



## From the Principal

Hints of autumn are in the air. The 2011-12 school year is officially in full swing. The mid-term for the students' 1st trimester is **Friday, September 30<sup>th</sup>**. Watch for progress reports to arrive via Thursday envelopes on **October 7<sup>th</sup>**. These reports provide information before the trimester's end to ensure sufficient time for students, parents and teachers to identify goals and develop a plan for each child's success.

In her newly assumed roles as both **Student Council** and **Buddy Program** coordinator this year, **Monica Snell** is making sure that our students experience the fun in learning. Our first "buddy activity" took place on September 26<sup>th</sup> when students collaborated to create projects from recycled materials. Everything from a hamster house, a museum, a robot, a battleship and a jetpack suit were invented. Student creativity and teamwork were at all time highs. The Student Council program is also well underway with candidates' speeches delivered on September 28<sup>th</sup>. We are thrilled to have Monica's energy, creativity and enthusiasm behind these valuable programs.

Wishing you all a joyful, fun-filled and safe October.

*Christy Stocker*  
Principal



**School Picture Day**  
**Tuesday, October 11<sup>th</sup>**

Bring a bright smile  
along with your  
order form & payment!



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[www.nicasioschool.org](http://www.nicasioschool.org)

**WANTED: A few helping hands on School Picture Day, October 11<sup>th</sup>.** Two parents needed to escort students & assist photographer. To sign up, please call the Office at 662-2184.

## Students Gear Up for Oct. 21<sup>st</sup> Walk-a-thon

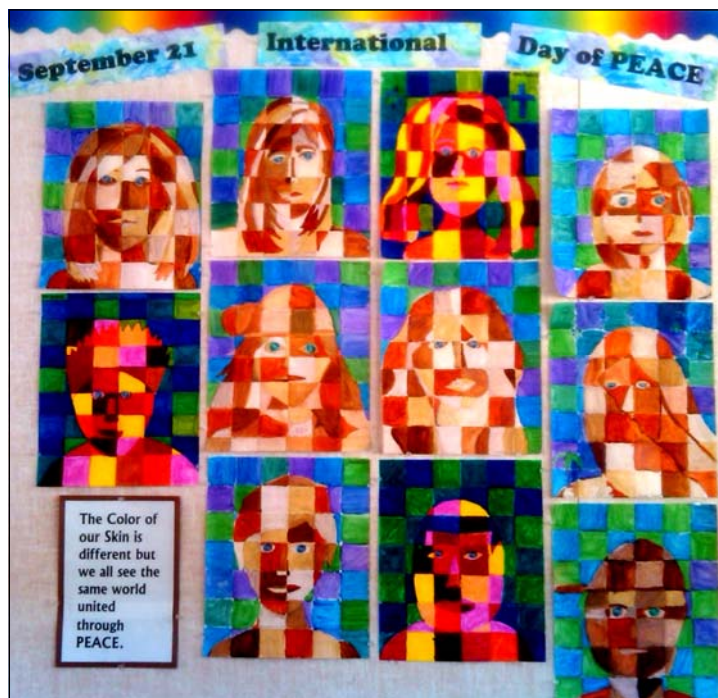
Nicasio School students will put the "fun" in fundraising when they hit the school track at the annual **Walk-a-thon on Friday, October 21<sup>st</sup>**. Walkers from every grade level



are welcome to participate in the event which combines exercise and camaraderie with raising funds for the school. The Walk-a-thon will start at **2pm** and will officially end at **3pm**. Parents of any student(s) who want to keep walking after 3pm must be present to supervise. The final cut-off time is 4pm. For more information, contact **Andreas Kohlbrenner** at 272-4162.

## Middle School Artists Piece Together a Vision for Peace

The first exhibit of student art created under the guidance of new **Art Specialist Judy Timmerman** is on display in the office. The multi-hued mosaic portraits were created by the **6/7/8 grade class** in honor of the **Sept. 21<sup>st</sup> International Day of Peace**. The student art reflects the commonality of all people regardless of skin color and the hope for peace through unity. Everyone is welcome to visit the office to view the beautiful and inspiring works of our student artists.



# gratitude



Raquel Padilla along with her son, Tony and niece, Anabi, help the 3/4/5 class plant winter crop seedlings donated by Jesse Kuhn of Marin Roots Farm.

Nicasio School is most fortunate to be embraced by a community that gives so generously of its time, talents and resources for the benefit 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*:

- \* **Raquel & Tony Padilla and Anahi Gutierrez:** *Planting 3/4/5 winter crop*
- \* **Jesse Kuhn:** *3/4/5 garden plants*
- \* **Mary Jane Pasha & Arden Wood:** *Garden plants & soil, preparation & planting of school garden beds*
- \* **Drew McIntyre, Mary Jane Pasha & Raul Saldana:** *Drip irrigation repair*
- \* **Pete Maendle & David Dolcini:** *Stringing new flagpole rope*
- \* **Marnie Jackson:** *Tennis racquets*
- \* **Nicasio School Foundation:** *P.E. Equipment shed & Art Room furniture*
- \* **Laura Ramirez & Lauri Lind-White:** *Filling Thursday Envelopes*

***Many thanks, one and all!***

## Student Council Hopefuls Present Campaign Speeches



Nine students recently threw their hats into the ring as candidates for open positions on the **2011-12 Student Council**. Candidates posted campaign flyers and submitted drafts of their speeches to **Student Council Advisor Monica Snell** for review prior to presenting them at the school-wide assembly on Wednesday, September 28<sup>th</sup>. Following the speeches, students returned to their classrooms to cast their ballots. Election results were not yet posted as of press time, but *congratulations* are in order for all students who stepped up as candidates: **William K., London M., Fiona B., Ellierose J., Phoebe B., Angelina V., Gracie K., Sophia B. and Sam M.** *We are proud of all of you!!*

## Workshop Helps Students Discover their "Inner Poet"

Nicasio School students started the new school year with a creative bang, thanks to a 6-week **poetry workshop** being taught to all grades by **Michele Rivers**.



*Michele Rivers*

*with Thirteen English Women*, published by Random House. Michele is the creator and director of the *Gift of Love Poetry* program, a non-profit that provides complimentary poetry CDs to people diagnosed with cancer.

The 2011 poetry workshop was made possible by a grant from CPITS funded by the **Marin Community Foundation**. During the weekly sessions with each class, Michele has been mentoring students in the use

Michele has been a guest teacher of poetry at Nicasio School for more than 10 years. A self-described "English Renaissance woman," she is a writer, artist, photographer, designer and teacher. Michele has been an active **California Poets in the School (CPITS)** teacher for over 12 years. She has written several books, including *Time For Tea ~ Tea and Conversations*



*Lisset Padilla gets coaching from Michele Rivers.*

of metaphors, similes, alliteration, layout, personification and other creative expression techniques. She said her primary goal is to help students develop their imaginations.



*Seventh grader Lucas Lind-White recites his poem-in-progress to the class.*

Students will have an opportunity to present their work to the school community at a **"Poetry Café" recital** on the morning of **Friday, October 7<sup>th</sup>**. The recital will take place in the **MPR from 8:45am-9:45am**. Parents are invited to attend. Anyone who would like to bring muffins, rolls, fruit or drinks to share is welcome to do so.

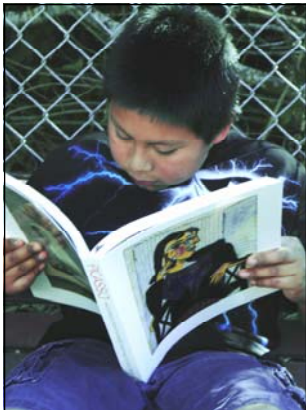
## Picasso Exhibit Inspires 3/4/5 Class

By Elaine Doss

The 3/4/5 class went on its first field trip of the school year on Sept. 23<sup>rd</sup> to see the Picasso exhibit at the de

Young Museum in San Francisco. Parent drivers Marnie Jackson, Patty Winkelmann and Holly McArthur

dropped us off in front of the museum and parked their cars. Meanwhile, Judy Timmerman and I, along with the 13 students, ate a delicious snack of homemade granola bars (courtesy of Mary Jane Pasha) while sitting near one of the two sphinxes that guard the entrance.



Tino Vicencio was transfixed by a book of art by Picasso.

Once inside, we viewed the Picasso exhibit, which filled nine galleries. The students' assignment was to view the exhibit, select a favorite work of art, observe it and jot some notes about it, and finally, sketch it. The children took this assignment very seriously. Several other visitors were heard commenting on how focused and well-behaved our students were. We ate our lunches outside in the sculpture garden, after which we viewed a few more exhibits, and last, we visited the observation tower. The 360-degree view of San Francisco was splendid with bright sun, a few wispy clouds, and fog slipping in through the Golden Gate.

Suddenly I heard an official voice asking, "Whose children are these?" The parents pointed at me, and the female guard announced, "Your students could teach the high schoolers who visit here a thing or two. They were polite and well behaved throughout, never running or shouting." – *Ab, music to a teacher's ears.*



## MUSIC NOTES

By Amanda Hahn

As we experience some of our most summer-like days, fall is finally upon us! In the K/1/2 music class, we will be starting our fall songs and continuing our work of rhythms and body percussion and movement

ostinati (an ostinato is a repeating pattern). Students have had fun making rhythms from everyday words like yummy foods for the song "Bluebells

Cockleshells" and creating 4-beat phrases to play on percussion instruments as a group. We are also taking turns as the sleuth, trying to find the leader of the movement patterns

in the Zimbabwean game "Zin Ya Ma Redu". In the 3/4/5 class, we have been building our music vocabulary while working on pentatonic (5-tone) improvisations on the mallet instruments: xylophones ("xylo" means "wood" in Greek), metallophones, and glockenspiels ("bells play", in German). For these musical explorations, students are discovering the unique timbre (musical texture) of each instrument, and trying to recreate each other's ostinati. Challenging

their spatial and listening skills, they are working to match their individual style of movement to their classmates' quality of sound. They are also reading musical notation and creating a rhythmic canon (also called a round).

The middle schoolers have been listening analytically to early 20<sup>th</sup> century jazz (Scott Joplin's ragtime,

the Charleston, Gershwin, and Duke Ellington) as the start of their study of the history of popular music. Students are exploring their leadership roles and building communication skills within the



Middle school students playing a variety of mallet and percussion instruments in Amanda Hahn's music class.

large group: one challenge is to

create quickly a unified, steady beat with a firm plan in place without talking or making extra sounds (with no help from their teacher!). They have been practicing challenging body percussion phrases, building toward creating a performance piece for our first music assembly. Hope to see you there on October 5<sup>th</sup>!

(Note: This year's scheduled music assemblies will take place Oct. 5, Nov. 9, Feb. 1, March 14, May 2 and June 6. Parents are welcome and encouraged to attend these events.)

## An Appreciative Staff Savors Back-to-School Luncheon



Nicasio School staff enjoyed a delicious luncheon on their first day back to work on August 22<sup>nd</sup>, thanks to the Chef Laura Ramirez and Robyn Burton, coordinator of the event. Amid festively set tables, the staff feasted on homemade enchiladas with all the fixings, refreshments, and decadent cupcakes. Not a crumb remained! A BIG

"THANK YOU" to our wonderful hosts!!

## K/1/2 Class Finds Fun & Sun at Heart's Desire Beach

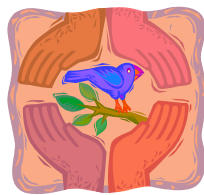
For its first field trip of the year, Miss Laura's K/1/2 class ventured to Heart's Desire Beach on Friday, Sept. 23rd.



The group enjoyed a sunny day filled with sand play, exploration and camaraderie along the shores of Tomales Bay. (Thanks to all the parent drivers and chaperones!)

## Buddy Activity Puts Artful Spin on Recycled Objects

A wide range of creations was fashioned out of recycled materials during the first Buddy Activity of the year on Monday, Sept. 26<sup>th</sup>. In this photo, Finnegan Barr models a spacesuit designed by buddy pair London Meckfessel and Lucas Lind-White.



## PARENT CLUB CORNER

By Tory Grady

The Nicasio School Parent Club is in full swing and we are receiving lots of enthusiastic support! Thank you to ALL of the parents and students who have helped with recent activities.

### Please Sign-Up for Parent Club Activities

The Parent Club needs your help with the 10-12 or so activities we lead throughout the year! Please sign-up for something on the activity sheets posted in the office. It's a great way to get to know other families and support our school.

### Fall Clean-up Day

Let's hear a huge round of applause for Robyn & Mark Burton and their dedicated and tireless crew of weeders pullers, sand haulers, gardeners, sandbox builders, bark turners, pruners, poison oak hackers, vegetable bed preparers and



Rob Winkelmann and Eric Blantz dig in to help spruce up the campus on Clean Up Day.

equipment shed builders. The school looks amazing!!! Specifically, we would like to thank our volunteer team: Mary Jane Pasha; Monica, Jason, Winter & Luna Snell; Tory Grady; Grant, Tami, Fiona & Logan Beatty; Kim Wallach; Eric Blantz; Pete Casartelli; Marnie & Ellierose Jackson; Robert, Lucienne, Maxine, London & Franchesca Meckfessel; Antonio, Lisset & Elly Padilla; Jane Teel & Amy Kohlbrenner; Rob Winkelmann; Mariefrance Cote, Hooman Rabieh & Joya Cote-Rabieh; Laura, Archie & Bruno Walker; and Mark, Robyn, Ridge & Chase Burton.

Back-to-School Staff Lunch: Special thanks go out to Laura Ramirez and Robyn Burton for welcoming back our great staff with a fabulous Mexican

Fiesta lunch! A delicious and authentic array of enchiladas, rice, salad and guacamoles – not to mention an enchilada-building lesson (care

of Ramon Ramirez). What a great way to welcome back and support those who give so much to our children. Thanks, Laura and Robyn!

### Back-to-School Parent Tea

Thanks to Lauri Lind-White and Monica Snell for putting on a beautiful and tasty welcome tea. The goodies, muffins, flowers and fruit were courtesy of Kim Wallach, Lauri Lind-White, Monica Snell, Lucienne Meckfessel, Tami Arndt & Grant Beatty, Patty & Rob Winkelmann, Dale Plunkett, Marnie & Whit Jackson, Tory Grady, Eric Blantz & Holly McArthur – thank you all!

### Back-to-School Night

Last, but not least, the Parent Club would love to extend a warm hug and big thank you to all of the parents and families who volunteered their time and energy into making Back-to-School Night a success! The angels, under the leadership of Monica Snell, consist of Mary Jane Pasha, Marnie Jackson, Jane Teel, Kim Wallach, Jason Snell, Mariefrance Cote, Robyn Burton, Tory Grady, Lauri Lind-White, Lucienne Meckfessel, Tami Arndt-Beatty, Laura Walker, Holly McArthur, Julie Barr, Leanne Green-tree, Jack Kuhn, and Melissa Silva.