

The Weekly Read-It

John Muir School PTA Newsletter

February 7, 2006

100th Day Celebration is this Friday! COME JOIN THE FUN!

100

This Friday, come see how fun the number 100 can be!: Kindergarten from 12:45 to 1:40, First Grade from 9:20 to 10:20, Second Grade from 10:45 to 11:45 and Third Grade from 1:50 to 2:50. 4th and 5th graders tutor the younger grades at the centers.

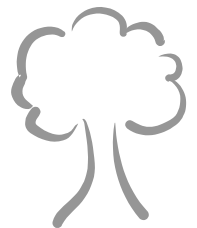
We still need volunteers for **Thursday, February 9th 5:30-7:00pm** (5 volunteers) to help set up the activity centers. **Friday, February 10th** (2-3 volunteers per session) Clean up at the end of the day (4 volunteers) **Please email Tracy Schrider at tracy@schrider-smith.net or call 510-845-0584 to sign up. Thank you!**

DEAR (Drop Everything and Read) Tuesday, March 14, 2006

The Berkeley Unified School District sponsors DEAR (Drop Everything and Read) which is a district-wide event to encourage reading! Members of the community, parents, teachers are encouraged to participate in this event. More information is coming, but mark your calendars now!

CALLING ALL YOU GARDNERS, WE NEED A NEW CREEK COORDINATOR!!!

Karen Smith has done such a wonderful job on restoring the Creek and we need a new leader to learn the ropes in keeping the creek area beautiful and functional for the JM community to utilize!! The job is fun and not demanding. Just periodic up-keep of the creek area. If interested please contact karensmith@earthlink.net

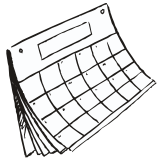


DO YOU HAVE STUFF SITTING IN YOUR BASEMENT/GARAGE/ATTIC THAT YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH?

Freecycle.org provides a service that you may find useful. The Freecycle Network™ is made up of many individual groups across the globe. It's a grassroots movement of people who are giving (& getting) stuff for free in their own towns. Each local group is run by a local volunteer moderator (them's good people). Membership is free. To sign up, find your community by clicking on the region on the left. You may then go directly to your local group by clicking on "Go To" or you may immediately joining by clicking on "Join." It will generate an automatic e-mail which, when sent, will sign you up for your local group and send you a response

DATES TO REMEMBER:

- Friday, Feb. 10-100th Day Celebration!
- Friday, Feb. 17-Lincoln's Birthday-NO SCHOOL
- Monday, Feb 20-President's Day Holiday, NO SCHOOL
- Tuesday, Feb. 21-PTA Meeting, 6:30-8:00pm AND Staff Lunch Sponsored by **Second Grade!**
- Tuesday, March 14-PTA Meeting, 6:30-8:00pm AND Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) Day
- Tuesday, March 21-Staff Luncheon Sponsored by Third Grade



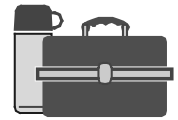
with instructions on how it works. Can't find a group near you? You might want to consider starting one (click on "Start a Group" for instructions). Have fun! The Freecycle Network was started in May 2003 to promote waste reduction in Tucson's downtown and help save desert landscape from being taken over by landfills. The Network provides individuals and non-profits an electronic forum to "recycle" unwanted items. One person's trash can truly be another's treasure!

This is Dated, But Still Useful!

A Back to School Warning: Children's Vinyl Lunch Boxes Can Contain Dangerous Levels of Lead

August 31, 2005

Oakland, CA – The Center for Environmental Health (CEH) announced it is filing lawsuits today against makers and retailers of soft vinyl lunch boxes that can expose children to harmful levels of lead. The Center has also notified several other companies of violations under California's toxics law Proposition 65 (Prop 65) for lunch boxes with high lead levels.



The lawsuits and violation notices against companies including Toys "R" Us, Warner Brothers, DC Comics, Time Warner, Walgreens, and others involve many lunch boxes featuring beloved children's characters including Superman, Tweety Bird, Powerpuff Girls, and Hamtaro. The level of lead in one lunch box, an Angela Anaconda box made by Targus International, tested at 56,400 parts per million (ppm) of lead, more than 90 times the 600 ppm legal limit for lead in paint in children's products.

"Lead exposure should not be on the lunch menu when kids' go back to school this fall," said Michael Green, CEH Executive Director. "There is no reason to expose children to any lead from lunch boxes. We are calling on these companies to recall these products and take action to eliminate lead from their products in the future."

Initial independent laboratory testing commissioned by CEH has already found seventeen lunch boxes with high lead levels, and the group's investigation is ongoing. In addition to the testing on the Angela Anaconda lunch box, tests on other lunch boxes showed levels of lead between two and twenty-five times the legal limit for lead paint in children's products. In most cases, the highest lead levels were found in the lining of lunch boxes, where lead could come into direct contact with food. Lead is known to be harmful to children even in minute amounts, as it can impair brain development and cause other behavioral and developmental problems. Children may be exposed to lead from lunch boxes when they eat food that has been stored in them. Handling the lunchboxes just before eating could also be an exposure risk.

It is not possible to tell by appearance whether a vinyl lunch box may contain lead, so CEH is advising parents to avoid vinyl lunch boxes altogether. "Parents may need to seek out alternatives, since many mass produced lunch boxes are vinyl or vinyl-lined," said Green. "A reusable cloth bag would be a good alternative." Parents can find information on how to test for lead in their children's lunch boxes at home at www.cehca.org/lunchboxes.

The CEH lawsuits were filed today against lunch box producers Igloo and InGear, and against retailers Toys "R" Us, Walgreens, Big Lots, and Ross Stores. Earlier this year, CEH sent notices of Prop 65 violations to Targus International, DC Comics, Time Warner, Warner Brothers, Binney & Smith (a division of Hallmark and the makers of Crayola-brand lunch boxes), Fast Forward LLC, and Holiday Fair Incorporated. Under Prop 65, companies have sixty days to respond to violation notices, after which lawsuits can be filed. CEH expects to file more notifications of lunch boxes that violate Prop 65 in the near future. Photos of the lunch boxes can be found at www.cehca.org/lunchboxes.

