



From the Principal

While I am pleased to hear from many of you that the changes made to this year's schedule (reduced support in the office, classrooms and on the playground) have been implemented smoothly, I find myself missing quality face-time with parents. In past years I have tried to be out front regularly to greet parents with a waive, a "hello" through an open car window, and friendly conversations. This has always been valuable time well spent. I now provide playground supervision on three mornings (T, W, TH) and office coverage on Friday mornings. However, please know that I am still around and welcome morning visits from you.

We continue to look for new ways we can do more with what we have. This past week, the teachers and I implemented a schedule that provides more instructional time to support to our English Language Learners (ELL). During weekly staff meetings, we will be working to identify additional curriculum and materials to enhance the learning program for our EL students.

This year, we will all enjoy a new schedule that includes a week-long vacation to celebrate Thanksgiving with family and friends. Wishing you all safe travels this holiday.

Christy Stocker
Principal



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Minimum Day
Thursday, Nov. 10th
All Students Dismissed at NOON

Día de los Muertos Exhibit Begins November 1st

An inspiring, student-created "Día de Los Muertos" (Day of the Dead) exhibit (a joint Art and Spanish project) will be in the Office starting Nov. 1st.



Students Receive Awards in Cross Country Races

Two Nicasio School students sprinted to their way to award-winning finishes at recent cross country races in the county. At the MCOE Cross-Country Championship Meet at Indian Valley College on Oct. 25th, 7th grader Amy K. earned an 8th place medal out of a field of 93 runners, and 6th grade student Maxine M. was awarded a 12th place ribbon. During a qualifying meet in Lagunitas a week earlier, Amy placed 3rd and Maxine placed 8th in their respective age divisions. Way to go, girls! We're proud of you!



(l-r): Maxine M. & Amy K. at October 17th meet.

Tibetan-style Flags Send Peaceful Wishes Aloft



In the tradition of a 2000-year-old Tibetan practice, flags promoting peace and compassion were hand-crafted by students and staff in a project initiated by Art Specialist Judy Timmerman. The colorful flags can be seen fluttering in the wind along the school's fence line for all to enjoy.

Veterans Day Observance

Friday, November 11th

School Closed



gratitude

Nicasio School is most fortunate to be embraced by a community that gives so generously of its time, talents and resources for the benefit of our students. Whether we managed to catch you in the act (of giving) or not, please know that EVERY KINDNESS shown to our students, staff and school is deeply appreciated. Among those to whom we extend a *heartfelt thanks*:

- * **Skywalker Ranch, Mike Higgins, Andrew Ihley & Alberto Alcalá:** *Donation & delivery of pumpkins for Buddy Activity*
- * **Nicasio Valley Farm & Randy Lafranchi:** *Hosting student field trip at pumpkin patch*
- * **Cindy Farina:** *After-school art scholarship donation*
- * **Jack Kuhn:** *T.V. installation in Middle School classroom*
- * **Martha McNeil, Kim Wallach, Grace Rogers, Maya Nielson, Laura Ramirez & Mimi Lewis:** *Weekly volunteer assistance in the classroom(s), office and/or library*

**Many thanks,
one and all!**

Student Council Happenings

by Monica Snell, Student Council Advisor

New Student Council Members Take Office

The votes from the September 28th **Student Council Election** have been tallied, and a hearty congratulations goes out to the newly elected slate of officers. They include:

- Sam M.** ~ *President*
- Sophia B.** ~ *Vice President*
- Gracie K.** ~ *Secretary*
- Angelina V.** ~ *Photographer*
- Phoebe B.** ~ *3/4/5 Representative*
- Ellierose J.** ~ *3/4/5 Representative*
- London M.** ~ *K/1/2 Representative*

Members of the 2011-12 Student Council have already begun their lunch-time meetings every other Thursday, and they are in the process of determining activities for the year.

Council Committed to Supporting Chilean Child

One effort the council hopes to continue is the ongoing support of **Joselyn Pizarro**, a Chilean child sponsored by the Student Council through **Children International**.

Every month, the council sends the organization \$22 to help support Joselyn. The Student Council is making plans to host a curbside bake sale, called "**London's Bakery**" (an event proposed by London M.) to raise more money for Joselyn's support. Watch for that event to take place soon! *Note:* If you'd like to help sponsor Joselyn for a month - or any length of time - your donation (preferably in the form of a check made out to "Children International") will be gratefully accepted in the office.



Sophia B. Makes Campaign Suggestion a Reality

Congratulations to **Sophia B.** for following through on a suggestion she made during her campaign speech, which was to create a "Post-it Compliments Box" into which students can place notes of appreciation for one another. Student Council officers then disseminate the notes by leaving them on the desks of those being "appreciated". Nice job, Sophia, for suggesting a way to boost peer morale and for showing follow-through as vice president!



3/4/5 Class Turns Sugar Crystal Experiment into a Lesson that Rocks

The 3/4/5 class recently participated in the best type of science experiment - the kind you can eat! - when Mrs. Doss led them through the steps of growing sugar crystals, also known as "rock candy". Sugar + water = a tasty lesson!



Raul S.



Jasmine G.



Winter S.



Ashley W.



Phoebe B. & Fiona B.

Middle Schoolers Put a Tasty Twist on Science Lesson

You wouldn't expect a science lesson on fungi to yield tasty results, but a recent middle school experiment involving the properties of yeast gave **Mr. Williams' 6/7/8 grade** students the chance to make **soft pretzels** from scratch. The students were intrigued by the sugar-consuming action of the yeast, artful in the twisting of the dough, and enticed by the aroma their pretzels baking in the MPR oven. The analytic conclusion of the budding researchers? ***Science is delicious!!***



Sophia B., Emely S. and Amy K. combine their ingredients for the pretzel dough.

Matthew B. and Noah P. observe while Sam M. measures ingredients for their dough.



One of three baking groups watches as Mr. Williams demonstrates how to activate the yeast for the pretzel dough.

Angelina V., Lisset P., Gracie K. and Maxine M. happily sample the delicious result of their experiment.



Nicole C. puts some muscle into kneading her group's dough.



MUSIC NOTES

By Amanda Hahn

Music classes through October have been fun! We are enjoying silly and spooky Halloween and fall songs in both the K/1/2 and 3/4/5 classes. Those two classes are also working on some rhythm fundamentals.

The upper elementary students are getting very quick at reading rhythmic notation! They've also been working with partners to help create a couple of different pieces. One was "Four White Horses," an upbeat song from the Caribbean, in which they worked with rhythm sticks to create their own dynamic percussive accompaniment. The other, still in progress, is a version of Tideo in which they have invented clapping patterns and turns, democratically choosing the ones that will be in our final dance.

The new challenge in this one is accepting that your beloved partner, with whom



you've perfected your moves, changes into a new partner within the concentric circles with every turn!

In the middle school class, students are getting to know chord changes popular in blues and rock, and trying out common patterns -- like the 12-bar blues -- on the xylophones. In Miss Laura's class, students are identifying the syllables and rhythms in names and words, and testing our ears to find patterns that match. They've also practiced matching shapes created by a friend's body during our "shadow" song.

We invite you to join us for a belated **Day of the Dead** (*Día de los Muertos*) music celebration at the **Nov. 9th assembly at 1:40pm** in the Library.

Walk-a-thon Fundraiser a Success



Zion W., Sam M. and Lucas L-W. log another lap around the track.

The **October 21st Walk-a-thon** was a huge success, generating more than **\$3000** for the **Foundation** and lots of smiles by the energetic students circling the school track. Many thanks to Coordinator **Andreas Kohlbrenner**, all the parent volunteers who helped out, donors who supported the event, and of course, the student walkers.



Archie W. and Daniel S. keeping pace with each other.

Special kudos to **Joya C.-R.**, who raised money for the Walk-a-thon by setting up a lemonade stand at the Rancho and selling out all of her drinks and cookies. Nice job, Joya!



Joya at her lemonade stand.

The final tally of funds raised and student winners of the event will be announced soon.

Donation from Skywalker Ranch Brings Pumpkins and Smiles to Students

Nicasio School students' faces lit up brighter than jack-o-lanterns on Oct. 26th when **Skywalker Ranch** employees **Andrew Ihley** and **Alberto Alcala** delivered a truckload of pumpkins, which were grown on the ranch and donated to the school for a Halloween buddy activity. *Many thanks to our friends at Skywalker Ranch*, particularly **Mike Higgins**, Andrew and Alberto!



Buddies Noah P. & Dylan G.



Alberto and Andrew await the arrival of the pumpkin recipients.



Jamie K. & Luna S.



The entire student body joins together in thanking Skywalker Ranch employees Andrew and Alberto (seated on floor) for their pumpkins.



Emily Anne P.-M. & Ellierose J.

Middle School Ventures to Wetlands and Fall Festival for Autumn Learning & Fun

Mr. Williams' middle school students observed wildlife and riparian vegetation on a walk through the marshland area of Petaluma's **Shollenberger Park** and enjoyed activities at the **Tolay Fall Festival** on an Oct. 24th field trip.

