



Carmeletter

May 12, 2006

Issue 15

Principal's Letter

Dear El Carmelo Parents, Students, and Community,

The year is coming to a close rather quickly and we have many wonderful school and community events coming up. I hope you and family are planning to come to our inaugural International Potluck Dinner on Friday, May 12 from 6:00-8:00 p.m. Bring your favorite dish to share with others, as you get an opportunity to sample all the other wonderful dishes from around the world. This is also an opportunity to get to know those El Carmelo parents you've seen on campus, but have not met personally. Don't forget to see all the wonderful heritage projects students have created for this event.

The **El Carmelo Open House** is on Wednesday, May 24, 2006. Join us for dinner and conversation with friends from 6:00-6:45. Look for specifics on how you can pre-order your dinner in this edition of the Carmeletter. This is a great opportunity to see your child's classroom projects, as well as projects in upcoming grades. I know you will enjoy the student work on display in each of the classrooms. The classrooms will be open for viewing from 6:45 to 7:45 p.m.

Classroom Placement Process and Parent Input: Please note the information below regarding our classroom placement procedure. If after you review the process you would like to provide us with information about your child, complete the attached form, address it to Lupe Garcia, and hand it in to the Main Office by May 23, 2006.

Classroom Placement Procedure for 2006-2007:

There are a variety of factors that the El Carmelo staff considers when we begin the process of developing classroom groups for the following school year. These perspectives include:

- ✧ The needs of the individual child
- ✧ The need to create balance within each classroom
- ✧ The need to create balance among classrooms at grade level

Using these guiding principles, considerable thought and attention go into formulating classes that will work best for all students, as well as for the individual child.

Individual Child

- Compatibility between the child's working style and the classroom environment.
- Compatibility between the child's learning style and the teacher's instructional style. (Note: even in the case of teachers new to the school, their teaching style is not an unknown. Each of our staff members will have gone through an extensive interview process and has been observed teaching in the classroom.)
- Compatibility of the child and other children in the class.

Balanced Classroom Composition

- Learning Needs: does each class reflect the range of learners, from independent to needing special support? Does each class reflect the range of academic abilities?
- Individual relationships: will the social dynamics of the class work to foster a positive learning environment?
- Gender: is there a balance of boys and girls in the class?
- Ethnicity: Does each class reflect the diversity of all children in that grade?

DATES TO REMEMBER

May	June
15 -19 Star Test	2 Carmeletter Deadline 8:30 a.m.
17 Noon Art	8 Music Performance by 4 th & 5 th grade students for parents
19 Carmeletter Deadline 8:30 a.m.	15 Last Day of School: K Promotion 8:30 a.m. 5 th Promotion 10 a.m.
22-26 Teacher Appreciation Week	
22-26 Book Fair	
24 Open House-Dinner 6-6:45/ O.H. 6:45-7:45	
24 Spirit Day: Crazy Hair Day	
29 Holiday: Memorial Day- No School	
31 Noon Art	



Principal's Letter *(continued)*

- Parental participation: does each class have parents who are interested in and able to help with in-class activities?

Balance Among Classrooms

Finally, are all classrooms at the same grade level "balanced" and have similar compositions? This may include such variables as balancing children who tend to be more "time intensive" (both behaviorally and academically), students new to the school, students for whom English is a second language, etc.

We take the classroom placement process seriously. We always try to put the most important educational interests of the children in the forefront, and we expect parents will trust and respect the judgement of the staff in making placement decisions.

Parent input plays a part in this process too. Although your child's teachers are in the best position to see your child as a learner in the school setting, you bring the unique perspective of the parents, which can be useful to the grouping process. Any information that you think is relevant please put in writing by completing the Class Grouping Form, which will help you organize the information. A copy of this form is attached to this copy of the Carmeletter. Requests for specific teachers are not helpful to this process. Please do not make such a request. Make sure to turn in the input form at the Main Office by May 23, 2006. If you feel that your child may have some special needs for next year that cannot be addressed on the parent input form, please make arrangements to see me before the deadline.

One final thought... although this activity begins at the end of May, a number of variables and unpredictable factors, such as late registrants, the need to realign classes, potential staff changes, and so on, delay the final class grouping assignments until shortly before school begins in the fall. For this reason, and to avoid having class lists announced, only to be changed, class lists will not be posted in the school office until August 18, 2006, the Friday before school begins.

Other Information:

Our district is about to begin a review of the boundaries for our schools. Please read the enclosed article on this topic by Liz Cowie and Linda Jensen in this edition of the Carmeletter. They are our representatives on the boundary review committee.

I hope to see you at the International Potluck Dinner on May 12 and at the School Open House on May 24. See you then!

Warmest regards,
Lupe García

President's Letter

Dear El Carmelo Families:

Even though there are only 4 ½ weeks of school remaining, there are many parents still hard at work in our community. Today (Friday the 12th at 6:00 p.m.) is El Carmelo's first International Pot Luck Dinner. We hope that you will be able to join us for the fantastic evening that the International Committee has planned. There will be fantastic food from different cultures, great desserts and beautiful artwork completed by your children. Also, at 7:30 p.m., we will take a few moments in a small presentation, to say a big 'thank you' and 'good luck' to Barbara and Judy.

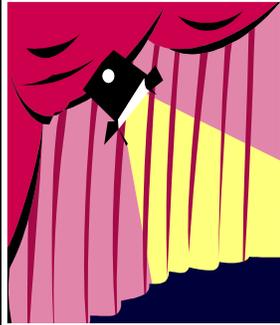
Don't forget, Open House is Wednesday May 24th. Last year we offered the ability to preorder your dinner, and we would like to offer it again this year as well. This year we will add more wonderful parent volunteers to make the lines go faster for you so you can enjoy the evening! The order form is in this issue of the Carmeletter.

Teacher Appreciation Week is the week of May 22nd. This is a week where we take the time to let our teachers know how much we appreciate all the work they do for our kids. We are so fortunate to have such dedicated and caring teachers at our school, and we want them to know it! The book fair is also this week and it will be open the night of Open House!

Whew! That's quite a bit going on this last month, but we hope that you and your families will take the time to have a great time at these last few PTA events.

Erina DuBois
President

Eric Schuur
Co-President



Spotlight — Barbara Ogle-Reid

Andrea Christianson, dreakiya@hotmail.com

Barbara Ogle-Reid knows who's who and where he or she belongs at El Carmelo. Barbara has been in the front office talking to and directing children and parents for 19 years. She started at Escondido as a Kindergarten class aide with noon duty responsibilities for one year before taking on her duties at El Carmelo.



Prior to joining the school district, Barbara had been working as a graphic arts publisher and needed a different schedule. "I wanted a schedule that was compatible with my kids' schedule," said Barbara. So she accepted a position at El Carmelo and started working several hours a day. It was a great fit; Barbara got a schedule that matched her kids' and she got to spend time with hundreds of other kids. "I like kids," said Barbara, "and I like being around kids."

It takes strength to be around so many children, and Barbara has it. She has variety of athletic interests that range from bicycle riding, to hiking to rowing. Rowing is her newest passion. "We have a place in Puget Sound and go there in the summer," said Barbara. "One year my brother gave me rowing lessons. I have a rowboat and belong to a rowing team." When she is not out with her rowing team skimming across Puget Sound, Barbara enjoys knitting, reading, cooking (specifically baking) and languages. She has dabbled in Italian, French, Japanese and Thai. "I like the sounds of different languages," she said. "I think it is fun to learn a language."

Seeing Barbara daily or occasionally, her style, competence and silver hair leave a positive impression. However, things weren't always this way. "I had very dark hair at one time," said Barbara.

Barbara set down roots in Palo Alto in high school. She grew up in the mid-west and moved out here with her family during her high school years. "My father was the minister at Grace Lutheran," she said. Barbara's favorite author is Amy Tan. "I think she is an insightful author," she said. "She has surprising resolutions." In one of Tan's recent works, Barbara liked her intuitive perspective on the subject of fate. Tan chose hope rather than love as the opposite of fate. "Hope is broader and more general. It covers more territory," said Barbara.

When inviting famous people to dinner, Amy Tan is at the top of her list. Also included are Bill Clinton and Thomas Jefferson. "Bill Clinton is an amazing person," Barbara said. "Thomas Jefferson was in on the first shaping of the Constitution. He wrote the document to be inclusive, not exclusive."

Buddy Family Program For School Year 2006-2007

El Carmelo is looking for families interested in being a 'buddy family' to NEW incoming students. This is a way to "Welcome" our new students and families into the El Carmelo Family. If you are interested in participating, please contact Yvette Mitchell at: yvettemitchell@yahoo.com. Thank you.



Kevin Danie's 4th grade Class to Perform at Cantor Art Center, Stanford University

Jenny Kuan, jwkuan@stanford.edu

Kevin Danie's 4th grade class has been practicing their recorders for the past two months, learning music originally written 500 years ago, during the time of Europe's discovery of California. For many of the students, it is their first time reading any music or playing in a small ensemble. On June 8, they will be performing for parents and the museum-going public at the Cantor Art Center at Stanford University. In addition to playing their instruments, the students will also be performing Renaissance dances, such as bransles, gaillards and pavaues. This project is the product of a unique collaboration by Stanford scholars, local professional musicians, and parents. We'd like to thank Herb Myers at Stanford, musicians and dancers Angene Feves, Karen Salvesson, and Kris Yenney, and El Carmelo parents Yi-Mei Chang, Megan Fogarty, Jenny Kuan, Charles Salmon, and Larry Yang.



Teacher Appreciation Week

Lisa Kucik, lisa.kucik@comcast.net

Teacher Appreciation Week will be from May 22nd through the 26th. While it takes many people to make a school succeed, Teacher Appreciation Week focuses on the teachers who work to make our schools a great place for students to learn to succeed in life. The week is a time for us to honor teachers and recognize the lasting contributions they make in our lives. This year, instead of decorating the teachers' doors, we will be offering classroom help. Your room parents will be passing along all the details for the week as we work them out.

WHOSE CHILD IS THIS?

Author Unknown

"Whose child is this?" I asked one day
 Seeing a little one out at play
 "Mine", said the parent with a tender smile
 "Mine to keep a little while
 To bathe his hands and comb his hair
 To tell him what he is to wear
 To prepare him that he may always be good
 And each day do the things he should"

"Whose child is this?" I asked again
 As the door opened and someone came in
 "Mine", said the teacher with the same tender smile
 "Mine, to keep just for a little while
 To teach him how to be gentle and kind
 To train and direct his dear little mind
 To help him live by every rule
 And get the best he can from school"

"Whose child is this?" I ask once more
 Just as the little one entered the door
 "Ours" said the parent and the teacher as they smiled
 And each took the hand of the little child
 "Ours to love and train together
 Ours this blessed task forever."

CONGRATULATIONS to ROOMS 6, 9, 10 AND 18!

Ana-Maria Dias, anamaria_am99@yahoo.com

Rooms 6, 9, 10 and 18 have achieved 80% participation in eScrip! The children were excited to receive the eScrip prizes of colorful playground balls and jump ropes.

eScrip is a way for local merchants to contribute to El Carmelo a percentage of what our parents spend at their stores. There is absolutely no cost to parents.

To participate you must register your credit/debit cards and Safeway cards with eScrip so that El Carmelo can get the credit. You can log on to www.escrip.com to view the list of participating merchants.

Thank you to everyone that signed up on eScrip! We made \$1400 MORE this year in just the first six months of school due to our parents' increased participation.

To register on eScrip go to www.escrip.com or come by the eScrip table at the International Potluck on Friday, May 12.



Once you are a member, only your Safeway card needs to be renewed annually.

THANK YOU—PiE Booth Helpers

Erina DuBois



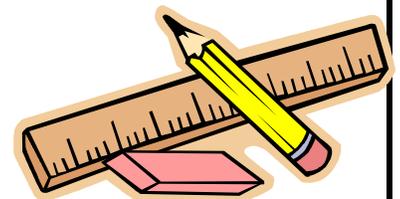
Thank you to the wonderful families who shared their Saturday to help at the El Carmelo PiE booth after the May Fete Parade. We helped over 400 children that day have fun at our booth! Thank you to the Eric Schuur and Michael, Greta Tan and Everett, Dean Kumagai and Kayli, and Tania Macuil and Alex.

BACK TO SCHOOL SUPPLIES

The PTA wants you to relax more this summer! How? We will be purchasing next year's school supplies for all students in bulk. This saves some money AND especially saves you the time running around!!

Also, purchasing the supplies all at once will allow teachers to have uniform sets of class supplies. There are still a FEW items that you will need to purchase at the beginning of the year, but the PTA is going to get the vast majority of stuff for you. At the beginning of the next school year, we will ask you to please reimburse us \$20 for supplies (which is less than what you would be paying if you purchased them yourself!).

If you have any questions about this program, please contact Megan Fisher. Thank you in advance for your cooperation and contributions.



School Attendance Area Boundaries May Be Changing; A Survey Is on the Way

Liz Cowie, cowies@sbcglobal.net and Linda Jensen

You may know from recent newspaper articles that the Palo Alto Unified School District is planning to review the geographical boundaries defining which schools residents may attend. PAUSD has revised attendance area boundaries from time to time, most recently in 1998 (before Barron Park Elementary opened) and in 2001 (before Terman Middle School opened).

PAUSD has asked a committee of representatives from each school in the district, the Attendance Area Advisory Group (AAAG), to advise how the boundaries might best be redrawn. We, Linda Jensen and Liz Cowie, are El Carmelo's representatives on this committee. The AAAG is expected to meet during fall 2006 and new boundaries could possibly go into effect the following school year, 2007-2008.

You will soon receive a survey so we can hear from you regarding your family's attendance areas, from elementary through middle and high school. The survey will help us understand and articulate our community's views when the AAAG meetings get underway in the fall.

Currently, several factors are prompting the District to consider new boundaries. Among the main factors are, first, that an increasing number of children are not able to attend their neighborhood school. This is due to population shifts, growing enrollment (a 21% increase over the past 10 years), and the community's desire to maintain small class sizes. In the 2005-2006 school year, 109 elementary students were "overflowed" to schools beyond their attendance boundary. The District places a premium on neighborhood schools and hopes to reduce the number of overflowed students through the boundary review process. Second, there is a variation in enrollments among schools due to population and capacity. Third, projected new housing developments may affect enrollment. (For more information on the boundary review, see http://pausd.org/community/downloads/brd_ed/brd_packet/pkt_101105.pdf, pp. 25-29).

Changing attendance boundaries is likely to be challenging. A change in one area is likely to require a change in a neighboring area, and so on. We are very fortunate that all of the schools in the District are terrific schools.

New boundaries could affect not only where your child may attend elementary school, but also middle school and high school.

Currently, there are two different attendance paths for families within El Carmelo's boundaries. El Carmelo students residing south of Matadero Creek attend JLS Middle School, followed by Gunn High School (the number of El Carmelo students in this segment is approximately 20-22 kids per year). Thus, these students are "streamed" with their middle school peers when they enter high school.

In contrast, El Carmelo students residing between Oregon Expressway and Matadero Creek also attend JLS, but go on to Palo Alto Senior High School (Paly) (the number of El Carmelo students in this segment is approximately 20-22 per year)¹. (Until about five years ago, this segment attended Jordan Middle School, followed by Paly.) Only about 23% of JLS students (about 70 out of a class of 308) are currently slated to go on to Paly each year². These students are not streamed with most of their peers when entering high school. Some El Carmelo parents have voiced dissatisfaction with this arrangement.

Note: If you do not know which middle and high school your child is assigned to, go to www.pausd.org, click on Registration, and scroll down to the link in the text called "School Finder." You enter your street name and it gives you the assigned schools.

We welcome your opinions in the boundary review process. Please respond to the survey so that we know your views. In turn, we will keep you apprised of developments through e-news, the Carmeletter, and PTA meetings, as the AAAG undertakes this challenge. We also look forward to seeing you at the Open House on May 24 if you have any questions or comments.

¹ Of the current fifth grade class at El Carmelo, 29 are slated to go to Paly and 35 to Gunn. The remainder of each El Carmelo class is made up of students overflowed from other elementary schools and students in the voluntary transfer program. Where these students attend high school is determined by their neighborhood school boundaries, or, in the case of the voluntary transfer program, by a separate district policy. These are the most recent numbers we have and we await further updates from the District.

² The number of JLS students going to Paly is about 70 because both the voluntary transfer program and Palo Verde Elementary also send a number of students, who will attend Paly, to JLS each year. As with El Carmelo, Palo Verde's students are split between Paly and Gunn, after they all attend JLS Middle School.

THANK YOU LANDSCAPERS
Lupe Garcia



All of you who came on Saturday, April 22 to help install the runway along the upper wing-- Thank You for helping beautify our campus! We had an amazing turnout of El Carmelo students and parents. The adage "many hands make work light" sure applies here. You finished the job in less than a day-- and I was anticipating coming back on Sunday. From digging, to using the wheel barrow for taking the dirt out or bringing the crushed rock in, to leveling and compacting the material-- it was hard work! Your efforts have put the finishing touch on an area that has been an eyesore for a couple of years. A job well done! To those who wanted to help on Sunday, April 23 and didn't get a chance--- Thank you also. We will keep you in mind for the next project. A special Thank You to Matt Fogarty and Josh Stanton-Savitz for helping organize and for bringing this project to completion. ¡Bravo!

Helpers:

Esther Aquilera	Mark Aquilera	David Alcazar	Paige Brown
Adelina Antunez	Hilda Espinoza	Megan Fogarty	Ashley Roe
Michaela Fogarty	Mike Fogarty	Sue Hermsen	Maria Ibarra
Eric Jensen	Jessica Jensen	Kaitlin Jensen	Mitch Roe
Tejas Kannan	Soumya Kannan	Sripriya Kannan	Jill Spain
Michele Kasper	Pily Macuil	Daniell Macuil	Ryan Spain
Nicholas Merrill	Phillippe Napaa	Bob Napaa	Josh Spain
Hanna Salmon	Mimi Salmon	Gabe Salmon	Ari Shamron
Gaal Shamron	Sinhue Sandoval	William Yang	Melissa Ibarra

Chuck McDonnell, Head of Landscaping for PAUSD
The PAUSD Landscaping Crew

The Chinese-Mandarin Immersion Program Proposal

Faith W. Brigel, faithwb2@sbcglobal.net, 650-330-0606

A group of parents have requested from the Board of Education that the Board approve the study of the implementation of a Chinese-Mandarin Dual-Immersion program to be started in August 2006. This Tuesday May 6, 2006 the Board met to vote on what action to take on this proposal. The original proposal is contained in the packet that can be found by going to the link included here:

http://www.pausd.palo-alto.ca.us/community/downloads/brd_ed/brd_packet/pkt_042506.pdf

The dates that you should scroll to are March 28th, and April 25.

It is important for you to inform yourselves of the factors related to this proposal. There are pros and cons to it, and only by learning about it will you

be able to have an informed opinion that is right for yourself and your family. Your opinion is important and it can effect the final decision of the Board. They read, and weigh the feedback that they receive from the community.

The Board would welcome your questions, concerns opinions; they are studying the effect that it will have on the school communities. I am including the Board members names emails and telephone numbers so that you may contact them:

Mandy Lowell,
(650) 323-2742
mlowell@pausd.org
Gail Price
(650) 856-6260
gprice@pausd.org

**Carmeletter
Publication
Members**

PTA President
Erina DuBois

PTA Vice President
Eric Schuur

Principal
Lupe Garcia

Editor
Faith Brigel

Layout Designer
Alicia Olivier-Winston

Distribution
Mona Napaa

Spanish Translations by
Margarita Perreault

Published Biweekly

Submissions may be sent to:

Carmeletter@yahoogroups.com

Or a printed copy may be left in the Carmeletter editor folder in the main office (below the mailboxes). Submissions will usually be reformatted, so plain text is preferred. Although we try to include everything submitted, please be aware that we need to keep the length of the newsletter reasonable, so we may shorten articles.

Next Issue

Submission Date
May 19th

Publication Date
May 26th

Camille Townsend
(650) 493-3410
ctownsend@pausd.org
Barb Mitchell
(650) 328-6027
bmitchell@pausd.org
Dana Tom
(650) 321-4506
dtom@pausd.org

El Carmelo Open House

Come to Open House - all the classrooms at school will be open for you to tour. Visit your child's classroom, check out some of the wonderful work that he/she has been doing, and chat with the teacher! You can also visit the classrooms for next year as well.

The Spirit Shop and Adopt-A-Book folks will be there – look for their tables on campus.

The Book Fair will also be open in the MP Room – check out the great selection of books.

You can also preorder a dinner (Burritos and Pizza). Just fill out the form in the Carmeletter, attach your payment and drop it off at the office. Your dinner will be waiting for you at 6:00 (near rooms 1-3) at Open House!

See you there!

Open House
Wednesday May 24th

6:00 – 6:45 p.m. – DINNER

6:45 – 7:45 p.m. – OPEN HOUSE

OPEN HOUSE DINNER ORDER FORM

As a courtesy service from your PTA, we would like to again offer you the ability to PRE-ORDER your dinner for the Open House. Food will be ordered from Baja Fresh and Ramona's Pizza (descriptions on other side).

All you have to do is fill out this form, attach your cash/check made payable to "El Carmelo PTA", and return it to the front office by Friday May 19th. (sorry, orders after the deadline will not be accepted).

	Quantity	Price	Total
BURRITOS			
<u>Adult</u> (all adult meals include chips)			
Beef		x \$5.50	
Chicken		x \$4.50	
Vegetarian		x \$4.50	
<u>Child</u> (all child meals include chips and applesauce)			
Chicken & Rice		x \$3.25	
Bean & Cheese		x \$3.00	
PIZZA (sold by the slice)			
Cheese		x \$2.00	
Pepperoni		x \$2.25	
TOTAL DUE			

Parent LAST Name: _____ Parent FIRST Name: _____

Child(ren)'s Name: _____

Child(ren)'s Room Number: _____

Amount Enclosed: _____

Food will be ready by 6pm near Rooms 1-3. Drinks will be sold separately at the Open House.

Any questions?? Contact Erina DuBois (erinad @yahoo.com or 813-1710)