

PTO-In the Know

November, 2002
Volume 2, Issue 2

A Newsletter for Parents and Teachers of the Montessori School of Manhattan Beach

Calendar of Events:

November 19: PTO meeting, 7:00-8:30pm, Peck Campus, Yellow House. Featured Speaker is Diana Lipson-Burge on Nutrition for your Child

November 12: Native American Dancers Assembly for all classes – sponsored by the PTO

November 27-29: Thanksgiving holiday – no school

December 17: PTO meeting, 7:00-8:30pm, Peck Campus, Yellow House. Tentative Speaker on Identifying Learning Disabilities

January 28: PTO meeting, 7:00-8:30pm, Peck Campus, Yellow House. Tentative Speaker on Building your Child's Self Esteem

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PTO Website

www.montessoribrpv.com/pto_home.htm

NEXT PTO MEETING: November 19th, 7:00pm

FEATURED SPEAKER: Nutrition for your Child

As part of our continuing effort to provide opportunities for parents to learn and network with others, we are bringing in Special Topic speakers to our PTO meetings. Our first Special Topic speaker will be Diana Lipson-Burge, who will discuss "Nutrition and your Child". Her program will last approximately 45 minutes. Future meetings are planned to cover the following topics: **Identifying and Understanding Learning Disabilities and ADD, Conflict Resolution, How to Build Child's Self Esteem and Transition to Elementary School.** Thanks to the Parent Education Committee for arranging these programs.

-Carla Buck, PTO President

Child Enrichment: The goal of the Child Enrichment committee is to augment the enrichment activities (concerts, Spanish, etc.) that are already provided by the school. The committee has developed a schedule of events based on each classroom's "units of study" and the top priorities of each teacher.

As of this newsletter, we have already had:

- A **Safety** guest speaker – a Manhattan Beach Police Officer for Miss Chantal's class talking about 911 and strangers
- A visit from **Dr. Turley (Dentist)** for Miss Christine, Miss Summer, and Miss Chantal. The dentist addressed care of your teeth and a child's first trip to the dentist.

Upcoming events:

- **11/21:** A POW-WOW for the entire school featuring Native American dancers.
- **11/26:** The "**Wonder Mobile-Insect Unit**"...a BUG museum, will visit Miss Michelle, Miss Susie, and Miss Diane. The current plan is to host this program for all the classes during the months when insects will be studied.
- **Safety speaker:** Lifeguard for Miss Chantal
- **Nutritionist, Firemen with the fire truck, Tropical Fish speaker** to be scheduled

Each classroom will receive the same number of enrichment activities over the course of the year. Speakers will be given a stipend (generally \$25) as a way of saying thanks. More elaborate events have a higher cost. The enrichment area is where the bulk of funds raised by the PTO are spent. We're still finalizing our plan for the year based on our projections for Scrip sales, but will provide more information on plans for the year and costs as it is available.

Thank you to all the parents who joined the PTO, to those participating in the Scrip program, and those who donated extra funds. Without this wonderful support, none of these events would be possible. We have received great reviews from the children on the events so far and hope you are as excited as we are to be able to offer these great experiences to our children.

Please send us your comments and feedback regarding these events. Any other suggestions for future events would be greatly appreciated.

- Letitia Lau and Cheryl Cleamons, Enrichment Chairs

We want You! – your ideas, your feedback, your involvement. Let us know how we're doing AND what it would take to get you involved

Treasury Report: Thanks to everyone who has supported the PTO! Here's a breakdown on our *projected* budget through June 2003:

<u>Income</u>		<u>Expenses</u>	
Scrip	\$5481	Parent Education	\$850
Kids Art	\$975	Child Enrichment	\$3925
Spring Sing Videos	\$1500	Community Rltns	\$2000
Membership	<u>\$1000</u>	Website	\$600
TOTAL INCOME	\$9756	Operating Exp.	<u>\$1000</u>
		EXPENSES	\$8375

We have raised \$8300 since last December, of which \$4000 is allocated for reserves. Our major expenses this month were Montessori Nights and the website.

If you haven't become a member of the PTO, it is not too late to join! It's \$10/year per family and is a great way to show your support. Membership forms are available in the office or on the website.

-Ann Mazuk, PTO Treasurer

Kids Art Greeting Cards are In! Cards are available for pickup as of November 12th. Come by the Scrip table at the front of the school from 8-9am. Bell campus cards will be packaged and available in the classrooms. This has been a great success, raising \$975, but, more importantly, helping create a fun memory from your child.

Change in PTO Board: We are sorry to see the departure of 2 members of the PTO board: Kay Everhart, President, and Bennett Talsky, Vice President. Both have been valuable members of the PTO, but due to health issues for Kay and work conflicts for Bennett, neither will be able to continue involvement in the PTO at the Board level. We wish both of them well. So what do we do now? Well – as always, we welcome any and all involvement from parents to participate in the PTO, so if you have the hankering to be more involved, we'd love it. Regardless, we will continue with all the great plans we have in place. The role of the President will be filled by Carla Buck and Ann Mazuk will act as Secretary/Treasurer.

We'd also like to plant the seed in your mind for next year – **Consider running for an officer in the PTO.** The elections are in April and the office is a year commitment. It's a great way to get more involved.

Montessori Nights: Thank you very much for your amazing support and feedback regarding Montessori Nights. Thanks also to Donna Van Tolsma, who taught each of the 3 evenings. We had a total of 59 parents who came over the three nights. For night one we had approx. 45, for night 2 we had approx. 38, and for night 3 we had 25. Several parents said that they wished it could continue and were very happy with the knowledge gained. The cost of this program was covered by the PTO and based on the feedback, it looks like this program could become an annual event. Please contact Shara Montana at SharaM@aol.com if you have feedback or would like additional information on the event.

-Shara Montana, Chair, Parent Education Committee

Having trouble thinking of a useful teacher gift for the holiday? Contact Julie Schweitzer at Julie@schweitzerfamily.com for the Scrip vendors that your child's teacher would like the most.

International Fair: There's been a lot of excitement around a springtime International Fair, but the progress is still slow. Here's the idea – a Sunday event for the kids in the school, parents organize booths around countries (goal is at least 1 per continent – although we might skip Antarctica); each booth has food, games, a craft, music and/or entertainment that involves the child. You don't have to be from that country to get involved – just have enthusiasm and interest to help spark the interest of our kids. Here's our most urgent needs:

- Ideas for an inexpensive venue to host the event (must be indoors). We can't use the school because it's used by the church on Sundays
- People to sponsor countries.

Thanks to the parents who have already contacted me. We hope to have a general planning meeting soon. Please call me with ideas and your involvement!

-Margot Farris, Community Relations Chair

Material Making Days: *Thanks* to those parents who have so graciously volunteered their time for the Material Making days in September and October. As the teachers have started to spread the word on all that our committee has been able to do, we could use a few more helping hands! Bring your favorite CD, I'll bring the refreshments and join us for some cutting, pasting and coloring on **November 22nd from 1:00 - 2:30 pm** in the Yellow House (Peck campus).

-Julie Schweitzer, Teacher Appreciation Chair

Las Floristas Charity: The Community Relations committee has been working with the school to build a relationship between the school and Los Floristas, a charitable organization devoted to the Rancho Los Amigos Hospital's Pediatric division in Downey, CA.

Las Floristas is a completely volunteer -run organization has helped to fund the Wheelchair Sports Program, Los Angeles "Teens on Target", Pediatric Neuropsychological Laboratory, Technology Development and Application Program, Bob Hope Audiology Suite, Sports & Fun Program for Ventilator Dependent Children, a Toy Lending Library, a medical Transport Van, and so on and so on.. Las Floristas has helped provide care and assistance to thousands with birth defects, brain damage, severe injuries resulting from accidents, and other acquired disabilities.

We just inked **March 14th** as the date where athletes from Las Floristas championship **Wheelchair Basketball** team will come and perform an exhibition game against teachers and parents for the Montessori School. These athletes came to us about 2 years ago and they were a big hit for the children.

*****HELP NEEDED*****

Parents who might be willing to **join the wheelchair basketball team** for Montessori should contact Margot Farris as soon as possible. Also needed are 2 basketball hoops and a PA system for the match.. Please contact Margot if you can help with any of these things.

-Margot Farris, Community Relations Chair

Want to go Behind the Scenes? What do you think about a BEHIND THE SCENES tour of the San Diego Zoo and Sea World in the spring (probably April) of next year? One of the PTO parents did this a few years ago with a group of families and said it was a blast. The Tours eliminate lines as well as really giving a unique perspective of seeing the animals at the Zoo and Sea World in a different environment.

The PTO is considering coordinating a trip if the interest is high enough among parents. The trip would be over a weekend and we would arrange both the tours and a group rate at a hotel – e.g. somewhere with a nice pool. This is not a fund raiser, but rather a service we could help provide and a chance for more families to get to know one another. – What do you think? Let *Sandra Essex* know if you'd be interested.

Fund Raising: We raise funds through the PTO to fund the activities that parents said they would like to see: Enrichment programs for the kids, parent education programs and community relations activities. The primary means we have chosen to make this happen are the programs of **SCRIP**, **ESCRIP**, and **SCHOOLCASH**.

By now, you should have seen the information for these programs. They are easy to buy and provide an easy way for us to fund the programs you asked for at no additional cost to you. We currently raise around \$130 /week with participation from around 8 parents. Just think what would be raised if only 10 more families participated a week.

If you want to participate, directions for participating and forms are on the school's website at www.montessorimbrpv.com/pto_home.htm.

- Sign up for **ESCRIP** online.
- You can purchase paper **SCRIP** on Mondays at the Peck Campus from 7:30-9:30.
- You can also purchase **SCRIP** using order forms, simply drop or route them to the PTO mailbox at the Peck Campus in the Administration office.
- We now have **Albertson's Community Card** at the **SCRIP** Table. At the request of a parent, Kimia Sadr, we have signed up for Albertson's Community Partners Program. Cards are available which have a UPC code automatically linking them to our account. At the end of each quarter we will receive a check for 2-5% of all purchases made with these cards.
- At the request of several parents, **SCRIP** is now available for purchase with your **VISA** card. An additional 4% will be charged, but it will enable all of you to get your miles and still contribute.

-Sandra Essex, Fund Raising Chair

Community Relations - Room Mom Sylvia Cenzano organized a Pumpkin Patch Sunday where parents who were interested could go together with their children to the Cottone Brothers Pumpkin Patch before Halloween. Apparently this was a fun outing and a way for parents to get to know other parents and their children in a fun setting – all a part of building the community which we strongly encourage. Thanks to Sylvia.

Parents – please consider planning similar events with your Montessori colleagues and let us know how it went so we can publish it in the PTO newsletter.

-Margot Farris, Community Relations Chair