

PROSPECT SIERRA SCHOOL

Developing Heart, Mind, and Community

PS News — March 9, 2009

This Week in PS News

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Featured Events

- **COTA at Home Online Auction**
March 13, 10:00 p.m.–March 27, 10:00 p.m.
- **Celebration of the Arts — Funkytown**
March 28, 7:00–10:00 p.m., Avis MPR
[Click here to buy tickets to COTA](#)
- **Middle School Production: *Beowulf***
Friday, March 20, 7:00 p.m.
Saturday, March 21, 7:00 p.m.
Founders Center for the Arts
[Click here for ticketing information](#)

All-School Dates to Remember

March 10	Parent Association meeting, 8:45 a.m., Tapscott library
March 11	Pizza Day — No Choice Lunch available
March 13	All-School Waste-Free Lunch — No Choice Lunch available
March 13–27	COTA Online Auction
March 16	Kick Off Your Day With PSPA, 9:00–9:30 a.m., Tapscott field
March 20	Middle school drama production, <i>Beowulf</i> , 7:00 p.m., FCA
March 21	Middle school drama production, <i>Beowulf</i> , 7:00 p.m., FCA
March 28	Celebration of the Arts: Funkytown, 7:00–10:00 p.m., Avis MPR
April 14	Parent Association meeting, 8:45 a.m., Tapscott library
April 16	Parent Education — KIDPOWER, 7:00 p.m.

Service Learning — Sustainability is a Community Practice

Tapscott students wash their own dishes after pizza day, empty pails of food scraps into the worm bin, transfer fresh produce from Full Belly Farm into reusable bags and deliver them to classrooms — real work accomplished with a sense of purpose and very little adult prompting.

It wasn't always this way. Change happens, but often it happens more slowly (or quickly) than we might like. Transforming habitual and routine ways of operating as a school community happened over the course of several years, in many small incremental ways, driven by a few hopeful and intentional green voices until one day we realized...things had changed. And while

we celebrate our achievements, it is important to continually be inspired to take action and further our education.

To the Okanagan people, as to all peoples practicing bioregional self-sufficient economies, the realization that the total community must be engaged in order to attain sustainability comes as a result of surviving together for thousands of years. The practical aspects of willing teamwork within a whole-community system clearly emerged from having to cooperate in order to survive.

— Okanagan Wisdom Keeper Jeannette Armstrong

Earth Day is six weeks away. It is a lively occasion at Prospect Sierra, and also includes moments of reverence at the workshops and fair on the Avis campus. If we had the unified teamwork of all our talented parents with expertise in this field, Earth Day could catapult to the next level — from great to phenomenal — and be a powerful educational opportunity for our students and faculty.

Last year, Dave Phillips (Cole 3BE), from Earth Island, astounded his participants with his workshop on whales, dolphins, oceans, and actions taken to protect them. Deborah Moore (Mariah 8th) and Kate Hoshour (Zane 8th) partnered up with students to create a solar fountain and plantings — which has since become a treasured gathering place for middle schoolers.

We need to share our collective intelligence, resources, and skills to further educate our own community about our Earth. Our times call for eco-literacy; clean energy; energy independence; daily practices and designs that respect living systems; healthy food; and an education that helps connect the dots between plants, people, and places, economics, society, and the environment.

Calling all parents! We respectfully urge you to participate by leading Earth Day workshops and action projects. Help teach our children and demonstrate to one another how indeed “Sustainability is a community practice.” Contact Kathryn Lee at Kathryn@prospectsierra.org.

Earth Day at Avis — “Sustainability is a Community Practice”

In preparation for the theme, middle school students will read *Stuff*, by Alan Thein Durning and John C. Ryan, and design fair booths as action projects.

March 17 — Preparatory Assembly — School Alliance for Climate Change Education

April 21— Earth Day at Avis

- Noon — Opening Ceremony
- 12:30 — Workshops for ½ of students, and fair for ½ of students
- 1:30 — Workshop/Fair swap
- 2:30 — Assembly — featuring Scoop Nisker (author, performer, and radio commentator), Mark Stefanski (science teacher from Marin Academy), and students from Richmond High School who created award winning videos on climate change and growing food.

Joanna Macy, an internationally honored eco-philosopher writes, “*A revolution is under way because people are realizing that our needs can be met without destroying our world. We have the technical knowledge, the communication tools, and material resources to grow enough food, ensure clean air and water, and meet rational energy needs. Future generations, if there is a livable world for them, will look back at the epochal transition we are making to a life-sustaining society. And they may well call this the time of the Great Turning. It is happening now.*”

Kathryn Lee

Notes From Tapscott

Tapscott Dates to Remember

March 9–10	4MM — Fort Ross overnight
March 10	Kindergarten to visit Avis 8 th grade, 11:00 a.m.–12:35 p.m.
March 11	Pizza Day — No Choice Lunch available
March 12–13	4CL — Fort Ross overnight
March 13	Waste-Free Lunch — No Choice Lunch available
March 13	Spring <u>AfterSchool schedule form</u> is due
March 16	Monday Munch provided by kindergarten parents
March 17	4MM — Ring Mountain field trip, Corte Madera, 8:45 a.m.
March 17	2 nd grade to visit 5 th grade at Avis, 9:00 a.m.
March 18	4 th grade to see middle school play, Avis, 9:00 a.m.
March 18	K–4 Assembly, jump rope presentation
March 19	3BE — CEID visit, ½ class, 9:30–10:30 a.m.
March 26	3 rd /4 th grades to visit 7 th grade, Avis, time TBA
March 27	MLK School, Richmond, to visit 4 th grades, 12:45–2:30 p.m.
March 31	4CL — Ring Mountain field trip, Corte Madera, 8:45 a.m.

Tapscott AfterSchool Enrichment Sign-up Procedures

Please note our procedures for the Tapscott spring 2009 AfterSchool session, 3/30–6/11, 2009

- By now, you should have received a mailer with a cover letter, enrichment class list, and an AfterSchool schedule form, which is **due no later than March 13, 2009**.
- We are continuing our paper saving approach to signing up for AfterSchool enrichment classes. Spring session enrichment class flyers are now available on the school website at: <http://www.prospectsierra.org/Inside/AfterSchool/signup.html>.
- Login Reminder: The name to use is pshmc; the password is 2learn.
- Please check out the spring session enrichment class offerings here: <http://www.prospectsierra.org/Inside/AfterSchool/courses.html>

To sign up for a course, print the flyer and mail with a check and enrollment form as directed. Instructions and dates vary from class to class, so please read the individual flyers carefully. These classes may fill up quickly, so I encourage you to get your registration in as soon as possible.

If you need assistance or have any questions regarding these enrollment procedures, do not hesitate to contact the Tapscott office at 232-4123 ext. 321, or Kirk Cooper at ext 332.

News From the Garden

Last week, the **1st grade** farmers were busily planting potatoes, peas, beets, and spinach. They pruned and weeded all the beds while our most welcome rains watered the crops and heralded spring growth! Daffodils are poking up their sunny heads as well. Young scientists planted tiny, fast growing sunflower seeds to help in a national project called The Great Sunflower Project. The purpose of this project is to count the pollinators that are attracted to the flowers. This will aid scientists in understanding, and hopefully, finding an answer to the dwindling populations of vital pollinators.

Tech News

The **2nd graders** are wrapping up a favorite unit, *The Logical Journey of the Zoombinis*, in which they study multiple attributes of these cute creatures to solve a wide variety of logic problems. The older students enjoyed seeing Zoombinis back in the tech lab! **3rd graders** have delved into a program called *SuperSolvers Outnumbered*, a math program in which students solve word problems based on interpreting data from computer-generated graphs, charts, and maps. A lot of good thinking goes into this activity as students learn to focus on the question being asked. **4th graders** created awesome calendars noting field trips, special school events, holidays, and classmates' birthdays. In working with desktop publishing, they have produced a product that will enable them to practice good study habits by using the calendar to keep track of long-term assignments.

3rd and 4th graders are working on keyboarding as well, progressing at their own rate through a series of sequential lessons. Emphasis is more on technique than on speed and/or accuracy. The **2nd graders** will have enough sessions to familiarize them with the home keys and a few reaches. The idea is to help students be aware that there is a proper technique when using a keyboard. While keyboarding is difficult for many young students, they are doing quite well. My hope is that they will learn fundamental technique that will prevent them from having to unlearn bad habits in the future. You can help at home with gentle reminders to keep fingers on the home keys.

If you are interested in keyboarding programs, some will be available in upcoming software orders. While I generally prefer the keyboarding programs on CDs that track progress, there are many activities available on the web. One such program is *Dance Mat Typing* that can be found at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/typing/>. This program begins with home keys, a feature I like. We want to have students feel that they are learning keyboarding, not *keyborning*!

Debby Roosevelt

Notes From Avis

Avis Dates to Remember

March 10	5 th Grade Parent Coffee, 8:30 a.m., Avis library
March 11	Pizza Day — No Choice Lunch available
March 13	Waste-Free Lunch — No Choice Lunch available
March 17	6 th Grade Parent Coffee, 8:30 a.m., Avis library
March 20	Middle school drama production, <i>Beowulf</i> , 7:00 p.m., FCA
March 21	Middle school drama production, <i>Beowulf</i> , 7:00 p.m., FCA

Lost and Found

The Lost and Found is overflowing! Please have your child check for items. Any clothing still in Lost and Found after Monday, March 16, will be donated to a charity.

5th Grade Parent Coffee

All 5th grade parents are invited to a coffee with Katherine Dinh, Head of School, and Jeff Nichols, Middle School Division Head, to discuss matters related to either 5th grade. Katherine will also lead a conversation based on psychologist Carol Dweck's book, *Mindsets*. The coffee will take place on **Tuesday, March 10**, in the Avis library reading room from 8:30–9:30 a.m. Hope to see you there!

6th Grade Parent Coffee

All 6th grade parents are invited to a coffee with Katherine Dinh, Head of School, and Jeff Nichols, Middle School Division Head, to discuss matters related to either 6th grade or looking ahead to 7th grade. The coffee will take place on **Tuesday, March 17**, Avis library reading room from 8:30–9:30 a.m. Hope to see you there!

Avis Library

The Avis library is a busy place these days, especially when it comes to humanities research projects! **6th graders** are finishing their book and web research into ancient civilizations of Greece, Egypt, Nubia, China, Persia, India, the Maya, and the Celts. **7th graders** have begun individual research into fascinating people, places, and events in Medieval and Renaissance history. Last week, students used *World Book MacKiev* software and reference sources from EBSCO databases to begin framing their topics and developing research keywords. They used the library catalog to find and evaluate print resources and continue in-depth note-taking. **8th graders** are beginning to find and evaluate library resources for the research portion of their oral history final project on topics as diverse and interesting as the Civil Rights movement, Vietnam anti-war protests, and the Cold War.

Currently on display in the Library are the ALA Youth Media Award winners and honor books (the Newberry, Printz, Coretta Scott King, and more) announced this January. For complete lists of winners and honorees, visit the ALA award link in the Book Lists section of the Prospect Sierra Library & Media Site (http://www.prospectsierra.org/Inside/Library/Book_Lists/). Voting for the California Young Reader Medal continues in the library through April. This year, students are also encouraged to nominate candidates for next year's award! Also on display are great books, new and old, honoring Charles Darwin and Abe Lincoln, both of whom celebrated their 200th birthday this February.

Britt Anderson, Avis' intrepid Head Librarian, has officially begun her maternity leave. We send love and good wishes to her entire family, and can't wait to meet the new little one later this spring.

Riva Pollard
Library Media Teacher

COTA Corner



New this year! Introducing **"Best of Live" Raffle for the Celebration of the Arts**. What can \$100 buy you at COTA? An incredible raffle ticket! If you win, you get to choose one item from the following live auction items. Live auction items are valued up to \$3,000!

- **Reserved parking spot at Tapscott for the entire 2009–2010 school year**
- **Golf outing for four at Mira Vista Country Club, includes cart and balls**
- **Berkeley Rep theater tickets and dinner for two at Trader Vic's**
- **Two tickets to Beach Blanket Babylon followed by the Signature Dinner at Tommy Toy's in SF**
- **Tahoe Donner Adventure at a beautiful mountain home for three nights**
- **Catered Gourmet Moroccan/Algerian Banquet for Twelve Delivered to You!**
- **Extreme Home Makeover by our own Prospect Sierra "Dads' Club"**

Purchase tickets online at [RAFFLE TICKETS](#), in the front offices, or at the event. Drawing will precede the Live Auction. Winner need not be present to win. Proceeds will go to tuition assistance funding for 2009–2010 school year.

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****Get ready for the Funkytown COTA party on March 28 from 7:00 to 10:00 p.m.****

[Get your tickets here!](#)

The COTA at Home Online Auction will run March 13, 10:00 p.m.–March 27, 10:00 p.m.

Get excited about these sample online auction items:

“Starter Pack” Program at Ice Chamber • Pair of Tickets to Berkeley Rep • One-Night Stay in an Ocean-View Cottage on the Mendocino Coast • Spring Garden Cleanup • Luxurious Fine Leather Bags from Libaire • Portrait Sessions with Several Local Photographers • Tasting for Six at Joseph Phelps Vineyards • Guided Tour of Golden Gate Fields Stables • \$250 Gift Certificate to Trader Vic's • One-Month Membership to Oakland Hills Tennis Club • Pair of Tickets to Cal Shakes

Paw Prints



Prospect Sierra Parent Association

Building Community.

For our Children. For our Teachers. For Ourselves.

- **Would you like to get involved at school, but can only participate after business hours? Here is the place for you...the PSPA Dads' Club!** The Dads' Club was created to broaden the opportunities available for families to support both campuses as well as our local community. The PSPA Dads' Club is open to all parents and caregivers. Please stay tuned for information on the next meeting of the Dads' Club.
- **Come to the groovy, soulful, funkadelic, boogie oogie-on-down party that will be COTA Funkytown!** Call a babysitter and mark your calendars for **Saturday, March 28 from 7:00–10:00 p.m.**, Avis multipurpose room. Don't forget to start bidding at the **online auction beginning March 13 at 10:00 pm and ending at 10:00 p.m. on March 27.** A huge thank you to all the dedicated PSPA volunteers for the work they are doing to help make COTA a wonderful success!
- It is with great pride and pleasure that the PSPA will be funding a **remodel of the Tapscott kitchen.** In keeping with PSPA's goals of supporting teachers, staff, and administration, PSPA seeks out projects that have a long-lasting effect in these areas. PSPA funded the remodel of the Avis kitchen two years ago and we feel very fortunate to be able to do the same at Tapscott this summer. The funds will be paid out of PSPA monies raised by past PSPA leadership through escrow and other PSPA fundraising efforts earmarked for this project. **No money from the school's operating budget will be used for this project.** A huge thank you to Steve Harrington and his team for all of their hard work in planning the remodel. We look forward to seeing the results next September.
- **A special thank you to Deb Durant (Sadie KMM)** for designing and creating the lovely silver apple zipper pulls that PSPA presented to the staff, administration, and teachers for Valentine's Day. Don't miss Deb's website at www.debduant.com for more of her beautiful jewelry designs.
- **Thank you to the Parent Education Committee** for bringing us Seana Moran's talk on multiple intelligences last Thursday evening. Save the date for the final Parent Education presentation this year, from **KIDPOWER on Thursday, April 16 at 7:00 p.m.** Stay tuned for additional information.
- **The next PSPA Meeting is, Tuesday, March 10 at 8:45 a.m. in the Tapscott library.** Don't miss the presentation and tasting by Children's Choice Lunch. Win fun door prizes! Coffee and treats will be served. We look forward to seeing you there! [Click here](#) to read notes from past PSPA meetings.