

PINECREST HEADLINES

Communication from the Head of School - Issue 7, 2009-10 - Wednesday, January 6, 2010

News and Notes

Happy New Year! May 2010 be a rewarding and happy year for all of us and for the Pinecrest community.

Morning drop-off for all students begins at 8:40 a.m. and ends at 9:05 a.m. We've had an increase recently of late arrivals, which makes it hard for the teacher to end drop-off and return to her classroom promptly at 9:05 a.m. Please be sure to arrive to school by 9:05 a.m. each day. This helps your child start his/her day off right too and helps ensure that instruction time is not lost for the teacher on duty each morning. Thank you for your cooperation.

The fourth and fifth/sixth grade classes will go with Ms. O'Hara and Ms. Mitlo to the Textile Museum for a field trip on Friday morning.

Our annual International Dinner will be held on this Saturday, January 9, at 6 p.m., at school in the multipurpose room. A green flyer was sent home in Wednesday Envelopes before winter break. An email with more information will be coming out later today.

On Wednesday, January 13, at 7 p.m., we will have our 2010-11 Rising Back-to-School Night, beginning in the multipurpose room. This is an adults-only event for parents of rising pre-kindergarten/preschool 4 and rising grade 1-6 students to learn more about their child's next grade level. For example, if your child is currently in preschool 3, you would go to the pre-kindergarten classroom for the pre-kindergarten/preschool 4 presentation, and so on. On Thursday, January 28, at 7 p.m., we will have this same event but for parents of rising kindergarteners only (current pre-kindergarten or preschool 4 students). (Please see below Special Intention section for more information about why we must reschedule the kindergarten piece of this event. Thank you for your understanding.) The format will be very similar to the Back-to-School Night we have in the fall (thus the name of the event). Teachers will make presentations and answer questions. Board members will share information as well. I hope you'll plan on attending.

2010-11 Reenrollment Forms will be distributed via Wednesday Envelopes on January 20 with a requested return date of Friday, February 19. Once again, the Board of Trustees has determined that an early registration discount will be available if the registration contract and tuition deposit is returned by Monday, March 15. More details will be available about this next Wednesday with the reenrollment information. The above-mentioned Back-to-School Night events are designed to help provide more information about your child's next Pinecrest experience and help with your decision-making for the next school year.

Our Annual Fund Campaign has begun and will go through June 30. We kicked it off with 100% Board participation. We hope that you will consider donating in an amount that fits within your family's means. Our goal is 100% community participation, although we have many alumni families who continue to give generously each year as well. All independent schools and non-profits run Annual Fund Campaigns each year. Your gift helps strengthen and uphold Pinecrest's mission for our current and future students.

There will be a winter session of K-6 after-school activities. More information will be distributed to families next Wednesday in Wednesday Envelopes.

Faculty members engage in regular professional development throughout the year. Ms. O'Hara is attending a Math With Meaning workshop next Thursday, January 14, in Reston, entitled Step-by-Step Model Drawing: Singapore's Best Problem-Solving Math Strategies.

Please remember to dress your child for the weather now that it has gotten chillier. Classes play outside most days that the temperature is above 32 degrees Fahrenheit (and not raining or snowing). A warm coat is mandatory every day until spring.

If you need to park during morning carpool, please do not cut the line and drive into the parking lot by the older building. Please wait until it is your turn to pull towards the mailbox and then go into to the parking lot then or please

News and Notes – continued

wait in the line until you can safely turn into the satellite parking lot on the grass. Similarly, at drop-off or dismissal (for 12 noon or 3:30), if you have parked by the older building and need to then leave, please wait until the carpool line has finished before exiting the parking lot. If you must park and come in during dismissal or at drop-off, a better option is to park in the parking lot on the grass. This avoids the sometimes dangerous situation of cars cutting each other/going in between each other in the line. We want to keep everyone safe, which is the purpose of these guidelines. Please share this information with anyone who may pick up your child(ren) – grandparents, caregivers, et al. Thank you!

If you read this newsletter and respond by email by Friday morning at 10 a.m., you will be entered in a drawing to win a 50% reduction on one child's Pinecrest Summer Pavilion 2010 registration fee! Congratulations to Molly Pringle (parent of Sophia, Pre-K) who won second row seating at the winter concert for reading and responding to the last newsletter!

Calendar Date Change (first announced 11/18/09): The calendar currently states that Tuesday, February 16, is a no-school day and a faculty in-service day for the teachers and me. We have changed this date. We will now be in school as usual on Tuesday, February 16. Our faculty in-service workday will be on Thursday, March 4, instead. This means no school for the children on Thursday, March 4. I know schedule changes are challenging, and I realize that some people may have already made travel plans for February. That is okay, and we understand if so. We have the opportunity to attend a valuable workshop on differentiated instruction on March 4, so that is why we have changed the date. Thank you for your understanding.

Pinecrest Summer Pavilion

We are almost ready to announce exciting and new summer camp information for 2010! We will run eight weeks of camp this summer beginning the week of June 28 and ending the week of August 16. Preschool Pavilion for rising pre-kindergarten/preschool 4 children will be available all eight weeks, mornings only. Pinecrest Summer Pavilion (PSP) information packets will be available in the next two weeks and will be distributed to current Pinecrest families first, before information is mailed to last year's camp families or put on the school website. Current Pinecrest students and former PSP campers will have priority registration before it's opened to the public. Mrs. Hartzler has been hard at work on the schedule and planning, and there is no doubt in mind that this will be ANOTHER great summer for us!

Upcoming Dates

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| Fri., Jan. 8 | Grade 4 and 5/6 Field Trip – Textile Museum in D.C. – morning |
| Sat., Jan. 9 | Open House for Prospective Families – 10 a.m.-1 p.m. |
| Sat., Jan. 9 | International Dinner – 6 p.m. – multipurpose room |
| Wed., Jan. 13 | 2010-11 Back-to-School Night – 7 p.m. – begins in multipurpose room (For parents of Rising Preschool 4/Pre-K & Rising Grade 1-6 students to learn more about their child's <u>next</u> grade level) |
| Mon., Jan. 18 | Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday Holiday – NO SCHOOL |
| Wed., Jan. 20 | 2010-11 Reenrollment Forms Distributed |
| Wed., Jan. 20 | Grade 4 and 5/6 Field Trip – Mount Vernon |
| Thurs., Jan. 28 | K-6 Quarter 2 Ends (48 days) |
| Thurs., Jan. 28 | 2010-11 Kindergarten Back-to-School Night – 7 p.m. – kindergarten classroom (For parents of Rising Kindergarten students to learn more about their child's <u>next</u> grade level) |
| Fri., Jan. 29 | K-6 Quarter 3 Begins |
| Fri., Jan. 29 | Grade 4 and 5/6 Assembly – 9:15 a.m. – multipurpose room |
| Fri., Feb. 5 | Grade 1 Assembly – 9:15 a.m. – multipurpose room |

SAVE THE DATE: Sat., May 1 – Pinecrest Annual Auction Fundraiser – evening – adults only

Celebrations/Appreciations

Congratulations to Grace Becker (parent of Scott, grade 4) who won the Auction Redskins Raffle in December! Thank you to EVERYONE who bought raffle tickets and promoted it to friends and family. \$425 was raised for the school, and we are most grateful. Thank you again to Richelle Singh and Ramiro Torrico (parents of Raman Singh-Torrico, K) for donating the Redskins tickets and making this fundraiser possible!

Celebrations/Appreciations – continued

A standing ovation for Mrs. Yeomans and Mrs. Samaha for their direction of our winter concert on December 18. What a special morning it was to see all of our stars shine! We also extend a warm thank you to John Calvin Presbyterian Church and to Fred Wulff from the John Calvin parish who provided wonderful help with the sound system.

Happy Birthday to Ms. Mitlo (today) and to Mrs. Mink (January 10)!

Special Intention

I want to let the community know that our kindergarten teacher, Mrs. Vogus, was diagnosed with thyroid cancer during the winter break. It is considered Stage 1, and a scan determined that the cancer was located only in the thyroid and several adjoining neck lymph nodes. Mrs. Vogus is having surgery later today, and her prognosis is positive and so are her spirits. The surgery will require a two-week recovery period. Ms. Elder (an experienced teacher and friend of Mrs. Davis's who has been substituting a lot with us this fall) will be teaching kindergarten during this time. Mrs. Vogus is expected to return to school on Tuesday, January 19. Mrs. Vogus shared this news with the kindergartners (as their parents were informed over the break) in very simple terms – that she has "bad cells" in her body right now that are making her "sick" and that it is called "cancer," which will require surgery and then to be out of school. This is the message other classes will receive too. The best way for our community to help at this time is to keep Mrs. Vogus and her family in our thoughts and/or prayers as they face this challenging situation. I know that together we will support Mrs. Vogus, give her strength, and help keep her spirits as up as they can be. This is community. This is Pinecrest School.

Thyroid cancer doesn't have a well-recognized icon or a color like some other diseases or illnesses, but one of Mrs. Vogus's icons is a sunflower. We will be selling yellow paper sunflowers (\$1.00 each) in the front office to benefit the Light of Life Foundation. The Light of Life Foundation was established in 1997 by Joan Shey, a patient herself. The mission of this 501(c) (3) non-profit organization is to improve the quality of life of thyroid cancer patients through continual education of the lay public and the medical community and by promoting research and development to improve thyroid cancer care. For more information, please visit www.checkyourneck.com. The sunflowers, similar to last year's pink paper ribbons for Mrs. Wheeler (grade 1 teacher) or the annual paper sneakers for diabetes for Ellie Hohenstein (grade 4), will be hung up in the front office as a visual show of support for our beloved kindergarten teacher and her family. To purchase a sunflower (or more), please see Mrs. O'Grady or Mrs. Shaw or send us a note with payment in an envelope through backpack mail or Wednesday Envelopes. Cash or check payable to Light of Life Foundation is accepted. You can write your own name (or your child can write his/hers) on the sunflowers you buy to be hung up in the front office.

Thought for the Day

"Once you choose hope, anything's possible." (Christopher Reeve)