak. If you ever wonder how unique our school is, take some time and come and visit here and then go and visit other school settings. We have an amazing staff who respect each other and who have a true passion for Montessori education. I would like to once again thank everyone who helped to create and who continues to support Eagle Peak!



Notes from Michelle (con't)

Now for a quick but serious reminder, about birthday and student celebrations: Please remember that we ask that when you are celebrating your child's birthday or a holiday in the classroom, that the snacks you provide do not contain an abundance of sugar. We ask that you bring muffins, fruit, or other simple foods. We ask that you do not bring cakes or items covered in icing. Not only does the school make this part of our policies through the student handbook, but there are many parents who do not allow their children to eat this type of snack and it really is not fair to have it presented to them in the school setting.



Holiday Adopt-a-Family

We still need your help.... This year Eagle Peak is "adopting" 10 local families through the Monument Crisis Center. Voluntary participation was so overwhelming last year that we decided to double our impact. This is a great opportunity for parents and children to give back to the community in need outside of our school.

For any additional information about Adopt-a-Family, please see attached flyer or contact Victoria Manassero Maat at juju-bee@pacbell.net or phone 925-933-4432. Email is best.



Garden Work Party Tomorrow - Sat., Nov 21 st

Hope to see you tomorrow between 8 am -12:00. Please bring your own garden tools, gloves and water.

If you have any questions please contact Jessica Bates at eaglepeakgarden@gmail.com or Raul Ruiz at reruizr@yahoo.com

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A Thanksgiving Note from PTLG

Dear Teachers, Staff and Parents,

Have you ever been in awe of what our children are capable of? Kindness is one attribute that comes to mind; thoughtfulness is another. A door held open for a classmate whose hands are full. A third-grader helping a first-grader tie his shoe or learn a new job in the classroom. Giving, happily, without expecting anything in return. Cooperation in general.

In the daily bustle of drop-off/pickup, the scurry for income, and pitching in where we can, we grownups often miss the opportunity to express gratitude for one another. Smiles and simple courtesies go a long way; yet sometimes we're too preoccupied to extend even that much.

So this week, I'd like to take a moment to appreciate all the generosity and commitment that is visible, even tangible, at any moment on campus. The value of each effort -- from behind-the-scenes work of the Administration, Board and CFEP to the more familiar services provided daily by our teachers, childcare staff and volunteers -- cannot be overstated. Each contribution is vital to EPMS, and together these efforts create a truly awesome, cooperative atmosphere.

We all know how fortunate our students are to have a place at Eagle Peak. As parents and volunteers, I think we are equally privileged. We are not just getting things done and fulfilling obligations here; we are also showing our kids, by example, how to be a part of something bigger than ourselves. And if that reward weren't enough, we get to be inspired by the talents of others and make friends along the way.

From this perspective, EPMS feels like an incredibly rich establishment. While financial concerns continue to linger, it is comforting to reflect on the bounty we have in front of us. Thank you to every contributor in this bottomless feast.

Kris Harwood, PTLG Co-Chair



HELP EPMS..... **SHOP On-Line**

Remember to check out the eScrip on-line mall when doing your Christmas shopping. Eagle Peak receives a percentage of your purchases from great retailers such as Barnes&Noble.com, Nike.com, Apple.com, Nordstrom, LeapFrog, Leaps and Bounds and hundreds of other stores. There are also many coupons that you can use for your purchases. When shopping on-line please remember our kids and go to www.eScrip.com and click on the On-line mall (in the upper right corner) first!

FYI – November 1 was an important date in the world of eScrip. Safeway renewals were required by that date. If a supporter did NOT renew their commitment to Eagle Peak, the school STOPPED earning money from your purchases at Safeway. There were only about 20 of our current supporters who did not renew. IT IS NOT TOO LATE! Please take one minute to log on to www.eScrip.com and click the renewal button. That's all you have to do to ensure that Eagle Peak continues to receive funds. Last year, eScrip supporters earned about \$3,600 for our school – all without spending any extra money or time. Thank you to those supporters who have already renewed. And THANK YOU to the 15 NEW supporters who have joined our Group. If you still need to join, it's easy. Just go to www.eScrip.com and follow the prompts. It only takes a few minutes and makes a big difference for our kids!!



8th Annual EPMS Read-a-thon

Keep reading and getting pledges! The Read-a-thon continues through Friday, November 27th. Pledges are due Monday, November 30th.

Thanks to all who helped out with the Book Swap last Friday. It was a big success - many books found new homes. Big "Thank You" to Half Price Books for donating reusable bags for the students to store their books. Happy Reading!

Thank you, Theresa

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Music Notes

Lower EI:

Over the last month, the students have been exploring rhythm by clapping, snapping, patting, stomping, singing, dancing. A few weeks ago, we explored creating and sharing poems with corresponding movement presentations based on non-locomotor or stationary action words (stretch, bend, sway, clap, sink, twist, etc) and locomotor or traveling action words (walk, run, roll, hop, skip, etc). Learning how to work together in small groups is an invaluable lesson in itself. On another day, we worked on moving from the kinesthetic rhythm and concrete rhythm experiences to the notation of rhythm using cups and paper to represent a measure of music, beats, quarter notes, eighth notes and rests. Each child had a chance to be the composer and conductor for their small group, leading their ensemble in clapping the rhythm they created. Your child can practice this at home with you!

We have also been working on mallet technique and exercises which strengthen our hand muscles by using rhythm sticks in a variety of ways. Ask your child about spiders crawling up the sticks, kangaroos jumping, trees falling down, bull and butterfly positions. When we move to the Orff Schulwerk barred instruments next month, they will be ready to bounce those mallets off the bars and make the instruments ring.

On Monday, I assessed each attending Group A student on their ability to sing in tune and remember a short melody. Group B's assessment will take place next class. After that, I will assess rhythmic competence.

Upper EI:

The "Cross Dance" from Poland was a big hit a few weeks ago. Did you know that your child actually enjoys folk dancing? Your child is gaining extremely valuable coordination skills from this activity and neural synapses are connecting between the left and right brains every time we dance.



Music Notes (con't)

Several parents have asked me about what they should expect from their child's recorder playing at home. In a class of 18+/- students, there are naturally varying degrees of physical and musical abilities. The goal of the Orff method, is to have the whole class as an ensemble be able to play music and improvise together, in small groups, and as soloists using melody and drone notes. Thus, learning fewer notes really well and with proper tonguing and breath techniques is the method that works. I do not teach major and minor scales in this setting but with the 4th years we are working towards moving easily from one note to the next of the 5 notes in the pentatonic scale of B A G E and D. The 5th years are playing both soprano and alto recorders and they have already used to the larger finger spacing and increased breath support required for the alto recorder. Most of the 5th years are able to play nine notes on each instrument.

This week, inspired by our visit from Dick Coleman's jazz trio last Friday, I brought my father's soprano saxophone to share. I played it briefly in 6th grade. I was able to play a few melodies for the students and show how similar the fingering is to the recorder. The 5th years all had a chance to hold it with the mouthpiece removed and place their fingers on the keys.

We are also learning how to read music and compose in our classes. Music sheets, theory and composition exercises are maintained in their folders. I have encouraged the students to take home their recorders and folders to practice and compose some melodic drawings.



Talent Show

EPMS Talent Show is February 26th this year! The show is always a big hit and a LOT of fun for everyone. Sign up sheets are due December 7th. Performers must attend BOTH rehearsals - January 27th and February 24th. See sign up sheets for details. Questions? Jenn Hartmann, 925-708-2128 or jenofun@hotmail.com.

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Volunteer/Help Wanted

1. Talent Show

Talent Show volunteers needed now. Great way to get in hours outside of the workday! We need an emcee coordinator, refreshments coordinator, visual artist coordinator, professional videographer, help with set up and clean up, and 2-3 assistants to help out during the show. Jenn Hartmann, 925-708-2128 or jenofun@hotmail.com.

2. Afternoon Carhops - Volunteer Needed:

Volunteers are needed to assist in after school carpool on Mondays and Tuesdays (3:30-3:45 pm). Please note a one month commitment is requested. If you can assist, please contact Mayra Garcia at 639-6358 or email: mayrag79gmail.com





Attachments this Week

- December Childcare Registration
- Lower EI Field Trip Payment and Permission Slip
Rooms 301 & 401 (302 handed out in class)
- Adopt-a-Family




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NOVEMBER SCHOOL CALENDAR

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
						 Garden Work Party 8 am - 12
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; background-color: #e0e0e0;"> <i>Thanksgiving Holiday - No School</i> </div>						
29	30					
	 Read-a-thon Pledges Due				Friday Market	

DECEMBER SCHOOL CALENDAR

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
			<u>Lower EI - 302</u> MOCHA  Prospective Parents Mtg. 7 - 8 pm		Friday Market	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
		<u>Parent Ed.</u> Montessori Language 6:30 - 8:30	<u>Lower EI - 301</u> MOCHA 		Lunch Order Due Friday Market	Prospective Parents Mtg. 9:30 -10:30 am
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	CFEP 7:00 pm	EPMS Board Mtg 7:00 pm	<u>Lower EI - 401</u> MOCHA 		Friday Market	
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; background-color: #e0e0e0;"> <i>Winter Break - 12/21/09 thru 1/1/2010</i> </div>						