



Sutterville Slate

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New School Year Starts Strong

Laurie Hensley, PTA President

We've embarked on another inspiring and fulfilling year of activities at Sutterville Elementary School – thanks to all of you for taking the journey. Just over 2 months into the school year, we seem to be on the right road... On the upside, our PTA Membership and Direct Donation drive kicked off the year with another increase. Last year we were up more than 33%, so this year's gains are particularly impressive. Innisbrook is still being tallied, and our cookie dough sales are now in full swing. On a less rosy note, our PTA dinners haven't met our expectations, and we'll be taking a serious look at the dinners as fund-raisers as we move forward. For detailed information about our PTA's fund-raising and spending, we encourage you to read the brochure hanging on the PTA bulletin board in the front office, or on our Sutterville website.

schools.scusd.edu/sutterville, on the PTA page – see the PDF version for full details).

On a personal note, I want to let everyone know that your PTA is truly committed to open and inclusive communication and participation in our Sutterville community. Please share your ideas and comments with me or one of your board members—in person, or by contacting us by email, phone, or through the Sutterville Families Facebook page.

Finally, a word about Fall Festival: What a wonderful, monster success! Tanni Schmidt jumped into the driver's seat and steered a wonderful committee of dedicated volunteers to create a magical fun-filled evening! Thank you to all who helped with Fall Festival, and all who came and enjoyed the event.

It is really an honor to be serving as PTA president, and I look forward to working with you all as we protect and enhance our Sutterville community.

A-maze-ing (Boo!)

Izzy Riddell

The line is a mile long for the Fall Festival's haunted maze! Everyone is ready to be scared. As they walk in, fog fills the air. The two sixth graders huddle up. "They're coming!" they whisper. "Rahh!" and "Boo!" they shout. The terrified 4th-grade girl hides behind her friend and they go to the next part of the maze. A high-schooler in a straightjacket is rocking back and forth, whispering to herself. They run past her, worried she will move. Finally, they're at the end. They pretend they weren't scared, but inside they are. But now they want to go back in!

The haunted maze was a sure success! This year, there were more sixth graders doing the scaring than high-schoolers. A Sutterville family, the Maloneys, was in charge of gathering students. Everyone got a "scare shift," where they had to embrace their inner spookiness. And they did!

Upcoming and Ongoing

Nueva Aventura de Sutterville

Inga Manticas and Shaina Zuber

Sutterville has a new Spanish Club, Nuestra Aventura Español. Taught by Señora Alicia Alvarado, the club takes place in Room 12 on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7:45 a.m. to 8:45 a.m. Señora Alicia teaches a group of students, grades one through six, how to speak conversational Spanish and about Mexican traditions. Señora Alicia has never taught Spanish at any other school, but was inspired to teach here at Sutterville because, as she says, "I wanted to create an environment where students could practice and have fun with language." Also, Señora Alicia's daughter is in a primary class here at Sutterville. The method used in Nuestra Aventura Español is conversation, the same method that Señora Alicia's grandmother used to teach her the language. Señora's Alicia's advice for anyone trying to learn a language is: "Don't be afraid to try! Read, spend every chance you get" to practice.

Another part of Spanish club is the Folklorico dance, which is lead by Rene Villarreal after school on Mondays. There are several different styles of Folklorico dance. There are indigenous dances (Danza) and dances with the influence of Spain and Germany. Señora Rene learned dance from her brothers and in a dance troupe in Mexico. She decided to start teaching dance because she loves it and because it is part of her culture. The Sutterville Folklorico dance troupe will perform in December at the winter festival. There are five girls currently in the troupe, but the troupe wants more participants! Boys are also welcome! Folklorico is a great way to learn Spanish and Mexican culture.

Suess on the Loose

Megan Maloney

My School Musical is back at Sutterville this year, this time performing the show "Suessical Jr." About 20 Sutterville kids in grades 1 through 6 are rehearsing the musical show under the direction of Liorah Singerman. The show is a mixture of Dr. Suess stories *Horton Hears a Who*, *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, *Horton Hatches the Egg*, and of course, *The Cat in the Hat*. Some of the characters in the show are Horton the elephant and the Cat in the Hat. In addition to Sutterville, other schools that will perform the musical are Didion, Caroline Wenzel, and Martin Luther King, Jr. This well-practiced show will be held at Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary school on January 29 at 7pm, 30 at 2pm and 7pm, and February 6 at 2pm and 7pm. Hope you'll come to one of the shows!

We Hath New Math

Sophie Modar and Qiera Nixon

The *Slate* recently interviewed teachers and our principal, Ms. Aoun, about the new math books the district is using this year. The main difference, according to Ms. Apperson, is that the new book heavily focuses on mathematical concepts, not just algorithms as the old books did. Ms. Aoun said that the book also stays closer to California math standards and teaches more problem-solving.

Ms. Ballante and Ms. Boettner said that their classes are doing great with the new books. They both like that the books let them change the curriculum to fit what their classes need. The *Slate* asked whether they would want to go back to the Saxon math system and they both agreed that they would not. They also added that they are glad that the students don't have to lug the book back and forth, as there is a CD the students can borrow to download all the homework.

New Faces, Old Friends



The Music Man

Lani Lo

Sutterville has a new band teacher this year. His name is Mr. Bingen, and he holds band class after school on Tuesdays and Thursdays at Sutterville. He teaches trombone, trumpet, drums, flute, and clarinet. The *Sutterville Slate* has learned even more about this talented teacher.

Slate: How long have you been teaching band?

Mr. B: I've been teaching for three years.

Slate: Why do you think learning music is important for children?

Mr. B: Taking lessons teaches students how to appreciate music. It also teaches them discipline, and how practice helps them to improve.

Slate: How does music inspire you?

Mr. B: It inspires me because there are so many different types and styles, and all are enjoyable in different ways.

Slate: What do you have in store for the band group this year?

Mr. B: We're going to learn how to play our instruments, read music, and hopefully put on a concert in December.

Slate: Where did you first learn to play music?

Mr. B: In 5th grade band group at Peter Burnett Elementary School here in Sacramento! From the beginning, I always knew music would be part of my life.

Slate: What do you like about teaching band?

Mr. B: I like seeing students learn music and have fun. I like teaching children because they have so much energy.

Slate: What advice would you give students who are just starting out playing an instrument?

Mr. B: Practice, practice, practice! It's important every day.

Gone but Not Forgotten

Lani Lo, Inga Manticas, and Izzy Riddell

Because of budget cuts and other issues, Sutterville is without some of our best-known and best-loved faces this year. Where did they end up? *Sutterville Slate* reporters recently sat down with Ms. Aoun to find out.

Mr. Rolleri was a part of the Sutterville family for five years, teaching 4th and 5th grade. This year, he is the assistant principal at Sutter Middle School. You may see him there if you go to Sutter for middle school. His duties include helping with student discipline and organizing on campus events. Mr. Rolleri was actually studying to become a vice principal, so we are happy to find out that one of our favorite teachers is now doing exactly what he wanted to do!

Albert Payton, our longtime custodian, is now working at West Campus High School. Why did he leave? Unfortunately, due to budget cuts, his hours at Sutterville had to be cut, so he decided to take the full-time job at West Campus. We hear that he really likes it there, but we miss him. Parents report that they miss Al in the crosswalk after school, too!

Ms. LeBlanc, who used to teach 4th grade at Sutterville, actually left over a year ago to be an assistant principal at Rosemont High School. Since then, she has moved to Peter Burnett Elementary School, also to be their assistant principal. Her duties are to provide student discipline, supervise students, and train teachers.

Mr. Donachy, who taught 5th grade at Sutterville last year, is now doing research for a book he's writing about education. He is also writing articles about his travels and does some substitute teaching as well. He is also enjoys cooking and fishing in his time off.



New Faces, Old Friends



Ms. Ballante: Inspiring Minds Who Want to Know!

Megan Maloney and Shaina Zuber

Sutterville's new fifth grade teacher, Ms. Ballante, took over for Mr. Roller, who had to leave last year because of the budget constraints. *Slate* recently had a chance to interview Ms. Ballante.

Slate: Where have you taught before?

Ms. Ballante: John Still Elementary, Ethel Baker, and Joseph Bonnhim. I taught second, sixth, and fourth grades.

Slate: What is your favorite subject and why?

Ms. Ballante: Science. It's very hands on and I like how it tells how the world works and makes things much clearer.

Slate: How would you sum up your teaching years?

Ms. Ballante: A learning experience. I learned something new at every school. It's still a learning experience.

Slate: How did you get started teaching?

Ms. Ballante: My mom is a teacher and I have a young brother with autism. I wanted to be part of teaching him and wanted to follow in my mom's footsteps.

Slate: Who influenced you?

Ms. Ballante: My mom and fifth grade teacher, Ms. Jenkins. My mom pushed me to go to school and showed me what a good teacher looks like. My fifth grade teacher was a great teacher.

Slate: What works and what doesn't work in the public school system today?

Ms. Ballante: No child is turned away in public school, but the class size is too big.

Slate: What extracurricular activities do you like to do with your class?

Ms. Ballante: Science jeopardy as an end of chapter; making school fun.

Slate: How would you like to be remembered at Sutterville?

Ms. Ballante: I want to be remembered as someone who worked hard to make sure everyone understood [what was taught] and had fun.

Ms. Boettner Builds Brilliance

Adan Hensley

This year, pink slips were given out to many teachers in the District. More than 100 teachers lost their jobs. But it was not all bad. When teachers at our school had to leave, and teachers from other schools had to leave, too, our school called Ms. Boettner, a teacher from Leonardo Da Vinci. She is now teaching 5th grade at Sutterville, having taken over for Mr. Donachy, and she is a *great* teacher! Ms. Boettner has been a teacher for many years. Her mother, father, and brother are all teachers, too, so it is kind of in her blood. Ms. Boettner says that one of the biggest influences in her life was her grandmother. Her grandmother would never let anything upset her, and she always wanted to know the right answer, even though she wasn't a teacher!

In addition to teaching at Leonardo Da Vinci Elementary School and now Sutterville, Ms. Boettner has also taught at Walkene Miller Elementary School. Asked what she wants students to remember about her, she said she wants them to think that she got them feeling compelled to learn and to have fun at it!



School News

Get a Clue about the Flu!

Shaina Zuber

This season, many people are worried about H1N1 (Swine Flu). In fact, it is not as pandemic as some had feared. Only 50 to 80 kids a week are absent at Sutterville, and most absences are *not* due to H1N1. To prevent H1N1, you should wash your hands, cover sneezes and coughs with your elbow, and stay home if you have a fever. The symptoms include a fever of 100 degrees or more, plus one of a cough, upset stomach, or body aches. H1N1 lasts about one week. One student who was afflicted with a confirmed case of H1N1 said “I had a fever, even though I didn’t feel sick, and I had a cough.”

The school is working hard to stop the spread of H1N1. They are making sure each class has hand sanitizer, giving time to wash hands before lunch, and cleaning desks and doorknobs more often.



Headlands: Like to Hike?

Andrew Summerell

On October 26th through 28th, Sutterville’s fifth grade visited the Marin Headlands for a three-day field trip. They survived yellow jackets, a five-mile hike, and they enjoyed some surprisingly delicious food. Every day brought a new hike. On the first day, the students hiked to Point Bonita Lighthouse. On day 2, they hiked up Hawk Hill—it seems like a mountain when you’re hiking it, but it’s not. There, the students learned about raptors and vultures and how their tails help them fly.

Every morning and afternoon, the students were given free time, and could choose between basketball, volleyball, or just wandering the beach—but if you go, leave your bathing suit at home because the water is freezing. In the evening there was night hiking or sitting beside the campfire. And at the end of the day, the students bravely survived the dorms and *tried* to sleep—it was loud!

Author Shares Tricks of Trade at Writers’ Workshop

Lani Lo and Inga Manticas

On Thursday, November 5th, the author Paul Genesse visited Sutterville to discuss his newest published work and talk about writing in general. This event was attended by Ms. Donachy’s and Ms. Apperson’s sixth-grade classes and was held in the cafeteria. Mr. Genesse told the classes that he decided to be a writer when he was four years old, and that he particularly enjoyed reading and writing fantasy stories as a kid. Mr. Genesse (who looks a bit like Stephen Colbert, in one student’s opinion) has published *The Golden Cord* and *Dragon Hunters*, both part of the Iron Dragon series. Many of Mr. Genesse’s stories are featured in anthologies such as *Furry Fantastic* and *The Dimension Next Door*. Mr. Genesse lives in Utah, but his niece Emily, who is now in 8th grade, attended Sutteville!

After the talk, Mr. Genesse led a writer’s workshop for the students. First he explained how to develop a character for a story—he said that a character shouldn’t be perfect, but shouldn’t be too grim, either. Then the students participated in creating a character and a story. The students ultimately created an imaginative story about a dead Goth witch—some students suggested that she should be able to fly, and some thought she should have telekinesis. At the end of the workshop, students were able to purchase Mr. Genesse’s novels and have them autographed.

Incontrovertible Intelligence

Check the Chess Club!

Trevor McKenzie

Sutterville has a chess club that meets on Mondays from 3:15 to 4:15 in Room 12. The *Slate* recently spoke with the chess club teacher, David Mauss. Mr. Mauss, a college student, has played chess since he was six years old. His mother originally taught him how to play. He mostly plays chess with students, friends, and other chess teachers, but likes to play with kids, too. He pretty much plays chess every day -- six days a week, at least. He doesn't play in competitions, though, because he mostly likes to teach it. He considers chess a sport, because it takes a lot of practice and dedication to be an experienced player.



Poetry Prevails

Michaela Moore

Poetry Week was held at Sutterville the first week of November. Mr. Cann, the Poet-in-Residence, taught everyone different kinds of poetry. Every year he talks about a different famous poet, and this year's was Robert Frost. After teaching everyone how to write poetry, four poets from each class were selected to read their poems at Poetry Night, which was held in the multipurpose room on November 10. The poems described students' feelings of happiness, sadness, pain and curiosity. Judging from the loud applause, the audience was very impressed!

Pub Club Brings the News You Can Use

By Gus Garvin

Publications Club is a group of students who write this very newspaper, the *Sutterville Slate*. They are fifth and sixth grade students. They work in Room 20 after school every Monday from 3:05 to 4:00 pm, and usually write from one to three stories per edition--but not all of the stories make it in. They also learn different styles of writing, including the journalistic style, editorials, reviews, and feature stories. To write their stories, the reporters have to attend school events and take notes, and interview teachers, staff members, and other students to get information about their subject.

Some members of Pub Club say that they joined because they wanted to improve their writing skills. Others admit that their parents made them join. One student said that he enjoys getting his name in the paper, among other things. The two editors, Ms. Manticas and Ms. Zuber, say they like working with the many varied and interesting personalities in Pub Club, and they really enjoy seeing the kids' writing improve and confidence grow.