



Paw Prints

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Letter from the PTA President *Derby Pattengill*

Happy New Year! Welcome back to BW in this new decade. I don't know about you, but for me there have been some big changes over these ten years. In the winter of 2000, Catherine and I were still without children and jetted off to Rome for a week as a couple. Fast forward to 2010 and I am finishing a PTA newsletter article about volunteerism, politicians, and budget meetings so we can pile the kids in the minivan to drive to the snow for a couple of days. What a change. I love it, but I really would never have imagined being where I am today. How about you?

Well change for the better and providing our children with the best possible learning environment is what the BW PTA is all about. My hero did say that sometimes if you want to see a change for the better, you have to take things into your own hands. That is what our community did with a successful Teddy Bear Drive headed by Scott Ybarrando and Mary Rintoul. Your generous contributions make such a difference in the lives of those children. Our community also came together for a great night to raise money and eat at Rubio's and hear our favorite teachers read Barnes and Noble. Thank you.

On a rainy December 12, Gina Gianzero and I met with our California State Assemblyman, Marty Block. He hosted an open house to reach out and listen to issues and concerns from his district. We attended to plead the case for public education. Mr. Block assured us that he is an advocate for education but it will be a tough year for California. The legislators are even looking at an 18% pay cut this year. I did not really expect much in terms of answers from this meeting, but I did learn something important. We must keep talking about education. Gina and I were the only ones at this meeting under the age of 65. The politicians must hear from us and our concerns. The squeaky wheel gets the oil. If we say nothing, they will focus on retirement benefits because that is who is speaking up and voting. Children are our future. We must speak up.

Your next chance to do so is on January 14 at the PTA meeting. We are holding a special Thursday evening meeting so that we may welcome SD Unified School Board Trustee, Katherine Nakamura, to speak. Come to the BW auditorium 6:00pm to talk, listen and learn about your children's education. If you like, please forward to me any questions or topics for discussion you may have for Mrs. Nakamura.

Questions, comments, critiques? Feel free to email or call me regarding PTA business. Of course let me know if you caught the Clint Eastwood line for this month.

Derby Pattengill
284-9471 or Cpattengill@cox.net

Message from the Foundation President *Drew Smith*

I hope you all had a great winter break. The Night at The Bench provided a great evening of fun and entertainment. We had the largest group ever to watch the movie *Ice Age: Dawn of the Dinosaurs*.

Thank you to Erin Dougherty for handling the event and for everyone who helped set up and clean up. Also, thank you to Chris Morache who sold all the refreshments for the 5th grade promotions committee. The entire night was a big hit!

Don't forget: The Jog-A-Thon is February 10th and with all the budget cuts looming, we need your help now more than ever. Lets make this a great event and raise over \$30,000.

Letter from the Principal



Calendar Highlights

Jan. 4—school
back in session.

**Jan. 14—PTA
meeting,
Auditorium 6:00
PM. Guest
Speaker Katherine
Nakamura**

Jan. 18—MLK, Jr.
Holiday

Feb. 5—
Multicultural Fair

Feb. 10—Jog-A-
Thon

January 2010

Dear Families,

Welcome back to a new year! I hope everyone had the happiest of holidays and enjoyed a lot of fun and laughter. Everyone should be rejuvenated and ready to be back at school to begin the new 2010 year.

Hopefully over the holidays, the students had the opportunity to get their pledge cards filled for the upcoming Jog-a-Thon scheduled for Wednesday, February 10th. This event is sponsored by the B-W Foundation and is the BIG fundraising event for this school year. Prizes for the students who raise the most money include a Wii game system, laptop computer, iPod nano, digital camera and family membership to the Kroc Center. The foundation is counting on this being a huge success.

We wish our 4th and 5th grade students an exceptional experience at Old Town and Balboa Park the week of January 11-15. This might be the last time our students get this educational opportunity due to district budgets cuts.

On January 14th at 6:30 pm, the PTA is sponsoring an informal meeting at Benchley-Weinberger. Katherine Nakamura, School Board Trustee that represents this area, will be present to answer any district questions that you may have. Please plan on attending this very important meeting.

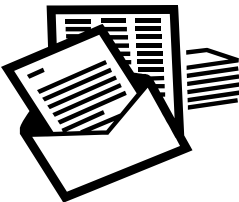
I want to thank everyone for all your support that you provide to our school and staff and especially for your dedicated involvement in your child's education here at Benchley-Weinberger.

Upcoming events for the month of January include:

January 11-15	Grade 4 and 5 to OCILE Week
January 18	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Holiday-No Student Attendance
January 29	Spirit Assembly

Sincerely,
Marian K. Jacobs
Principal

What Do You Think?



This letter was sent out to the San Diego Unified School District Superintendent on October 11. I have yet to get a response. Please read this and let me know what you think. Benchley Weinberger is one of 14 unsecured schools in the district. Should we have fencing? Should we pressure the district for this? Should we raise our own money? Let me know your opinion.

Dear Mr. Kowba:

My name is Derby Pattengill. I am a parent and the president of the PTA at Benchley Weinberger Elementary. The school is located in a beautiful San Carlos neighborhood on Twin Lake Drive near Lake Murray. Our school is consistently ranked in the top ten elementary schools in the district and

2010 JOG-A-THON *Lou Bertsche*



Our 2010 Jog-a-thon will be held on school grounds on February 10, 2010.

It will be the biggest and best one Benchley-Weinberger has ever had! We will be offering the BEST PRIZES EVER this year.

The students who raise the most money will have their choice of a new WII, A LAPTOP COMPUTER, A DIGITAL CAMERA OR AN IPOD!

Every student who raises \$25 or more will receive a t-shirt. We have tons of great stuff to raffle off for the kids. Pizza parties for the top classes! Running shoes, gift certificates and more. However, if any parent has a connection (Padres, Charges, Zoo, Legoland, Disneyland, etc., etc.) that can lead to bigger and better prizes, please call us!!!! We need you!

The paperwork for the event has been sent home in the red folders. Our goal is to raise \$30,000.00. With all the upcoming budgets cuts anticipated we need your support now more than ever.

If you can help us solicit prizes for the kids or if you have any questions, please call Lou Bertsche, 619-743-0464.

Together for a time Remember it with a YEARBOOK

How will you preserve your memories? How about with a full color yearbook?

Order your copy today and receive a FREE PHOTO BOOK! *

Only \$20.00 each if ordered by February 1, 2010
\$22.50 each after February 1st

Please make checks payable to: BW Foundation

Fill out envelope at the bottom of the yearbook form that was sent home last week. More forms/envelopes provided in the office.

Questions? Please contact Stephanie Cruz at cruzsm1@aol.com

*Photo Books are a great way to preserve your *personal* memories! It's Easy! Just download your digital photos and Inter-State Studio & Publishing Co. will build your photo book automatically! Offer consists of a 20 page 7.5 x 5.5 inches full color soft cover photo book.

What Do You Think continued from page 2

has been recognized as a California Distinguished School.

Speaking with the principal, Marian Jacobs, on Wednesday, I was made aware of a very dangerous and scary occurrence on campus. On Monday, October 5th, a kindergartener ran away from campus and was not found until she had run a mile away to the intersection of Golfcrest and Jackson Drives. The intersection has a stop light and four lanes and is quite busy.

Was this the result of carelessness, a teacher not paying attention and a slow reaction by the administration? That is not the case here. The student was under adult supervision yet managed to open one door and run directly into the neighborhood. She ran right out to the street and had any number of directions in which she could have headed. To reach the intersection where she was eventually found, she had to cross at least two major intersections with traffic lights. How could this happen? Benchley Weinberger is one of the few district schools that is not a secure site. There is simply not a way to lock down the school. There are four entrances to the campus which have not way of being locked. Three of these locations are out of sight of the main office. This situation not only allows children easy street access, but also permits and member of the public unobstructed access to the grounds.

A secure campus simply cannot be maintained with the current security measures. Architectural drawings and a

Where do you come from? Come share your heritage.

The Annual Benchley-Weinberger Elementary Multicultural Fair is scheduled for February 5, 2010 and we need your help .



Have a Cuppa!

Cold and thirsty during monthly Spirit Assemblies?

Stop by the table operated by fifth grade promotions and purchase a cup of coffee and perhaps a pastry or other goodie.

You'll warm up and help the fifth grade class in one easy transaction.

We have a unique blend of rich cultures and great ethnic diversity at Benchley. We would like you to share yours. Each year we ask parents to be Regional Ambassadors by setting up a table with items that they would like to share with the school; these items could include traditional clothing, books, pictures, games, food etc.

This year we plan to have the children "travel the world" on our campus and hope to make this a full sensory experience- the Sights, Sounds & Smells of the World! Please let us know if you have something that might help us achieve this goal (perhaps music you'd like to share or show the children how you prepare a traditional dish/food item or demonstrate a special craft).

We will also need volunteers for the morning check-in table (Global Ambassadors), the art/activity table (International Cultural Coordinators), our special lunch (Fiesta Friends), stamping passports (Homeland Security), set-up and tear-down.

If you are able to participate by sharing your heritage or would like to volunteer in some other way please return this form to school with your child by January 15th or contact Janet Weaver at snjweaver@cox.net or 619) 944-9384.

Child's Name
Please check:

Room Number

Regional Ambassador (host table)

Country

Global Ambassador

Fiesta Friends (serve lunch)

International Cultural Coordinators (art/activity table)

Homeland Security (passports)

Set Up

Tear Down

Parent/Guardian Name

email address

Telephone number

What Do You Think continued from page 3

\$50,000 district approved estimate have already been obtained by the principal. The estimate includes fencing and gates sufficient to create a secure campus, with all in and out traffic directed through the main office. I appeal to you as a parent and children's advocate to grant Mrs. Jacobs request to create a safer school. We were very lucky on Monday. Let's not leave the safety of our children while at school, under your responsibility, up to luck.

Please help us in this situation and deal with this in a proactive manner. At your convenience, I am happy to meet with you or your representative for a campus tour and plan review.

Sincerely,

Derby Pattengill