

RHEEMARKS

"Frank"ly Speaking...

December 4, 2016

In these final weeks before the holiday break, all classrooms are participating in a special **"Rheem Cares"** project. Hopefully, you've already heard details about Kindergarten through 3rd graders providing holiday cheer to the children and mothers at the Women's Drop-In Center in Berkeley, 4th graders collecting spare change to benefit the Heifer Project, and 5th graders supporting the Make-a-Wish Foundation. All families are encouraged to get involved as a way of helping our students practice the important Lifeskills of Caring and Friendship with a special focus on Giving.

And, speaking of gift-giving...are grandparents, aunts, and uncles nagging you for the perfect holiday gift? This holiday season consider the gift of a donation to MEF in your child's honor. Remember, the gift of education lasts a lifetime! Direct them to www.moragaeducation.org.

Thank you for your generosity, support, and caring!

This Week at Rheem:

Monday, December 5:

- First Day of Winter Hot Lunch Session!
- PTA Executive Board Meeting, 9:30 in Room 25
- 4th grade Walk-Through California Programs
 - Culleton in a.m.; Drury in p.m.
- Parent Ed Night: Sensory Processing (7:00 p.m. in JM Library)

Tuesday, December 6:

- Vision Screening for all 2nd grade and K students not previously screened
- School Site Council Meeting, beginning at 3:15 in Room 25
- Parent Ed Night: Parenting in the Digital Age (7:00 p.m. in JM Auditorium)

Wednesday, December 7:

- 1st grade Field Trip Trip to Lawrence Hall of Science (9:00 – 1:30)

Thursday, December 8:

- 4th/5th grade Winter Music Concert in MU Room (2:00 – 3:00 p.m.)

Friday, December 9:

- 2nd grade Field Trip to Contra Costa County Food Bank (8:30 – 12:15)

Note: All 2nd graders are Early Birds on Friday

Parent Education Opportunities This Week

This week, MSD offers (not one), but *TWO* informative Parent Ed Nights:

- On Monday, December 5, join Occupational Therapist, Janet Alexander, to learn more about “**Sensory Regulation Strategies**,” beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the JM Library. Click [HERE](#) for the flyer detailing additional “Evening with the Experts” presentations during this school year.
- On Tuesday, December 6, join MSD Director of Technology, Adrienne DeWolfe, for “**Parenting in the Digital Age**” beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the JM Auditorium. If devices are on your children’s holiday gift list, you won’t want to miss this opportunity to learn tips on managing screen time and responsible use! Please see [the flyer](#) for more information.

School News and Highlights:

- Did you know that December 5 – 9th is **Computer Science Education Week**? In honor of this special week, Rheem students will be participating in the **Hour of Code**, joining tens of millions of students globally to learn more about computer programming. K-3 will participate in a fun classroom breakout challenge where they solve programming puzzles to unlock secret boxes. 4th and 5th grade students will continue working on [Learn to Code](#), a self-paced curriculum I developed based on Harvard’s Creative Computing Guide. Want more information or to continue learning at home? Visit [code.org](#) for a myriad of fun and engaging activities for your child. Happy coding!
- We will be making another **BOX TOPS** collection before the Winter Break. Please turn in all neatly-trimmed Box Tops to the classrooms by Wednesday, December 14. The classes that bring in the most Box Tops will be awarded the Roadrunner Mascots at the January Spirit Assemblies.
- Many thanks to the **Moraga Kiwanis Club** for recently improving our school campus by adding two new painted features to our front blacktop: a **large-scale USA map** and a **“Peace Path”** that outlines the steps for successful conflict resolution. This project was headed-up by Club President, **Sam Sperry** (grandfather to four Rheem students: 5th grader, Max, 2nd grader Ellis, and K cousins, Ford and Meg) and involved several club members, including our very own superintendent, **Bruce Burns**.

Did you Know?

Recycle Woman (a real superhero) made a visit to Rheem before the Thanksgiving Break to remind all staff and students about the importance of recycling. To help us in our efforts, she introduced the following new items that you may notice around campus:

- **Compost Pails** in the classrooms to collect paper towels and any food scraps
- **"Itty Bitty" trash caddies** that hook onto our recycling bins. That way, students really think about whether to use the recycling or landfill side of the trash container.
- **"Paper Towel Only" Slim Jims** in the restrooms. Yes, paper towels are compostable, and, therefore, we are reducing waste by not putting them in the trash.

Recycle Woman (aka Jessica Jane Robinson) also visited Rheem the week prior to conduct a "Trash Audit" with our SWAT (Students Worried About Trash) Team, and will be back in January to conduct another one to see the progress we've made. Jessica is a Climate Reality Leader working with the [Climate Reality Project](#), founded by Al Gore.

National Geographic Bee Finalists Announced

We are very proud of the forty-nine 4th and 5th graders who participated in the Preliminary Round of this year's National Geographic Bee. On Wednesday and Thursday of this week, these students took a 35-question quiz to determine who would compete in the final competition. The twelve qualifying students are listed below:

4th graders:

Arnav M.

Cooper C.

Devan A.

Emma A.

Luka V.

5th graders:

Andy M.

Ben T.

Callen B.

Kadin T.

Maureen K.

Nate H.

Serge V.

The Final National Geographic Bee Competition will be held on **Thursday, January 12 at 9:00 in the Multi-Use Room**. This contest will be similar to a Spelling Bee where contestants orally answer questions about geography until one champion is selected to represent the school! We are looking forward to this exciting annual event!

The Last Word...

On Wednesday, at the MSD Coordinating Council Meeting, we were discussing our English Language Learner program. One parent (who moved to Moraga from Russia last year) remarked that her son came home from his first day of school at Rheem and told her that he had "many friends." She questioned him, "But you don't speak English; how can you have so many friends?" He responded, "We didn't talk, but I know they are my friends."

On Thursday, when I was handing out the 35-question National Geographic Preliminary Quiz to students who were giving up their lunch recess to take the test, I heard the simple words, "Thank You," as I gave each child her or her paper.

On Friday, one of the MSD directors was on campus for a meeting. She stopped me to say, "You know, several kids smiled at me and said Hello while I was on my way to this classroom! That was so nice -- they don't even know me!"

I can't remember what day it was, but this past week I overheard a 2nd grade girl come into the office to thank Ms. Fitzinger for lending her a sweatshirt when she was cold and then apologizing for not returning it (it had fallen out of her backpack). The 2nd grader offered, "Is there anything I can do to make it right?"

And that's just what I remember off the top of my head! It is so gratifying to see and hear of these genuine and unexpected acts of civility and inclusion happening around us at Rheem – especially when many of us worry about the impact of unkind words that we hear on the national news. These gestures from our students are small to be sure, but they provide us with a grand sense of hope for our future!

I love this school!

Ms. Frank, Principal