

The Paradise Valley Paw Print

December/January 2014



Dear Paradise Valley Family,

As the Holiday Season approaches, we have numerous reasons to celebrate mutual appreciation for the people we hold in high regard – people whose actions augment our lives. I would like to extend a personal and heartfelt thank you to...

- Students at Paradise Valley for all their effort, hard work, and continued commitment to boost their confidence and do their best each day.
- Paradise Valley staff members for their continued dedication, hard work, and relentless efforts to do what's best for students.
- Paradise Valley parents and community members for your time, support, and your belief in us to educate your child to the best we possibly can. It is an honor and a privilege that we take very seriously.

At Paradise Valley, we have a deep sense of nurturing our students into global citizens who understand expectations, respect all around them, develop a persistent outlook to never give up, and believe in themselves. As your Principal, it gives me great honor and pride to see our students excel in academics, sports, and in other extra-curricular activities. It is such a pleasure to see students reason logically and focus on the "why" behind concepts to make rational, educated, and logical decisions. Fostered with our strong, positive partnerships between home and school, I see students practice these skills every day at school. And, as they do so, they recognize their strengths and gain confidence. I believe in all our students and know that our Paradise Panthers will shine as superstars wherever they go!

Thank you again students, parents, staff, and community members for your continued support and for being good role models for our students!

Sincerely,
Mrs. Swati Dagar
Principal



Produced by PV Home & School Association, Inc. (HSA)
paradisevalleyhsa.org/Home & www.paradise.mhu.k12.ca.us/

For questions about the Home and School Association, programs it supports,
or to volunteer please contact pvhsa@yahoo.com.

What is Coming Up Soon?

December

December 23 through January 3
NO SCHOOL



January

- 6 Return to school
- 8 HSA Mtg, 6:30 pm, Cafeteria
- 9 Talent Show Audition Forms Due
NO LATE FORMS WILL BE ACCEPTED
- 9 School Site Council Mtg, 2:15 Library
- 14 Talent Show Auditions, 2:15 Cafeteria
- 15 Paradise Parents Book Club 6:30 p.m.
Club meets at BookSmart
- 17 Panther Den
- 20 NO SCHOOL Martin Luther King Day
- 30 Parenting Workshop (See Page 3)
- 31 Panther Den

Chess Club meets every Wed, cafeteria, after school. Join if you can!

And the Award Goes to ...

Paradise Valley hosted an Honor Roll Assembly recently. Many parents had questions about the process. Below are the criteria for Honor Roll Awards, grades 4th -6th:

Distinguished Scholar - This award shall be presented to students earning all A's.

Honor Roll - This award shall be presented to students earning all A's and B's.

Bug Roll Certificate - This award shall be presented to any student who is not on Honor Roll but has brought up a grade without letting the others drop.

Top Cat Award - This award shall be presented to two students that are deserving of special recognition.

The **Perfect Attendance Award** is presented to students who have not missed even one day of school and have not been truant tardy (tardy more than 30 minutes after school start time) even one day. In other words, they have 'perfect' attendance for the whole semester.

The HSA is looking forward to a new year! The board, committee members, and all of our parent volunteers are ready to help with supplies and activities in 2014. If you would like to join in supporting the school, please consider attending an upcoming meeting:

Evenings: Wednesdays at 6:30 – Jan 8, April 9
Mornings: Wednesdays 7:50 – Feb 12, May 14
Afternoons: Tuesday 2:15 – March 11



Programs at Paradise Valley

December/January 2014

Project Cornerstone



Consider giving your child the gift of **Quality Time** this year by learning ways to support and encourage your child to do well academically and socially. Paradise Valley will be hosting a Parent Workshop called Take It Personally (TIP). This workshop will start on January 30th and run every Thursday (except 2/20) from 6:30 - 8 pm over a 6 week period. During your time, many parenting strategies for success will be discussed.

To sign up:

<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0945ABA72D6-take>

During the month of December, our ABC Readers read Steve Seskin and Allen Shamblin's "Don't Laugh at Me." This book promotes understanding and acceptance of individual differences. In January, Project Cornerstone volunteers will present "Today I Feel Silly" by Jamie Lee Curtis. It teaches students to learn to identify emotions of their own and to understand how another person may be feeling. Learning to understand differences and identify emotions are both important steps to becoming Bucket Fillers. For questions or to volunteer, contact Diana Gill, dliding@yahoo.com.

Open Subcommittee Positions

There are currently six open positions within the Home and School Association volunteer team. If you are interested in supporting one, please contact amywhelan@verizon.net. The available positions are: Chess Club, Matching Funds Program, Playground/Campus Improvements, School Supplies, Teachers' Lounge, and Volunteer Coordinator.

Labels for Education and Box Tops!

Continue the tradition! Put completed labels (no sheets needed!) in a zip lock with your child's name, grade and teacher; return to your teacher or the designated folder in the HSA box located in the school office lobby.



Save the Date

The Paradise Valley Talent Show!
Scheduled for Tuesday, Feb. 11, 6:30 p.m.
Auditions: January 14, 2:15, Cafeteria
2:15 Cafeteria Rehearsals: Jan 21, 28, Feb 4, and 10
For questions, contact Nicole Chaisson
nicolec1313@yahoo.com.



ONE MORE THING ... Thanks to the dozen+ parents and student volunteers who made this year's "Cookies with Santa" fun and exciting for all the kids who met with Santa, enjoyed treats, crafts, and a little shopping.

People at Paradise Valley

December/January 2014



And They're Off!

There is a reason that the ideas presented in the 1990 book by Robert Fulghum, *All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten*, have resonated so strongly for over twenty years. The simple sentiment in the title is true! What is taught in kindergarten is critical and can't be dismissed as child's play. Positive social behavior, *how* to learn, how to get along with other people, how to handle new ideas ... getting a strong handle on those concepts makes right the difference.

So don't let the cute pictures, cartoon-style graphics, and instructional aids for small hands decorating classrooms 1, 2, and 3 fool you. Paradise's three-person team knows kindergarten is serious business that requires a patient finesse that only a few possess. Ms. Costa, Mrs. Hendrix, and Mrs. Pollard are skilled experts who make it look and seem fun with games that are more than just fun games, songs that are more than just catchy tunes, and projects that provide long-lasting lessons kids will remember long past the end of the school year.

They each have thorough training and a deep well of personal and professional experience – almost 65 professional years combined! – from which they can draw to help their kids pay attention, learn, stay on track, and behave in a way that is productive individually and for the class. Each teacher points to her desire to make a positive difference as the cornerstone of her chosen profession. Mrs. Pollard cites “watching the light bulb go on and seeing excitement and confidence in children” as her favorite aspect of teaching.

Sometimes excitement comes from learning with standard materials, like books or work sheets. And, sometimes, excitement and learning come from a show-and-tell snake slithering out of its bucket while kids were outside playing at recess. There is a lesson there, too, and Ms. Costa, no doubt, taught it very well: the importance of reacting to an unexpected challenge with calm, flexible grace. Perhaps her dance skills – she started her career teaching ballet, tap, and jazz dance at her family's studio – helped her fancy foot work that day!

Another advantage the kinder team gives our kids is that they have either taught other grades or have had children of their own who attended Paradise. That means they know clearly what is expected after kindergarten and can prepare accordingly. That wider perspective will also come in handy while the kinder team collaborates on strategies for the shift to Common Core standards that will be implemented in the near future.

Kids may be nervous and a little homesick the first day. But, by the last day they are ready, confident, and smiling and hugging their teachers with tears in their eyes. Perhaps kids may not be able to articulate what they feel in June, but they know they have had a good thing going with the kinder team and they will miss it, more than they realize at such a great age!

The next *Paw Print* will feature the third grade team!