



# THE OLD MILL CREEK

www.oldmillschool.org  
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June 4, 2008

## FIELD DAY



Don't forget Old Mill School Field Day this Friday, June 6<sup>th</sup>. Join us for lots of fun games and activities!

## HAVE A GREAT SUMMER!



**BEST WISHES TO ALL OF THE OLD MILL GRADUATING FIFTH GRADE STUDENTS!!**



## Calendar

### Wednesday, June 4

Old Mill Open House

### Wednesday, June 11

PTA Executive Committee Retreat 8:45 a.m. Old Mill School Board Meeting 7:00 p.m. District Office

### Friday, June 13

Last Day for PTA Lunches

### Tuesday, June 17

School Board Meeting 7:00 p.m. District Office

### Wednesday, June 18

Fifth Grade Graduation 9:00 a.m. Old Mill Last Day of School Early Release 12:45

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### DON'T FORGET . . .

No PTA Lunches the last week of school June 16-18<sup>th</sup>.

If your child has medicines stored in the school office, pick up any extra by the end of the school year.

If your child is not a graduating fifth grader but will not be returning to Old Mill in the fall, please stop in the office and tell us.

School starts again on August 28, 2008 and Back-to-School Night is on September 3, 2008.

Lapathon is Coming Again October 19, 2008.

Have a Great Summer!

## DROP DON'T STOP SCHEDULE

WEEK OF JUNE 9—ROOM 6

WEEK OF JUNE 16—DDS COMMITTEE



# PTA EXPRESS

By Jan Hudson  
and Leanne Hansen



The end of school is one of those wonderfully bittersweet moments we share. The excitement of summer awaits . . . long, warm, sunny days, free schedules, swimming and playing. We eagerly anticipate the ringing of the last bell announcing that summer has arrived! While we enjoy and relish that moment of freedom, we also reflect on the memories from the start of school and the changes that lay ahead.

The Kindergartners are enthusiastic to move into their new role as 1<sup>st</sup> graders and the 4<sup>th</sup> graders can't wait to become 5<sup>th</sup> graders and welcome their new K buddies next year. The fifth graders have one foot out the door excited to meet the challenges of middle school while holding on to the friendships and memories of their teachers and friends at Old Mill. Our teachers have taught our kids the life values of flexibility and responsibility allowing them to confidently take their next step. Not surprisingly, when the kids were asked why they love their teachers, they said: "because they are caring, they laugh and they make learning fun." We must thank our teachers for sharing this love of learning with our kids, and Ms. McDonough for being such an inspiring and supportive leader.

I hope you were able to join us at the Teacher/Volunteer Appreciation Lunch last month. You each have helped and made a difference in many ways this year whether it was working in the classroom, taking photos for the yearbook, sending reminders to your class or working on a committee. Your support and involvement made a difference. A special thanks to the PTA Executive Committee for their tireless work providing: incredible educational and entertaining assemblies for our children, fun-raising and fund-raising events, safe emergency procedures, better school wide communication, a new playground and a mural in just nine short months! Thank you parents and teachers for working together to build a stronger community within our school and for "making things better!" This has been a fantastic year because of your involvement.

I've greatly enjoyed being PTA Co-President the last two years. My first year with Robin Moses was effortless with her amazing leadership skills and her fantastic wit. This year was also wonderful working with Leanne Hansen. Her ability to see the big picture and to stay focused kept me from drowning in the details, and her sense of humor, sensitivity and great attitude (and smile!) are amazing. Thank you, Leanne! Also a warm thank you to Deborah Goldman for being our awesome Treasurer. Her organization and passion for our school is remarkable. We are fortunate that Leanne and Deborah will be our Co-Presidents next year. We will be in great hands!

Enjoy your last few weeks of school and have a wonderful, restful and safe summer. See you in the fall!

## PTA Executive Board

### Co-President

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### Co-President

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### Kiddo! Rep.

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### Historian

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robinmoses@sbcglobal.net





# GRIST

By Jane McDonough



One clear sign of summer's approach is when those STAR boxes are all gone from the office at last. The scores will reach all parents sometime in the summer, usually towards the end of July. Another is the suddenly wistful expression that starts to show up on our 5th grade students. They start looking around at things, realizing that they are not going to see all of the same scenery in a short while, and that it will recede for them into the background of their soon-to-be-different lives.

Taking stock of this year I feel happy about what we have all gotten done together. The kids have a healthy glow for the most part, they are able to crow about their significant accomplishments over the course of the school year, specifically those areas where they are not so good at the subject, but learned a new strategy for overcoming what had been obstacles in the past. The teachers and I really enjoy celebrating those places with kids, and with you! Site Council made a difference by increasing our emphasis on getting to school in a healthy way, 3rd grade classes helped us get a mural in place on our amphitheater, PTA helped us get a new structure in place for the younger students, our laptop cart #2 is now complete and in use in the library, so we have two "labs" for whole class computer activities where once there were none.

Teachers completed their second academic year in structured professional learning teams, working with the team leaders, specific goals for student learning, and mapping their shared curricula. The list goes on. In short, it has been, like fine wine, a very good year. Thanks to everyone for all the parts they play and will continue to play. Special thanks to Jan Hudson (and family!) for the extra mile that being PTA lead is and for the special job she did in keeping us all on track, and laughing most of the way!

Thanks for the smiles, notes, cards, flowers and sweet thoughts that are sent to all of the OM staff just when we need it most. Thanks for the hard work, day after day, assisting our classes with the work of learning. Thanks especially for the willing assists with technology, hands on sports support, selling popsicles, endless lunch duty, yard duty support, lost and found, literature groups, times tables flippers, lifting and moving, or just help around the school which keeps us together as a team, working for our kids, so that they can learn the most possible in the time we have them with us. That time is not very long, after all, and when June comes, that lesson of how fast it flies looms large for all of us. Happy Summer! Read! Do that both together and apart – the Mill Valley library has the best librarians in the world. Ask and you shall receive! Talk about what you read and what they read, and why it matters. Compute! Numeracy includes problem solving and estimating for fun! How much does that gas cost? So at that rate how much will this trip cost? What if? How tall are you now? How tall were you one year ago? How much change do you have in your drawer/bedside table? What if? Seven times six is . . . Thus my overall summer advice for families is Play! And may summer be long and the world prosper!

## TOPSoccer is Coming to Mill Valley!

The Mill Valley Soccer Club is starting a new soccer program, TOPSoccer. The program is designed to provide an opportunity for those children with special needs, including learning differences, to play soccer in an environment that is less stressful than the traditional program. This program is associated with the United States and California Youth Soccer Associations. Registration began on May 1<sup>st</sup> and will continue through the summer. You can sign up on line at [www.mvsc.org](http://www.mvsc.org). You can also call 381-KICK. The program is scheduled for Sunday afternoons, beginning September 7<sup>th</sup>. There is a small fee for the program, but scholarships are readily available for those who would not otherwise be able to participate. If you have questions about whether TOPSoccer is right for your child, please call Frank Bonardi at 847-4154, or you may email him at [futsal4u@hotmail.com](mailto:futsal4u@hotmail.com). Please also contact him if you are interested in being a part of the planning process. We hope that many of you will take this great opportunity to have your child experience soccer without the pressure of being on a traditional team.

## A Word from Kiddo! . . .

### **Kiddo! Annual Giving Campaign – Off To A Great Start!**

Thanks to the 45% of school families who have already made their 2008 Kiddo! contribution! This is a fantastic start to raising the \$1.9 million needed to save library and classroom aides from budget cuts, as well as fund our award-winning art, music, drama, dance and poetry programs for the 2008-09 school year.

For the 861 school families who have not yet donated, please note that follow-up phone calls are on the way – donating now will help Kiddo! save time and money so more funding can go to the kids. Thanks in advance for your generous support in these difficult financial times for our schools. You can DROP your donation in the Kiddo! box at your school, CLICK on [www.kiddo.org](http://www.kiddo.org) and make your donation online or MAIL your donation to Kiddo! at 409 Sycamore Avenue

### **Kiddo! Video 2008-2009**

Do you have video or great photos of your child's Kiddo! performances? Concerts, plays, poetry readings, dance recitals? If so, please share them with us as we begin to prepare next year's Kiddo! video. Please send to [ajustice@kiddo.org](mailto:ajustice@kiddo.org). Thank you!

### **2008 Kiddo! Golf Classic**

Kiddo! is gearing up for its third annual golf tournament on Friday, October 24, 2008. Spaces fill up quickly, so if you want to ensure a foursome for you and your friends, you might want to consider sponsoring a hole or even the entire tournament, as sponsors receive top priority. For more information, please contact Louis Stervinou, Tournament Chair, at 228-2880 or [lstervinou@eastdilsecured.com](mailto:lstervinou@eastdilsecured.com), or call the Kiddo! office 389-7789, ext. 5 ([info@kiddo.org](mailto:info@kiddo.org)). All proceeds benefit Kiddo!

### **2009 Kiddo! Gala**

The 2009 Kiddo! Gala Committee is looking for an Auction Chair to organize the 20+ auction volunteers. If you are interested, please contact Gala Co-Chairs, Molly Williams 380-0978 or Amy Curtis 383-1515.

## SAVE THE DATE FOR LAPATHON 2008!!!!

Mark your calendars now for **October 19 from 11-3 o'clock** as Old Mill School once again throws the **best party in town!** Lapathon is the PTA's main fundraiser for the year and is also just a flat-out great time. Our children don themed T-shirts designed by one of our fifth graders and circumnavigate the school, raising money for each lap. Parents volunteer to count laps, dole out water, staff the barbecue grill, and perform many other incredibly helpful yet surprisingly enjoyable functions. Everyone – kids, parents, staff and stray relatives – spends the day listening to great music, feasting at the BBQ, and just generally chilling out and enjoying our great community.

Money raised at Lapathon accounts for over half of the PTA's annual budget. It covers programs and events like assemblies, teacher stipends, program grants, drama grants, art and science supplies and technology repairs and updates, as well as capital expenditures such as replacing outdated furniture, P.E. equipment, lighting and other items. In these tight budgetary times, Lapathon funds will be even more critical in supporting the remarkable education our fantastic teachers provide for our children. So we will need abundant participation from all our walkers and their parents!

Don't worry, you don't need to sign up for anything now. In your fall "first day packets" you will find a Lapathon volunteer flier, and we encourage you to sign up then for whatever job sounds most thrilling to you. For now, we just want to say we look forward to seeing you there and thank you in advance for supporting our PTA! And if you have any questions, feel free to call one of your Lapathon co-chairs, Jules Campfield (381-5956) or Heather Young (388-5899).

## **Mill Valley School District Funding Measure - November 2008**

The Mill Valley School District currently faces a difficult financial environment, with significant budget cuts from the state, increasing student enrollment and an economic downturn that limits property tax revenues. MVSD projects a funding gap of \$850,000 for the 2008/09 school year and up to \$2 million annually for each of the next three years. The district will be able to close next year's funding gap through increased PTA and Kiddo! funding and budget cuts to a variety of programs and services, without resorting to the teacher layoffs that many districts across the state are experiencing.

However, without a secure, local source of increased funding the district will be forced to meet its growing financial shortfall with more drastic reductions in the 2009/2010 school year and beyond.

**The Mill Valley School Board is expected to vote on June 11 to place a measure on the November 2008 ballot to amend the existing school parcel tax.** The amendment would increase the current tax by \$193 per parcel and extend the tax for an additional eight years. If passed, this measure would raise nearly \$2 million of additional guaranteed local school funding annually.

The district faces some unique challenges in passing this measure. Parcel taxes require a two-thirds super-majority to pass. This becomes particularly difficult as fewer than 20% of voters in Mill Valley have children in our district schools. In addition, the district and School Board are legally restricted in their ability to advocate for the measure. A campaign committee of community volunteers has already emerged to promote the measure and will be contacting parents independently.

We urge school families to become informed about how this upcoming measure will affect our schools and our community. Stay tuned for more information and please be sure to vote on November 4, 2008. Thank you.

## **The Old Mill PTA Is Looking For Volunteers!**

We have two volunteer positions that are open for next year. Easy and not a lot of work. Come help us out...

**Health and Safety:** This individual is in charge of making sure the lice check box has all of the necessary equipment in it. They also should just check in with the room parents through out the year to make sure checks are taking place monthly.

**Lost and Found:** Help manage the lost and found. Keep the area neat and tidy. Quarterly display articles and those that aren't retrieved, take to Goodwill or keep for yourself :).

If interested, please contact Mary Stervinou or Maggie Woodward.

## **Good News about School News!**

Old Mill School and the PTA have revamped the way you will receive information next year! School news and updates will be distributed to you regularly via the new PTA/office email communication. You will still receive information pertaining to your child's class from your RP, teacher or our website, but this new delivery of information from one contact will guarantee more accurate and timely distribution of Old Mill calendar updates and news directly to you. You can look forward to receiving only one message, even if you have kids in multiple classrooms!

Kindergarten through 4<sup>th</sup> grade parents will receive an email this month via room parents asking you to go to [www.oldmillschool.org](http://www.oldmillschool.org) and enter your email address. This will submit your email to the list so you won't miss any important information. (*Note: even if you have previously entered it this year, we need you to do it again.*) We need at least one email address per family, but you can include mom, dad, even grandma if you'd like! We look forward to keeping everyone clearly informed next year with this new streamlined approach.



## It Takes a Village

visit us online at <http://www.itavmv.org>

Wow! How can it be the end of the year? Thank you to our nearly 300 members, the District's teachers and administrators, the PTA Council, and the Board of Trustees for your support. Thank you also to my fellow Executive Board members, Dr. Kerri Mills (Assistant Superintendent), Marianne Shine, Maureen Pardi, Pam Sowerby, Jeanine Ferris, Caron Stapleton, Rauol Wertz, Janet Miller, Ross Buffington, Gillian Reilly, and Deborah Goldman. It Takes a Village would not be the amazing PTA it is without you! Here is just a snap shot of some of what we accomplished:

- Seven speaker events on Technological Resources, Reading Strategies, Support for Families and Siblings, Social Thinking, Executive Functioning, Social/Emotional Challenges & Kids are Great When You know How They Work.
- Our four parent coffees helped us to meet new members and share our parenting stories with one another and playgroups helped our children with learning differences connect with other kids and build relationships. Contact Pam Sowerby ([psowerby@comcast.net](mailto:psowerby@comcast.net), 380-9680) if you are interested meeting informally over the summer.
- We launched our website: <http://www.itavmv.org> (thank you Ross Buffington), designed and printed ITAV brochures (thanks to the Mill Valley Rotary Club for funding and to Ross Buffington for his design), and went high tech with much of our publicity (thanks to Jonathan Schwartz for forwarding fliers electronically).
- We placed ITAV membership forms in each school's Back-to-School packet (look out for them again next year), our Executive Committee meetings gave us an opportunity to work together to share information and develop ideas and strategies to make our special education community the best it can be, we represented ITAV on the Mill Valley Council of PTAs and collaborated with all our District schools and PTAs, and we were in the March issue of Marin Magazine – a great opportunity to get information to the broader community.
- Mill Valley Market offered to donate a portion of its proceeds from your grocery shopping to ITAV (No. 7093).

We have made lots of plans for 2008/2009. Have a fabulous summer and let's look forward to a great 2008/2009!

## Summer at the Mill Valley Public Library

**The Sky's the Limit** at the Library this summer! Why leave Mill Valley when you can visit the library for fantastic summer programming? Kids can pick up reading and read-aloud logs on June 23; they'll receive weekly prizes and stickers that gently encourage their love of books and reading. Daily (M-F) afternoon activities at the library start on Wednesday, June 25 and run through Wednesday, August 13. There'll be folklore (with delicious snacks), Little Sprouts! toddler programs, art workshops, and so much more. Every Wednesday afternoon, you'll enjoy entertainment under the redwoods featuring a stellar lineup of storytelling, dance, music, magic, puppets, and comedy . . . perfect for the whole family. Kids entering 5<sup>th</sup> grade in the fall can sign up for **PeRP**, our Personalized Reading Program, and get a customized summer reading list. Watch for our blue Summer Reading flyer in your child's backpack – it's the key to keeping your kids engaged, involved and **READING** all summer long! Flyers will be available at the library on June 9<sup>th</sup>. For more information, visit our website at [millvalleylibrary.org](http://millvalleylibrary.org) or call 415-389-4292 x106. (Many programs have limited space and/or age restrictions, so please read the flyer carefully for details.)

Our **End-of-Summer Film Festival (August 18-22)** will make the last, bittersweet week of summer a little less painful. Daily **FREE** matinees at the library will showcase fun family films, served with popcorn and pillows. Screening schedule will be available in mid-July.

Ongoing programs include all five of our weekly **Story Times** (check our website for days and times) and **Live Homework Help**, our **FREE** online tutoring service for grades 4-12+. It's available through our website ([millvalleylibrary.org/homework.html](http://millvalleylibrary.org/homework.html)) for students in summer school or anyone working on academic projects.