
THE BEACON



Principal's Letter

DECEMBER 2009

Dearest Families,

With the holidays thundering down upon us like an avalanche, I am trying desperately to maintain a balance between what I want to accomplish for our students and my own family. As the nucleus of my family has diminished and tightened with the loss of previous generations, I have become painfully aware of the importance of family and the traditions of the holidays.

This past Thanksgiving, my twenty-year old daughter, Isabel, asked me for the first time to show her how I make my pie crusts. Simple as this request may seem, it was a long-awaited moment for me. It is important to understand that my children were raised taking for granted that everyone had sushi or risotto milanese in their lunch. In my past life as they were growing up, both their father and I were chefs, and they took little interest in acquiring the acumen it takes to prepare the gourmet meals they were served on a daily basis.

Cooking has always been an art form for me, and it is also the way I relax and center myself from the stress of my work day. Obviously, I no longer cook for a living, but I do so enjoy cooking food as an expression of love for friends and family. When I make a pie, I conjure up the vision of my older sister explaining to me the importance of not overworking the dough for a tender crust and encouraging a liberal application of flour to avoid sticking, though it did little to prevent my making a mess. I remember my grandmother's perfect lemon meringue pie served faithfully every Sunday, which I began trying to replicate as a child, and still feel is one of the more complicated applications of pastry making.

This evening I prepared a holiday tradition in our family, my grandmother's "Oklahoma Ice Box Cookies." The ingredients are a closely guarded family secret known only by my two sisters and myself. I know when my children come home for the holidays, they will head straight for the cookie jar, exactly as I did in my grandmother's house as a child, in search of this most perfect melt-in-your mouth treat. They expect to find them there, and I will do my best not to disappoint.

Over the past few years, it has been a goal for me to explore traditions with my school family. It is now part of our school tradition to have an activity that older students can share with our little ones. We have sipped Mexican hot chocolate, decorated gingerbread men, made tamales, and this year are hoping to create graham cracker "gingerbread houses" as a school together. We have put up our little tree in the Multi-purpose room replete with ornaments made by our students I have saved over the years and hope to add to this year. Several of the teachers have expressed an interest in sharing some songs and skits they have worked on with their children. We are hoping to set aside parts of the days, December 17th and 18th, to celebrate traditions and make memories together. If you would like to be part of our tradition, we invite you to join us to celebrate what I feel is an integral part of the human condition: the need to belong and share common threads of joy. I will send out an automated message with times, or check with your child's teacher if you would like to participate in our activities.

If you are not able to join us, I encourage you to delve back into your "memory DNA" for those special pieces of the holidays to share with your children. No matter how simple or complex, it is our own perpetuity passing from generation to generation. Maybe this holiday, Isabel will ask me for the recipe of her great grandmother's ice box cookies, and I can breathe a sigh of relief and pass the baton.

I wish you peace and joy for the holidays, and health and prosperity for the coming year.

Paula

AUES 6th Annual Food Drive _ November 30th – December 18th

Our campus food drive is the largest donor in our community. This food drive will assist local families experiencing hardship during this winter season.

As our nations' economic crisis has impacted many families, we graciously ask to share what you can.

Donations of canned, boxed and/or packaged, non-perishable food will be collected at school and sent to the Project Santa Organization.

Each homeroom will have a donation box and in the school hallways until December 17th.

Please lend a hand to help your neighbor during this difficult time of year.

For more information, please contact Brandy Oropeza at 882-2131, extension 303



Winter Break Schedule

Friday, December 18th
12:30 EARLY DISMISSAL
See attached bus schedule.

December 21 through January 1
WINTER BREAK – No School

Monday, January 4th
First Day Back to School
HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Winter Concert

The Winter Concert is Wednesday, December 9th at the Point Arena High School. There is a spaghetti dinner that starts at 6:00pm in the PAHS Cafeteria. The cost is \$15.00 for adults and \$10.00 for kids.

The concert starts at 7:00pm in the PAHS auditorium. Come see the Intermediate Band, Advanced Band, PAHS Jazz Combo, PAHS Choir, and solo guitars and piano.



Student ID Cards On Sale Now! \$5.00

Student picture identification cards are here! Get yours now!

You may use the card for personal identification needs, which include travel, purchases and banking.

Privileges of the card include discounts to all High School and Elementary school functions.

The cost of our student picture identification cards \$5.00 each

Come to the school office and buy yours today!

Tarjetas estudiantiles con fotografía \$5.00



**¡Llegaron las tarjetas estudiantiles!
Compre la suya pronto.**

Usted puede utilizar la tarjeta para cuando se requiera una identificación: por ejemplo durante los viajes, las compras o en un banco.

Los privilegios de la tarjeta incluyen descuentos en los eventos escolares de la Escuela Secundaria y la Escuela Primaria.

El costo de estas tarjetas es de \$5.00 cada una.

¡Venga a la oficina de la escuela y compre la suya hoy mismo!

Independent Study and Winter Break

Due to the large number of student independent study requests, all signed contracts must be submitted on or before Tuesday, December 8th.

Our independent study program are for students who extend their holiday break from 5 to 20 days.

Our classroom teachers need at least a week in advance of the absence to give them time to prepare the work and the contract.

Trips out of town for 5 to 20 days without an independent study contract are unexcused.

Winter break begins on December 21st and ends January 1st. Students return to school on January 4th, 2010

**Kindergarten
Minimum Day Changes**

Attention Kindergarten Parents,
MARK YOUR CALENDAR for the following
12:30pm minimum days.
Friday, **December 18th**
Friday, **June 11, 2010**

PM kindergarten session will join the AM session from 8:25-12:30. There will be no 11:15-3:15 session for the above dates.

There will be no transportation for kindergarten for AM or PM sessions. Please speak with child's teacher or other Arena parents for carpool ideas for the above days.

ATENCIÓN PADRES DE KINDERGARTEN

MARQUEN SUS CALENDARIOS para que tengan en cuenta los siguientes días de salida temprana a las 12:30.

Viernes 18 de diciembre

Viernes 11 de junio del 2010

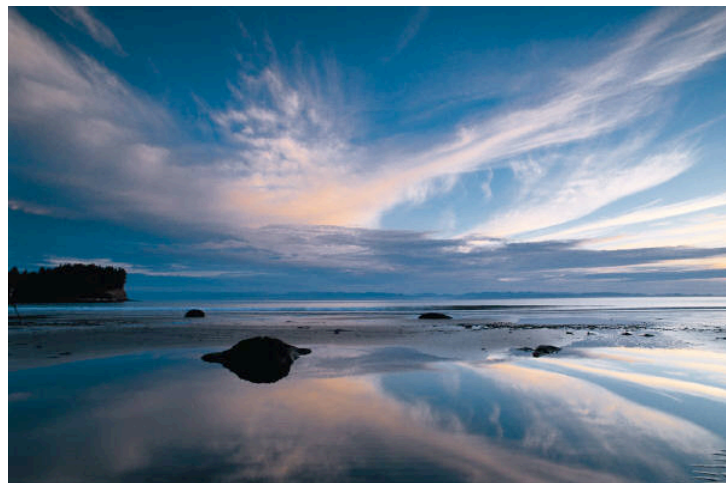
La sesión de kinder de por la tarde se reunirá con la sesión de por la mañana de 8:25 a 12:30. No habrá sesión de 11:15 a 3:15 durante estos días.

Tampoco habrá transporte para los estudiantes de kinder de por la mañana y para los estudiantes de kinder de por la tarde. Por favor hablen con el maestro/a de los niños y con otros padres para coordinar el transporte durante estos días.

Quotes of the Month

**Be faithful in small things
because it is in them
that your strength lies.**

Mother Teresa



**Happy Holidays
And
See You in the Year 2010!**

