



Madera Matters

President's Message

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It's Spring! Well, looking outside as I write this—it's pouring—it's not *exactly* spring yet, but it's around the corner...Spring is a time of renewal, new beginnings, and a time for perennial optimism. In these days of budget cuts, the continuing recession, partisan bickering, and uncertainty, I'll take my metaphors where I can find them. It's time to think of what's **SO GOOD** about Madera and our community, and how we all can contribute to our continued success.

Think about the great community and school events that are approaching—International Night, the Auction, the Carnival, the Jazz Festival. These are wonderful events that are always a lot of fun and great for our families. Please consider helping make them happen. Volunteering for even a few hours is a great help and honestly is a lot of fun as well.

Think about all of the good that our PTA has done for the school—Spring is when we elect new officers, new voices for the school community, and when we begin to make plans for the next school year. There are lots of exciting changes we can help make happen for the Madera community - in music, in sports, and in academics. Do you like something that we have done in the past or that you have seen or heard about at another school? Have new ideas and priorities that you think are important for our children? Come to a PTA meeting, volunteer for a leadership position, and share your ideas. I'm rotating off after two very rewarding years as President, and two before that as Treasurer. It's time for new voices and new ideas. How about yours?

Despite continuing budget cuts, I'm also optimistic about plans in our school district. I'm very pleased that the school board has voted to move forward with the Portola reconstruction and interim relocation to the lower pad—that's a victory for everyone who cares about community and the enrichment programs that are so important for middle school students. Nearby Mira Vista is converting to a K-8 campus, which may have opportunities for our students as well. Amid the recent rumors of adding a sixth grade at Madera and the transfer renewal questions, ideas were introduced about our campus and future direction that I think are very promising. I'm grateful that so many Madera parents took time to contact the school board, attend meetings, circulate petitions, and make phone calls. You know what? *It makes a difference!* The board *does* listen to the community, and your voice counts! It's very gratifying to see the desires of the school communities make progress for our children. I talk to parents all the time—at school, around town, at weekend sports, and even up in the Sierras skiing recently. The positive, optimistic spirit is great and it's contagious—and makes me proud to be a part of it. I hope you feel the same way. ~David Miller, PTA President

Madera Matters,
March 2010

Ukulele Performance

Ukulele virtuoso Jake Shimabukuru will be coming to Madera for a special assembly on **Thursday, March 18th**, which will be a great kick-off for International Night later that evening. The assembly will be filmed by the Center for Asian American Media as part of a documentary they are preparing on Jake and his work. To be a part of this film, each student attending will need to have a release form signed by a parent or guardian. Many, many thanks to Madera parent Sapana Sakya of Asian American Media for making this happen!

Come on Down to the Hoedown! Madera PTA's Annual Auction

Howdy Madera Partners! Do your children enjoy the library? The music program? Science? Computer lab? Reading program? Well it's that time of year again...time to ensure those programs remain, and more come to our school. Given the budget situation in our state and school district, those programs may be in jeopardy. It is up to all of us in the Madera family to do our part to make sure our children have these opportunities. The Madera auction is our biggest fundraiser, raising up to \$25,000 for extracurricular activities that help our children grow.

This year's auction theme is a Hoe Down, so dig out your cowboy hats, arrange your baby sitters, put on your dancing shoes and get ready for a night of great food, drinks, good music and incredible shopping! What can be better than that!!! This event is a lot of fun and a great opportunity to socialize and strengthen our Madera community. The date is **APRIL 17th, from 5:00 to 10:00pm at the El Cerrito Community Center**. Here is what you should do:

1. Attend – we're having a Ticket Sale Contest – the class that sells the most ticket wins free Ice Cream! Contest ends April 2nd, so HURRY!

- ◆ Tickets are \$25 in advance, \$30 at the door. Make Checks payable to Madera PTA and leave them in the Auction box in the office. Be sure to put your name, phone # and the # of tickets on the envelope. You can also contact Karla Andrade at 510-724-9204 or k.cristina@sbcglobal.net for tickets.

2. Solicitations – Please donate a good or service – this can be anything from a vacation home for a weekend to a bottle of wine.

- ◆ Complete a Donor Form and attach to your donation (these can be found in the auction box in the office)
- ◆ Back by popular demand, we are adding a Wine Table as an auction item – so please donate your favorite bottle of wine. All collected wines will be grouped together as a Wine Cellar and auctioned off!
- ◆ If you have any questions about your donation, please contact Rula Craner at rula_craner@yahoo.com or 415-297-8380.

3. Volunteer – we still need help to set up during the day, as well as that night, so please let us know if you're interested in being part of this (it's really fun!). Contact Natalie Borreani at 510-815-0503 or nborreani@sbcglobal.net.

If you do nothing else this year, please come to the auction and support our school (and have a great time while you're at it)! You won't want to miss it!!! See you there! ~Rula Craner and Natalie Borreani, Auction Co-Chairs

Madera Family Math & Science Nights

Madera PTA is pleased to sponsor Family Math and Science Nights again. The first will be held on **Tuesday, March 23** by Lawrence Hall of Science. The theme is Build It! It brings out the engineer and architect in everyone. Participants exercise

their design, problem-solving, and spatial skills by constructing in two and three dimensions. Bring your creativity! On **Thursday, April 29**, Chabot Space and Science Center will present Space and Astronaut Training, which is sure to be a hit. On **Wednesday, May 19**, LHS

presents a Medical Mystery Festival. Students become "doctor-detectives" who solve medical mysteries while they examine pretend patients. Students listen to their own hearts, measure their breath flow, test their eyesight, and are challenged to build a healthy meal.

Got News?

The deadline for the next issue of the Madera PTA Newsletter is Monday, May 3. Please submit items to Clare Sheridan at claresher@yahoo.com. Please include your name and phone number. Thanks!

Did You Know?

Ms. Miller's 4th/5th grade combined class staged and acted in *Romeo and Juliet* and presented it to the school!

Upcoming Events

- ◆ International Night, Tuesday, March 18
- ◆ Family Math Night: Build It, Thursday, March 23, 6-8 pm
- ◆ Site Council meeting, Monday, April 12, 3 pm and PTA meeting, 6:30 pm
- ◆ Madera Auction, Saturday, April 17, 5-10 pm,
- ◆ Madera Science Fair, Thursday, April 22, 7 pm (projects due on Tuesday, April 20th)
- ◆ Family Science Night: Space/Astronaut Training, Thursday, April 29, 6-8 pm

Madera Goes Global at International Night

Madera Elementary cordially invites you to its 2010 International Night on **Thursday, March 18th from 6-8 pm**. This is a celebration of the diversity of our cultures and shows our students that each of them has an important role in making the world a better place. This year's theme is "Food For All." The following activities will be held:

- ◆ Students are decorating a STAR by adding their favorite food & recipe
- ◆ Students will participate in an International Costume Parade wearing festive international attire to represent their cultural background, a place they would like to visit, or a place they have visited before
- ◆ Our dedicated music teacher, Jan Jones, will lead the children

in songs from around the world

- ◆ Everyone will enjoy international dishes each family will bring to share during a pot-luck dinner
- ◆ Everyone will bring a can donation for the Contra Costa Food Bank

The details...

Please bring a dish as follows:

Kindergarten: Appetizers/finger food

1st, 2nd & 4th grades: Main dish

3rd & 5th grades: Salad, noodles, rice or potatoes

The PTA will provide paper products, drinks and dessert (bring your

own plates and utensils if you wish to go green!)

⇒ Please remember to label your dishes and serving utensils with your name and your child's grade.

⇒ Bring your dish to the kitchen located off the multi-purpose room.

⇒ Please remember that children are not allowed on the play structure during evening events.

Join us for an evening of music, great food and international delights!

Thanks, Sue Dodd & Lucy Kirsch
International Night Co-Chairs