

THE OBSERVATORY

Fall is Time to Turkey Trot!

Calendar Highlights

- OCT 14** Turkey Trot Deadline for T-Shirt Guarantee
- NOV 6** Turkey Trot
- DEC 3** Los Gatos Holiday Parade - Join Us!
- JAN 19** Winter Raffle Begins
- APR 30** May Faire

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Dear Mountain School Families,

Apple picking, fall picnic, camping trip, pumpkins...even though it still feels like summer, the markers all indicate a change of season! We are now 4 weeks into our year and I hope you are settling in and feeling like you are getting to know your teachers and the other families in your classes by now.

The change of season lets us observe leaves drying up, changing color and falling from the trees. We notice shadows lengthening and, briefly, for a few minutes last week, we even felt raindrops falling as we got ready for cooking time! Soon, we'll be eating dinner in the dark.

In the 3/4s, we've been blessed with a steady supply of dead critters to investigate as our year began. I say "blessed" because for one thing, it's wonderful for the children to be able to look as long and as closely as they want at these fallen insects and reptiles now safe to approach. It brings about many observations and interesting questions which we can turn back to the children to find out what they may already know. There's another reason we welcome this opportunity: death and its meaning can be approached gently, indirectly and un sentimentally by talking about the lifecycles we observe in nature. At Mountain School we sometimes tell the children that everything has a beginning, a middle and an end. This is true about stories, it is true about trees and plants, it is true about animals and people. Observing a dead snake, we might say that this is the snake's end. It is dead now and it can't eat or move or shed its skin again. It won't wake up. Not that they're always convinced: I remember one boy who needed to keep digging up a dead bird that had been buried just to check that it was still dead!

Death is a hard concept for young children to understand. According to our friend Bev Boss who died just last year herself, one of the things that helps people the most is for the songs, books, and stories that will help them cope with death to be in their lives before they experience grief and loss. We have several of these books appropriate for young children in our



library at the schoolhouse including Tough Boris by Mem Fox, Miss Bridie Chose a Shovel by Leslie Conner, Who Killed Cock Robin by Etienne Delessert and Saying Goodbye to Lulu by Corinne Demas. There are also old folk songs like Go Tell Aunt Rhody which originated in the U.S. during colonial times, Jenny Jones (English) and Water, Water Wallflower (Scottish) that can be played and sung with children.

Children come to grasp with death in stages. From ages 2 to 4, children don't believe that death is final. They think it is temporary and reversible. They attempt to equate it with something they know (like sleep) and are more interested in what it means right now (the person is never coming back) than in how it happened. During the next stage, ages 4 to 10, children understand that all living things will die someday. (Younger ones may not yet apply this to themselves.) They may play imaginary games in an attempt to understand death and deal with their fears (role playing, superheroes, ghosts). By age 10, most children understand that death is personal, inevitable, universal and final. At all ages, part of the fear of death is that they will be separated from their parents. When asked, "Are you going to die?" — answer honestly, "No, I do not expect to die for a long, long time." Then schedule your physical.

Let's enjoy every moment we have on this beautiful planet!

Love, *Leslie*



Marketing Corner

Have your friends check us and other local preschools out!

Las Madres Education Fair

Wednesday, November 9, 6pm-9pm

Campbell Community Center

http://www.lasmadres.org/content.aspx?page_id=87&club_id=177487&item_id=563844

Fundraising

Thuan Pham, Fundraising Chair



Thank you to all the Mt. School families who are participating and helping to raise money for our school! This event will not be as successful without everyone's effort!

To see how much money you and other Mt. School families have earned on their pledge pages, follow this link:

<https://lgsons.ejoinme.org/MyEvents/2016TurkeyTrot/LGSONSFundraiserDirectory/tabid/809342/Default.aspx>

Big shout outs to the **Zenteno family** who has raised almost \$800 dollars on their pledge page, and the Jewell-Larsen and Walker/Ho families, whose businesses are sponsoring the Turkey Trot!

- **NEW PRIZE OFFERED:** All families who reach the goal of \$100 on their personal pledge page by November 5th at midnight will be entered in a drawing for a child's bike and helmet. Each additional \$100 will earn the family an additional raffle ticket.
- **Which class will win the PJs and Pancake Breakfast at the Schoolhouse?** Currently, the class that has raised the most money is the **4/5's class**, followed closely by the **3/4's class**.
- **You still have time to register for the race and participate in the fundraising! Help out your school, lift your class to victory and win a bike for your family!** To register for the Turkey Trot and set-up your fundraising page, follow this link: <https://lgsons.ejoinme.org/2016turkeytrotregistration>
- **Please register by Friday, October 14th to be guaranteed t-shirts or to have family sponsorship names printed on t-shirts.**
- Please contact me, Thuan Pham, or your class Fundraising Liaison, for more information or any questions about the Turkey Trot and fundraising for Mt. School.



SPOTS GO FAST - DON'T MISS

Early-Bird Registration at the Turkey Trot!

Look for the Buy-a-Spot Sign-up in the Registration Tent

- Candlelight Yoga - hosted by Amy Moreland

- Mom's Wine Date - hosted by Mahduri Fletcher

- New Years Train at Oak Meadow - hosted by Thuan Pham & Tania Vong

- Sing-a-long Campfire at Bear Creek Stables - hosted by Teacher Leslie & TBA

- Quilting Class - hosted by Teacher Marie & Karyn

- Pre-Holiday Frolic at the Schoolhouse - hosted by Teacher Sarah & TBA

- Ukulele class - hosted by Grandma Phyllis

- Mom's day hike - hosted by Teacher Leslie & TBA

- Dad's Poker Night - hosted by Dino Negrini

ONLINE REGISTRATION - NOVEMBER 6TH - 20TH

Teacher Profile

Marie Imai, Head Teacher 4/5s

I grew up in a suburb of Portland – Milwaukie, Oregon. I'm the oldest of three children. My father had a tire recapping business and my mother was a Christian education director for a Presbyterian church. As a family we always camped at Mount Hood. My father took us camping, skiing, salmon fishing, and mountain climbing throughout the Northwest.

I graduated from Stanford University in 1964 which is also where I met my husband, Kent, and we have now been married 52 years and have 6 grandchildren from 22 to 4 years, 3 of whom attended Mt. School. I was a substitute teacher in Detroit where my husband attended medical school. We moved back to San Jose in 1968 and I first found Mt School in 1969 with my 4 year old son Stefan. I became an assistant teacher in 1975 and unbelievably have been here ever since teaching in the 2s, 3/4s and 4/5s and serving as director during the 1990s for 10 years or so, following Teacher Sally McElravey.



The best preparation I have had for teaching at Mt School is having spent so much time outdoors with my family growing up in Oregon and then repeating that kind of experience with Kent and my own children on annual backpacking trips in the Sierras for more than 20 years. Connecting with nature and being comfortable out doors is such an important part of my life and a gift that began with my parents. I congratulate all of you for starting this journey with your young children and hope that you discover ways to continue your adventures out of doors throughout your children's growing up years and for the rest of your life as well. And when you can go with other families the fun is more than doubled! We are so fortunate to have the Santa Cruz mountains in our backyard offering the peace and restoration of nature to all of us. Whenever my grandchildren have been fussy or out of sorts we simply go outside to play and everything changes for the better for me and for them.

I have been so inspired these last few years by the naturalist, Jon Young who lives in Santa Cruz and will be the speaker at our general meeting on Nov 9. Don't miss hearing him and come with your spouse if at all possible - make it a date night! Jon is the co-author of Coyote's Guide to Connecting with Nature. You can learn more about him through his website 8shields.org and owlinkmedia.com.

If I were to pick a perfect job for myself, I couldn't imagine one better than having spent the last 40 years or so at this nursery school; it's my idea of a match made in heaven. I so appreciate the support of teachers and parents ... and the friendships, more than anything in my life, except for my husband and children. I just feel so fortunate; I don't think most people get all the benefits from their work that I do from mine. It's so much more than a job.

Our School Library

Courtney Boitano, Librarian

This month we will move into the school house so please take a minute to peruse the parent library located in the red bookcase in the parent room. There are instructions posted about how to check out a book. Please try to return the book within 4-6 weeks for others to enjoy. We have a diverse selection of books as well as some school house recipe that might provide ideas for snack!

As a reminder, the teacher's library (books on the white bookshelves) are not to check out but can be perused while you are at the school house if your child shows a particular interest in a topic and you would like to delve into it with them. Please ask a teacher for assistance in obtaining a book from the teacher library.

We are always accepting donations for the parent library if you have any books on child development or parenting that you think others would enjoy. Please contact me Courtney Boitano, cdboitano@gmail.com if you have books to donate. Happy Fall, Happy Reading!

See with Wonder...As a Child

Submitted by Jane Krejci, Teacher Fri 2's

*When a child plays, he plays for the sake of play.
He is enchanted by the moment, the timeless time, the eternal now.*

*All that surrounds a child is a source of wonder.
She walks and moves and looks with great wonder in her eyes.*

*A child's eyes are like a mirror, reflecting what is there.
All is mysterious, surprising, fresh and new.*

*Let's not forget how we walked with our eyes wide with wonder...
"What's this? What's that? I never saw it before!"*

*How wonderful it is when we experience life with freshness,
amazement and wonder...as a child.*



Community

Sarah Hitchcock Glover, Head Teacher Friday/Saturday 2's

Throughout several decades we have had the good fortune to enjoy a great working relationship with Lakeside School. This Autumn our families are invited to attend the revival of a very sweet tradition on their campus, the Lakeside Elementary Community Harvest Festival. This is an event your families can surely enjoy to help you get into the Fall season. There will be a chili cook-off, a bake-off, items for sale from local artists and crafts people... a real down home feel for the harvest season. Maybe even some local freshly squeezed grape juice from an alum Mountain School family! Lakeside parents are working very hard at doing all the fundraising they possibly can while organizing for another parcel tax effort in the Spring.

A fun opportunity to give them our support. Hope to see you there!

Happy Autumn

Join fellow mountain families for the
**Lakeside Elementary
Community Harvest Festival**



**Saturday, October 29th
Noon-4PM**

**Bring your best to
celebrate fall harvest for
a chili cook-off, a bake-off,
and fun-filled games!**

www.lakesiderocks.org