



Happy Valentine's Day!

El Carmelo Calendar

Most current PTA calendar can be found at www.elcarmelo.paloaltopta.org

February

- February 16: **Auction Donation Deadline**
- February 17: No School, staff development
- February 18: No School, Lincoln's Birthday
- February 21: No School, Washington's Birthday
- February 22: Character Assembly: Responsibility
- February 26: Pancake Breakfast- 9am – 10:30am

March

- March 2: PTA Exec. Board Mtg - 8:45am – 9:45am
- March 3: *Carmeletter* submissions due
- March 6: Math/Science Exploration - 2pm – 4pm
- March 7: Coffee with the Principal - 8:25am
- March 8-10: PAUSD MARS Tests grades 3, 5
- March 11: Carmeletter Published
- March 13: Daylight Savings Begins (set clock ahead 1 hour)
- March 21-25: Teacher Appreciation Week
- March 22: Character Assembly: Flexibility
- March 23: Stories Under the Stars, 7-8pm
- March 26: EL CARMELO AUCTION!!! 6pm
- March 31: *Carmeletter* submissions due

Principal's Letter



The groundhog came out of its hole today, looked around, saw or didn't see (I can't ever remember how it goes) and evidently decided that Spring was on its way.

While the folks in the Midwest might feel like disputing that prediction today, here at El Carmelo the sun was warm and perfect at recess as witnessed by the wild joy of hundreds of our children. Recess is this wonderful mixture of the **tools** (the play equipment we've ordered is in place and the adult supervisors have what they need) and the **imagination** (I am always surprised what amazing games kids can invent at recess).

Another felicitous mixture of the right **tools** and **imagination** this spring is the PTA-sponsored WEB room at El Carmelo. The WEB room is the collection of leveled readers that I talked about in a previous article. Thanks to the PTA, last year saw the beginning of our new WEB room constructed in the faculty lounge in the main office. This year, the PTA will finish the job, creating a home for over 1,700 sets of leveled readers (or about 7,000 individual short books). The addition to the space used for the WEB room will allow us to continue to expand and individualize the reading instruction at our site.

Thank you to everyone who donates to the PTA! This money, which does many great things at El Carmelo, is providing the right **tools** (the space for our readers and their online checkout system) to match our children's **imagination** and drive to read.

Chuck Merritt
Principal

PTA Co-Presidents' Letter



Susy (big hat lady) and
Karole (sunglass lady).

You're sick of hearing about El Carmelo PTA's 34th Annual Auction: Prom Night? Well, the alternative is to discuss arts & crafts projects you can make for your significant other for Valentine's Day and other ways to rekindle your flame. You changed your mind? Okay...

Why the Auction is SOOOO Important:

1. The government is broke.

The public schools in the US today are not the ones we went to thirty years ago. The cash-strapped government is paying for less (basically the bare bones of education, such as rent and teacher salaries), and PTAs and PiE-type organizations are paying for more. We don't like this, but it's the new reality.

El Carmelo's annual auction is hands down our PTA's biggest fundraiser. **Last year, the auction brought in about \$40,000!** Rumor has it that prior years generated much more.

2. Scientists (i.e., smart people at the Search Institute in Minneapolis) show that parents with adult friends in the community are more likely to have kids who turn out 'normal.' (In other words, if we are hermits, our kids are more likely to take drugs and have emotional problems. Bummer...)

There's a lot of chitchat in school parking lots, seedy bars (we know you're out there), and dark alleys all over Palo Alto about something called the **41 Developmental Assets**. What are they? Great question. We're still trying to fully understand them ourselves. In short, your child needs at least 31 of the 41 Developmental Assets to develop enough resilience to handle life's inevitable challenges and become a healthy member of society.

(See <http://www.projectcornerstone.org/html/assets/41assets.htm>.)

Four of the 41 Developmental Assets can result from attending the Auction (and other school events) and building your social network in the El Carmelo neighborhood:

#3 - **OTHER ADULT RELATIONSHIPS** (Young person receives support from three or more non-parent adults)

#4 - **CARING NEIGHBORHOOD**

#5 - **CARING SCHOOL CLIMATE**

#6 - **PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOLING**

Now, we just need to find 27 more...

3. (Optional) Parenting is no cake walk.

Auction night is a rare opportunity to hang out with peers (no kids allowed), talk with grown ups, and go nuts in a safe environment. Re-live your lost youth. Pretend your limo is waiting outside, not the minivan. Everyone is down-to-earth and friendly. Nobody at El Carmelo cares who you know, what you wear, etc. We ain't the people up North (just kidding).

*The takeaway: (1) Donate to the Auction, such as hosting a small movie night at your house. It's never too late. Email Auction Chair Amy Love (aloveinchile@yahoo.com). (2) Please save the date: **Saturday, March 26**. You're not too cool (or shy) to go. (3) Buy tickets. You don't need to drag your cranky spouse or find a date; just go with another parent. (4) Bid on items if you can, especially the parties. The parties are great ways for both you and your child to make new friends and get to know others better. (5) Have a blast. Just because we're old doesn't mean we can't have fun.*

YOU are El Carmelo. We've always been known for our strong sense of community. Let's get out of our comfort zones and participate! You and all of our children will be greatly rewarded.

Your Run-of-the-Mill Co-Prez's,
Karole Goldie (karolegoldie@gmail.com) & Susy Kim (susykim@gmail.com)

El Carmelo Auction

El Carmelo "Prom Night" Auction

Saturday, March 26, 2011
SIGN UP THOSE SITTERS NOW!

"Prom" tickets will be available for purchase soon.

FAMILY DONATIONS NEEDED

We are low on donations from El Carmelo Families, please stop by the office and fill out a donation form ASAP. This is your chance to help out our school and have fun doing it.

- Throw a themed party for kids or grownups
- Teach a class in photography, art or ichibana
- Cookies for a month?
- Wine, vacation rentals, jewelry?
- Brainstorm with other parents

(And a big THANK YOU to all who have already donated)

Use the DONATION FORM found at:

www.elcarmelo.paloaltopta.org/auction/familydonationform.html

Copies are also available in the office.

Don't let the deadline pass you by!

NEW AUCTION DONATION DEADLINE: FEBRUARY 16, 2011

For Questions please contact:

Amy Love, Auction Chair

650-862-2801, aloveinchile@yahoo.com

PROM NIGHT



El Carmelo's 34th Annual Auction
Saturday, March 26, 2011



What I Love About the El Carmelo Auction

This year's spring auction "PROM NIGHT" is coming up soon on March 26, 2011. It's a great evening that is only the start of fun El Carmelo experiences. **We're a bit low on family donations so far, so now's the time to think about how you can join this effort.** In this month and next month's Carmeletter, we'll be highlighting comments from real families who love how the Auction helps build our El Carmelo community. Here are some thoughts from Christine Hodson about the Auction:

This spring my husband Dave and I will be attending our 4th El Carmelo Auction. Not only because it is the PTA's largest fundraiser of the year, but also because we have found it to be a great way to spend time with other families in our El Carmelo community. We have really gotten to know El Carmelo parents at the auction because, unlike at drop off and pick up at school, the auction gives you time to talk and laugh (without anyone being in a rush!). But attending the auction is just really the beginning.

To me, attending the auction and bidding on spots at the auction parties provide a chance to plant the seeds to grow my family's El Carmelo community. It takes both time and effort to build a community. Yes, you have to put yourself out there in terms of getting to know people. But I believe it is time well spent. To me, the more families I get to know (and who get to know my boys), the more comfortable I feel because as they get older there will be moms or dads or kids looking out for them outside of our home, through the middle school years and (ugh!) high school.

Over the past few years, our family has bid for and attended many of the auction parties. My husband and I have gone to auction parties where we have had a chance to meet and get to know more families. We have had fun at the adult parties (drinking margaritas, competing against other parents in games of Wii or laughing hysterically at a "Newlywed Game" night). While attending a "recipe exchange party" this year with about 20 other moms, I learned not only cooking tips but many funny stories from other families' kitchens. At a book exchange party I hosted last spring, I discovered that we had some moms who were "world travelers" in their pre-mom lives and had fascinating stories to share.

Our boys have had fun at auction parties, too! They have enjoyed (1) running around playing flashlight tag on a dark October night in the backyard of an El Carmelo family, (2) attending a "Parent's Night Out" sponsored by El Carmelo teachers (how cool to come back to school on a Friday night for pizza, crafts, games of tag and movies in your classroom while your parents go out to dinner?), (3) building gingerbread houses on a cold Saturday in December in the MP room (4) making holiday crafts with El Carmelo parents after school to give as gifts to family and friends and (5) camping with El Carmelo sons and dads at Foothills Park.

If you are looking to build YOUR families' own community, then I would encourage you to come to the auction. Talk to the families you smile and say hello to every morning at drop off and pick up (but don't really know that well!). Put yourself out there-- you will find a fun, warm and welcoming El Carmelo community waiting to get to know you better!

Do you have an Auction story to share? What was your most memorable auction bid? Do you have a fun auction party memory? Send us an email (carmeletter@paloaltopta.org); we'd all love to hear it!

Box Tops for Education

How many Box Tops for Education labels have you found in your house? Each label is worth 10¢, so the more you find, the more money El Carmelo can earn by redeeming them. Drop them off in the collection envelopes in each classroom, or in the envelope in the main office. Let's see which classroom can bring in the most labels by WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 16.



El Carmelo Hosts Another Successful Book Exchange

The annual El Carmelo Book Exchange was held during the week of January 24. As usual, it was a wildly successful event. Over 60% of the El Carmelo student body, as well as many teachers, contributed close to 1600 books. The books were collected each morning by members of the Leadership Club, sorted by a group of wonderful volunteer parents, and then distributed to each classroom on Friday, January 28. Every single El Carmelo student, including those who did not bring books, was invited to take home at least one "new-to-you" book. The extra books that weren't used for the Book Exchange were donated.

Pancake Breakfast

Saturday, Feb. 26, 9:00 - 10:30am

You are all invited to the Pancake Breakfast on Saturday, February 26 in the MP Room! We start serving food at 9:00 am and the kitchen closes at 10:30 am.

\$3.00 adults \$1.00 children

and \$1 off if you bring your own non-disposable cups and plates.

Come join us for the Pancake Breakfast, a true tradition at El Carmelo Elementary for many, many years.

A HUGE 'Thank you' to the volunteers for the events listed below:

... LEGO Night: Chairs *Ann Holum* and *Haijun Wen* for organizing this popular event. Many thanks to *Jennifer Fernandez*, who orchestrated many behind-the-scenes organizational bits, *Tee Chi* and *Rickey Moore*, the El Carmelo custodians who set up for the night, and Kindergarten teacher *Denise Dauler*, who lent us her boxes of Legos. And thanks to *Qingping Tian*, *Svetlana Gamolya*, *Janey Wan*, *Sandi Lewis*, *Serena Chandley*, *Andrea Jelks*, *Alex Kass*, *Jim Barbera*, and *Chuck Merritt* for helping at this super fun night of creation.

... Book Exchange: *Maria Derrick*, Chair, for spearheading this fun week. This event wouldn't have been possible without the efforts of many people. Many thanks to *Keeble & Shuchat*, *Village Stationers*, and *Copy America* who cheerfully contributed boxes; *Jennifer Fernandez* and *Ginny Nagao* for their unending patience and support; the many members of the Leadership Club who collected books on Monday through Thursday and then delivered heavy boxes of books on Friday, as well as volunteer sorters: *Lucinda Brommersma*, *Anna Chan*, *Tammy Chen*, *Kate Karagueuzian*, *Hagit Katzenelson*, *Erika Krugler*, *Amy Love*, *Adriana Reyna*, *Shirley Siu*, *Maya Venkatraman*, *Sherwin Wong*, *Stephanie Youngquist*, and *Joyce Zhang*. And finally, a huge thank you to everyone who contributed books. Many of them have found new homes, with new readers who will enjoy them.

... PiE Chairs: *Leslyn Leong* and *Alli Wong* for increasing the number of important PiE donations from El Carmelo families. And *Nancy Bain*, *Susy Kim* and *Karole Goldie* for volunteering in the PiE phone-a-thon.

... Bingo Night: *Celina Tracy* and *Christine Hodson* for organizing this super popular evening. Also, thanks to *Yoshie Roake*, *Suzanne Ogawa*, *Mark Seiders*, *Susy Kim*, *Karole Goldie*, and a special thank you to El Carmelo alumna *Paloma Tracy*.

Save Money and Paper – Read the Carmeletter Online

The *Carmeletter* is published every few weeks throughout the school year, both on-line and in hard copy. Want to save paper and still remain up-to-date with El Carmelo news? Get it on-line only. If you're interested, send a quick e-mail to *Maria Derrick* at wesderrick@mindspring.com.

eNews

Want to know what's happening at El Carmelo? Make sure you receive the weekly eNews. If you want to subscribe or have an item to submit, send an email to elcarmeloPTA_enews@paloaltopta.org.

Carmeletter Submission Deadline, Purpose and Guidelines

Submission Deadline for next issue: **2pm Thursday January 6, 2011**

The purpose of the *Carmeletter* is to communicate a wide range of school-related information to the El Carmelo community. Most of what is published in the *Carmeletter* is ultimately posted on the PTA Web Site. All members of the El Carmelo community can take advantage of the *Carmeletter* to publish information relating to school activities. No advertisements or commercial promotions are permitted. The only fundraisers permitted to advertise are those run by El Carmelo PTA or PiE. We have decided not to include photos of students because of the permission waivers needed for minors. Only children's first names may be included.

Submission Guidelines:

-.doc format: all text submissions should be in a .doc format (note: if you are using Word 2007, please save your document as a "Word 97-2003 ".doc" document before sending. Please no ".docx" files).

-Pictures: submit pictures in separate ".jpg" file(s)

-Graphics: submit graphics in separate ".pdf" file(s)

-Submissions should be 500 words or fewer

COMMUNITY KIOSK

ISSUE 9

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A PTAC PUBLICATION



PTA Wardrobe and Snow Clothing Rentals

Wed. 2-5pm and Sat. 10am-1pm. Closed school holidays. The Palo Alto Council of PTAs operates the PTA Wardrobe and Snow Clothing Rental service. The Wardrobe provides new and gently used clothing in all sizes at no charge to families in PAUSD. Donations are welcome during open hours: clean, gently used clothing and books; new underwear and socks are especially appreciated. To support this service, the Snow Clothing Rental allows individuals and families to rent entire outfits (jacket, pants, snow boots, scarves, etc.) for the snow, \$15 for children, \$20 for adults.

The PTA Wardrobe is located in a portable at Jordan Middle School, 750 N. California Avenue, enter from Middlefield Road and the wardrobe will be right in front of you. Info: paloaltopta.org/wardrobe.shtml, 858-0654.

JLS Connections Program Information Meetings

Wed. Feb. 9, 6:30pm, District Office, 25 Churchill and Tues. March 1, 7pm, JLS Cafetorium.

Connections is a learning community of students, teachers, and parents where hearts and minds are inspired through challenging and innovative teaching practices, including project-based and hands-on learning, differentiated instruction, and leadership development. The JLS Connections Program is open to all PAUSD 2011 incoming 6th graders, through lottery in the Spring. The two Connections' information meetings are for all interested parents and current 5th grade children.

Connections' teachers and current and former students will be available to answer questions. Info: jls.pausd.org/connections.

Medaka no Gakko Summer Program

June 20-July 8, 2011, Mon.-Fri, 8:45am-12:30pm, Palo Alto Buddhist Temple, 2751 Louis Road, Palo Alto. Registration begins mid-January for Medaka no Gakko, a Japanese cultural summer program for children who have completed kindergarten through fifth grade. The parent cooperative program features arts and crafts, music, literature, cooking, social studies and language. Classroom activities are enriched by demonstrations and performances by artists and community members. For more information, visit www.medakanogakko.org or email medakanogakkopalalto@gmail.com.

Get MORE out of your summer!

Camp Edmo Summer Day is a great place for kids entering grades K – 4 to explore, create, have fun and grow. Each weekly Arts & Science and Animation theme is designed in partnership with the top Bay Area children's museums: Exploratorium, California Academy of Sciences, Zeum and the Museum of Children's Art. EdTech teaches pre-teens and teens entering 5th – 9th grade how to create their own digital movies, photographs, soundtracks, graphic designs, and animations. Both beginners or advanced media-makers will learn to express and impress with their digital media art. Choose a 1-week Studio Session for a taste or the recommended 2-week Pro Session for the ultimate media feast. For new Summer 2011 sessions, locations and prices visit www.campedmo.org or call toll free 877.993.MORE (6673). Enroll by Feb 28th or for multiple weeks for huge savings.

Primary Math World Contest Team Tryouts

Wed. Feb. 9 or Thurs. Feb. 10, 7-8:15pm, Quinlan Community Center, Cupertino Rm, 10185 North Stelling Road, Cupertino. Cupertino Union School District and City of Cupertino Parks and Recreation Afterschool Enrichment Program Present: 2011 Primary Math World Team Tryouts for Grades 7 and under. Tryout to join USA-Silicon Valley team to compete in an International Math Contest in Hong Kong in July 2011. Online Registration: reg4fun.cupertino.org/econnect (Activity #44065 for Wed; or Activity #44066 for Thurs). Info: www.mathedge.org, 408-725-2680, or mathedge@gmail.com.

Science Enrichment Classes at the JMZ Enrolling Now

The Palo Alto Jr. Museum and Zoo offers challenging, hands-on after school science classes for inquisitive K-5th graders as well as preschoolers. The small class size of 10 students maximum allows every child to participate directly. New winter classes begin the week of Jan. 24, including "Zoology" for Kinders, "Zoo Keepers" for 1st-5th graders, and "Animal Detectives", "Science of Toys" and "Kitchen Chemistry" for preschoolers. A second session of winter classes will begin mid-February. Classes are listed in the "Kids" and "Preschool" sections of the Enjoy! catalog or at enjoyonline.cityofpaloalto.org.

Community Events for the PAUSD Area – February 4, 2011

Music and Arts

Registration for Winter Children's Fine Art Classes Has Begun

Junior Museum and Zoo and the Palo Alto Art Center.

The Children's Fine Art program.

Ages of 18 months to 18 years.

Winter classes include Musical Clay, Ceramics Open Studio, Clay for Preschooler and Parent, Everything Adobe, Pastels, Classical

Watercolor, Young Master Drawing, Kinderclay: Food and Gardens, Fashion Design and Illustration, Expressive Painting, Digital Art For Kinders, Classical Watercolor, and more. To enroll:

www.cityofpaloalto.org/enjoy or call 329-2366. To join the Children's Fine Art email list:

LeeAnne.Campbell@cityofpaloalto.org.

TheatreWorks Drama School Saturday Classes

Sat. Mornings, March 5-26,

10am-1pm, Drama School

Classroom, 1390 Willow Road,

Menlo Park. Students K-6 learn

stage combat, improvisation, music

theatre, storytelling, self discovery,

and have fun. Taught by experienced teaching artists. Tuition: \$200.

Register online:

www.theatreworks.org/learn, or call: 463-7146.

Palo Alto Children's Theatre: Mainstage Season Performances

Palo Alto Children's Theatre, 1305 Middlefield, Palo Alto.

Ferdinand the Bull, Jan. 25- Feb. 13,

Metamorphosis - A New Play

Development by Betsy Franco,

March 3-12, *Charlotte's Web*, Mar 31 -

Apr. 9, *Lord of the Flies*, May 19 - 28.



Auditions are for children 8 years of age through high school, unless otherwise noted. Info:

www.cityofpaloalto.org/depts/csd/activities_and_recreation/attractions/childrens_theatre

PACT Saturday Playhouse: Goldilocks and the Three Bears

Sat. Feb. 26, 10am and 12pm, PACT, 1305 Middlefield, Palo Alto.

Performed in the Black Box Theatre, inside the Magic Castle by the Teens Arts Council Company, the Palo Alto Children's Theatre Saturday Playhouse Series of shows is designed for young audiences. All of the shows are interactive, so the audience helps the actors tell the story with sound and movement.

Suitable for 3 to 6 year olds and parents; playing time approx. 45 minutes. Tickets \$10 Adults, \$5 Children. Info: cityofpaloalto.org/childrenstheatre, 463-4930.

TheatreWorks Vacation Camps: ACT UP!

Grades K-6. April 11-15, Duveneck, Nixon and Barron Park Schools.

Have fun playing with theatre, music, movement, and making new friends!

Juggling, puppetry, singing, dancing,

acting. This fast paced one-week

camp runs weekdays 9am-3pm.

Regular Tuition \$275, Package Rate

\$225. Registration now open:

www.theatreworks.org/learn/drama-school/camps.

Sports Opportunities for Kids

For current sports opportunities, visit:

info.paloalto.pta.org/sports.shtml

Parent Education

InGenious: Levers for Unlocking Creativity—Lessons on Defying Expectations, Challenging Assumptions, & Unleashing Innovation

Tues. Feb. 15, 7-9pm, Frances C. Arrillaga Alumni Center, 326 Galvez St., Stanford. Dr. Tina Seelig will highlight the use of creativity tools not only in successful business ventures, but in all aspects of our lives. Dr. Seelig will be joined by Matthew Severson, founder of The School Fund which helps students in Tanzania, who offers a real life example of this creative approach to identifying and solving compelling social problems. Free. Flyer: info.paloaltopta.org/docs/110215TinaSeelig.pdf. Presented by Palo Alto PTA Council and secondary-school PTAs & PTSAs., co-sponsored by Stanford Hospital and Clinics. Info: Sunny Dykwel, PTACVP Parent Ed, sdykwel@kwrpa.com

Health Insurance

Presented by Michelle Droz, Vice President of Benefits, Woodruff Sawyer and Co, San Francisco. Would you like to learn more about various health insurance plans, both through private employers and purchased independently? How will the recent Health Care reform affect your family – ask the expert. Wed. Mar 16 - meeting is 7 to 9 pm. Hospitality begins at 6:45pm. Springer Elementary School Multi, 1120 Rose Avenue, Mountain View, 94040. This parent education event is sponsored by the SELPA I CAC (www.selpa1cac.org). Free and open to anyone who feels they might benefit.

Education Update

Sat. Feb. 5, 10am-noon, Board Room, 25 Churchill. State Senator Joe Simitian will hold an "Education Update" meeting, where he will discuss the education aspects of the state's budget and give an update on current K-12 legislation. Everyone is welcome, but RSVP: www.senatorsimitian.com or 688-6384.

Details: www.senatorsimitian.com/entry/education_update3.

Community Kiosk

A bi-weekly publication of the Palo Alto Council of PTAs. The mention of any business or service does not imply an endorsement by the Palo Alto Council of PTAs or the Palo Alto Unified School District. Only short announcements of not-for-profit events of interest to PAUSD elementary school families are considered for publication. Submissions may be edited for clarity or space. PTA Council President: Terry Godfrey. Kiosk Editor: Karen Karpen
Deadline for the next issue: February 9, 2011, 5pm. E-mail submissions to: kioskeditor@paloaltopta.org