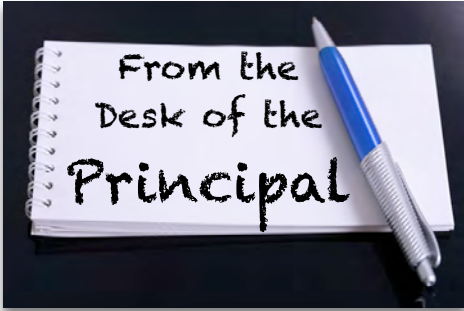




# R A M T R A C K S



## RALSTON PTA NEWSLETTER



It is hard to believe that we have nearly completed our first trimester of school. Here is an update on some of the many positive, fun and engaging activities that have been happening at Ralston.

Our energetic student government class has organized many fun Friday activities, setting the tone for a spirited campus. They have hosted a successful "Black and White Extravaganza" theme dance. Approximately 500 students participated in this wonderful evening, the most widely attended dance we have ever held at Ralston. Many thanks to all of the many brave parent volunteers who helped chaperone the dance. Our students also promoted a spectacular Red Ribbon Week, and continue to build campus spirit daily. Once again, our students recognize the need to get involved with supporting our outside community. On October 14th, the students held a Heavenly Hats parade. Students and staff paid one dollar to be allowed to wear their favorite hat to school for the day. All proceeds from the event were donated to the Heavenly Hats Foundation, to benefit medical patients around the globe who lose their hair due to disease or treatment of a disease. We are so proud to report that our school raised \$500 dollars to support this important cause.

Our staff has been busy engaging our students with exciting lessons, projects and field trips inside and outside of the classroom. On October 19th, our AVID students, under the supervision of teachers Chris Saldivar and Lauren Sanguinetti, toured the UC Berkeley campus. On October 28th, Jennifer Frey coordinated a trip to the State Capitol with all of her eighth grade Social Studies students.

We were proud to have many of our music students in Advanced chorus, Honors band and Advanced Orchestra perform once again at this year's "Save the Music" Festival.

As a reminder, our Homework Club is well underway. Every Tuesday and Thursday from 3:15-4:45 in our library, students can sign in with the supervising teachers to receive help with

homework. Two teachers are there to provide assistance for the students. Please encourage your students to participate as the Homework Club provides a great opportunity for students to receive help weekly.

Our District held a very successful and productive staff development day on October 10th. Some of the activities designed for Ralston staff included a strong focus on technology (tools and resources for the classroom). I am also happy to report that on this day, thanks to teacher Lena Mughannam, a certified CPR trainer, seventeen of our staff members were recertified in CPR. We are grateful to Steve Pomeroy, Dawn Graves, Lena Mughannam and Angela Sveda for providing special training sessions to our staff on that day.

Parent Conferences were held the last week of October. Many of our parents signed up for this wonderful opportunity to meet their child's teachers. As always, I encourage you to please connect with your child's teachers during the year if you have any concerns.

Thank you to all parents and community members for your support in making our magazine fundraiser such a big success. We would like to acknowledge Deborah Blackwell for coordinating this tremendous effort. The money raised from this fundraiser directly supports school programs and helps to purchase special school supplies and equipment.

Congratulations also to our elected parent School Site Council Members: Julia Spivak, Jeff Marshall and Khalid Sebti. At our first meeting of the year, we reviewed our school data and approved our Single Plan for Student Achievement for this school year.

I remain so grateful to all of you who continue to support our efforts at Ralston. There are so many people to thank. Please know your volunteer time, donations, energy and support make a huge difference. We could not do what we do without your partnership.

Just a reminder, Friday, November 11th is a school holiday to honor Veterans Day.

Sincerely,  
Jennifer J. Kollmann, Principal

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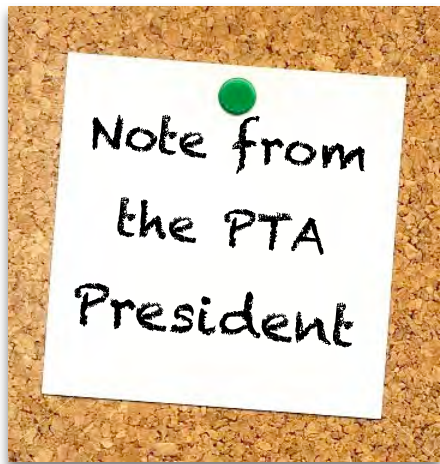
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With the arrival of autumn (can you believe how time flies?), I hope all Ralston students, teachers, staff and families are settling in to the school year and enjoying the fall sports and activities.

Serving as PTA president, I often get to witness and hear about acts of generosity and kindness

that are demonstrated by our students, teachers and staff, community members and parents. As busy parents, getting your children to all their activities (e.g., cross country meet in Half Moon Bay!) can be a challenge. Here is a story about our community from a working parent of a sixth grader who participated in Ralston Cross Country this fall:

*"... at one of the meets, I see a mom from the soccer team my daughter played on two years ago. Her daughter is also in 6th grade and doing cross country. She offers to give my daughter a ride home and to subsequent meets if she needs one. She then sends me an email suggesting that for Friday's meet, my daughter can walk with her daughter and a group of other girls to one of the girl's houses to change/have a snack/catch a ride to the meet."* How thoughtful, and excellent modeling for our kids!

PTA has received many gracious notes from teachers, staff and students for the support that PTA provides. Your generous contributions of time and funds are much appreciated, and benefit our teachers, students, programs and classrooms.

**A BIG Thank You** goes out to **Teacher/Staff Appreciation co-chairs, Lori Moon, Rosanne Faust and Nancy Doud** for the monthly treats they organize and deliver. Often I am told by the staff how much they enjoy and appreciate them. The students are delighted that **Ice Cream** is back! Thank you to **Robyn Peters** for stepping up to chair the Ice Cream Committee for both PTA and Music Booster, and offering our children healthy ice cream selections. Thank you to **Ramtracks Editors Jacqueline Kraft-Arnov and Lisa Meltzer Penn** for keeping the Ralston community well informed of school and related happenings. Thank you **After School Club** co-chairs **Fedora Chen and Lee Lin Thye** for all their preparation. Finally, thanks to **Joe and Cindy Carrasco** for putting together the Ralston Directory. With 1,000+ students and their families, and 80+ teacher and staff listings, that is a HUGE undertaking!

**Our next PTA Association Meeting will be held on Thursday, November 10th from 7-8PM in the Ralston Library.** In addition to **Principal Jennifer Kollmann's** monthly update on school activities and issues, we'll have **Officer Andre Moniot, the Belmont Police**

**Department Resource Officer** who is assigned to Ralston as a part of **Belmont Safe Schools Program**, tell us why the Belmont PD assigns their officers to our schools, and what the program is. Everyone is welcome to attend. Please join us and get to know our Ralston community and happenings!

As always, please contact me if you have any questions or suggestions.

Keiko Smith, 2011-12 Ralston PTA President  
[keikosmith@yahoo.com](mailto:keikosmith@yahoo.com)



## Call for Volunteers/Community Service

Attention 8<sup>th</sup> graders!! Volunteering is a gateway into the high school requirement of community service which can also help with any upcoming letters of recommendation. Are you looking for a volunteer opportunity?

If so, Ms. Bergin has the solution for you! If you are an 8<sup>th</sup> grader who excels academically and is looking forward to high school, this is your chance! Start building up your community service experience by signing up to be a Ralston Ram Homework Club Tutor. Please check in with the Counselor, Ms. Bergin, for details and an explanation about the new student/tutor program.

We have some volunteers already but there is plenty of room for more students to assist other Ralston 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade students. Tutoring will occur during the Homework Club hours on Tuesday and Thursday between 3:10-4:40 p.m. Bus transportation is available every afternoon at 4:45. The time commitment is just four to six hours for the remainder of the school year. As one can see, with the small number of hours required per tutor, we need numerous volunteers.

For further explanation or details about the new program please see Ms. Bergin in the Counselor's Office, Rm. # 8, near the main office.

## Student Government News

To start off the year in Student Government, we had our first dance, a Black and White Extravaganza! It was a huge success as we had 500 students attend, which made a grand total of \$2,000, all benefiting Student Government! We have also just formed into new committees and started planning for our next dance which will be on November 18<sup>th</sup>. The theme that we chose is *San Francisco*. The Service Committee just finished counting a total of 7,000 books for the Children's Book Drive, beating last year's number of 2,800 by a long shot! Competition heated up to a very close race in the end, so we had three homeroom winners, who all received breakfast parties. During the first week of October, we held our first Spirit Week. The theme was "rainbow", as we encouraged students to wear different colors every day and a minimum of three colors on Friday. Two activities also included were "treat on a string" and a "balloon popping relay."

The Recycling Committee is still working on incorporating our first phase of recycling here at Ralston. We are using our profits from the dance to purchase recycling bins for our campus. Also, on October 18<sup>th</sup> we had an informational meeting about the Every Penny Counts Drive. On Heavenly Hats day, October 14<sup>th</sup>, students had the opportunity to buy a hat pass for \$1 to wear their hat all day at school. We had a parade near the weight room, and the top three winners received iTunes gift cards. We will donate \$500 to the Heavenly Hats Organization, which raises money for people who lose their hair because of cancer. We would like to thank all who participated or donated.

Red Ribbon Week took place the last week of October! Officer Andre ran an art contest for Red Ribbon week. For results go to the Ralston website. Tuesday was "Turn your back on drugs" day, and students wore their clothes backwards! Wednesday was "Don't let drugs turn your life inside out" day, and students wore their clothes inside out. Lastly, Friday was "It's up to me to be drug free" day, and we wore red! We also had a Mummy Wrap Contest.

There will be a Staff versus 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Girls Volleyball Game at lunch in the main gym on November 10<sup>th</sup>. It should be lots of fun!

Sincerely,

Charlotte Matthews  
Secretary



## Sports Update

### M&M Sports K – 6<sup>th</sup> grade Basketball League

At Ralston Middle School  
Season: Nov. 19 – Jan. 28

One-hour games on Saturdays  
For Registration Form:  
[mmyouthsports.com](http://mmyouthsports.com)



Are you looking for a safe, fun and educational place for your child before or after school? Footsteps@RAMS is currently taking enrollments for before and after school care for the school year 2011-2012. We are located on-site at Ralston Middle School and remain open until 6:30 PM, Monday-Friday. The program includes arts and crafts, Mandarin lessons, sports, homework assistance, community service, cooking, recreational activities and more! RAMS is open for full day programming on many days when Ralston Middle School is closed. We also offer Friday night activities and field trips. Students can enroll from one to five days per week and drop-in slots are available. A limited amount of fee subsidies are available for families who need financial assistance. For more information, please go to our web site [www.footstepschildcare.org](http://www.footstepschildcare.org) or call 650-610-0813 or 650-610-0715.



Here is an update on where we are on our fundraising projects. With your support, I'm confident we can earn many thousands of dollars for Ralston.

1. Escript.com: we presently have over 550 participants. Some of them are from out of state supporting your children at Ralston. Have you thought to ask the Aunts, Uncles, Grandparents and good friends to support our school? We would like to receive 100% of their contributions but the truth is that it can be split among three non-profit organizations.
  - a. Have you added your Credit and Debit cards to your account? It's completely safe and when you are shopping around town, the school can get a small contribution from the merchants.
  - b. **Holiday Shopping:** If you are an online shopper, consider making your purchases through Escript's online mall. Just go to your Escript subscriber page and click on the online mall in the upper right. There are over 1,000 merchants that participate and you pay the same price as if you went directly to their website. The difference is that we can receive up to 16% of what you spend back from the merchant.
2. We are going to be putting together a classroom contest whereby the student who collects the most Box Tops for Education and Labels for Education (the bar code label) will win a prize from the PTA. Start collecting them now and just put them in a little baggie! (For V8 juice bottles collect the Bottle Cap.) Keep in mind that all of the Bar code labels that qualify under the Labels for Education program DO NOT have this identification; so here is the link to see all of the products in the program <http://www.labelsforeducation.com/Portals/0/assets/pdf/EnglishParticipatingProductsPage.pdf> Watch the Ralston Daily Announcements for further details as to the date of the contest.
2. Nob Hill Q-card: for those of you who shop at Nob Hill, we invite you to pick up one of the yellow cards on the left side of the office window. Like the Safeway Club card, you hand it to the Checker, who scans it, and we receive a contribution from the store.

That's about it. I'll try and keep you updated through the Ralston Daily Announcements and the Ramtracks. Do call or drop me a note if there are any comments or questions. Rich Kinsey 226-3666 [belmateo@hotmail.com](mailto:belmateo@hotmail.com). Thank you in advance for your support!



**The Scholastic Book Fair is being held in the library this week: November 1-4. There are many popular titles available for young adult readers. Please come in and have a look around. A big thank you to all our parent volunteers who help run the show. I'm sure students will enjoy these books during our upcoming holiday vacations.**

The English classes are scouting around the library in a scavenger hunt with clues from the disappearing vowels fun sheet. The scavenger hunt entices the students to search through all the sections of the library. There was some good old-fashioned competition in a few of the classes for speed and accuracy. During library orientation, we also use a reference concentration game to give students a fun way to find out about the reference books in the library. I believe having these skills (and practicing them) will be valuable to the students for the present as well as the future!

Ralston Library has **6,829 books**. Enrollment for Ralston is 1,005 students. This averages out to approximately 6.7 books per student. The California School Library Association recommends 20 books per student. To keep the collection current the CSLA suggests purchasing 2 new books per student per year. The donated checks are for purchases in the non-fiction section. I plan on directing the funds to purchase books in the natural science section. So, please keep on donating in any form (Adopt-A-Book or cash) and your student will see the direct difference in the library.

**Our two-year total for Adopt-a-Book is 234 new books and donated checks of \$160 with a total donation of cash and books of approximately \$1,092.**

Here are names of the families who have donated to the library:

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY 2011-2012

Anonymous, Shimizu, King, Anonymous, Becker-Lipton, Noleroth,  
Anonymous, Koda, Tannous

*Join Us, See Your Name Here*

Thank You for all your support,

Mrs. King



# HALLOWEEN CANDY BUY-BACK 2011!

## SPONSORED BY:

**URMI AMIN, DDS MS, Pediatric Dentist**  
**MICHAEL CHANG, DDS, Orthodontist**  
**NANCY KAHER, DDS, General Dentist**  
**SUSHIL & ANJANA KALRA, The UPS Store**

- \* Drop off your Halloween Candy at your school office
- \* When? Nov 1<sup>st</sup> – Nov 4th
- \* Drs. Amin, Chang and Kaher will donate \$2 per pound of wrapped candy to School Force\*

### Support Our Troops

All candy will be shipped to our troops overseas as part of Operation Gratitude

\* Up to \$3500



**School-Force!**

The Belmont-Redwood Shores  
Public School Foundation



Our Ralston music students are off to a great start. The kids are rehearsing daily for their upcoming Winter Concerts on December 13th and 14th. In this article, I'd like to explain a little bit about the fundraisers the Ralston Music Boosters have throughout the year to help support our program. We rely mainly on our "Direct Donation" from the parents, along with our Hot Lunch Program and Ice Cream Sales (both on Mondays), and an annual fundraiser to supply sheet music, instrument purchase and repair, lockers, uniforms, field trips, competitions, and all the other miscellaneous things needed to keep

our music program running. I'd like to thank everyone for their support with our Hot Lunch Program and Ice Cream Sales and express gratitude to our fabulous Co-chairs: Betsy Carter, Robin Branch and Robyn Peters for their dedication and hard work in making it all run smoothly.

Our 7th and 8th graders are also preparing for their bi-annual Disneyland trip in the spring. Students perform in the park and attend a workshop at a recording studio, where they learn and record sections of a film score and then view the playback of actual Disney film clips with their own ensemble playing the musical score. It's an experience they remember forever. This year our annual fundraiser was Cookie Dough sales chaired by Leslie Marks. It helped individual students who participated fund their trip, with the rest going to our Music Program.

As you can see, it takes monetary and volunteer support from the families and dedication from its two teachers, Mr. Thielen and Ms. Webster, to continue offering this program and to maintain its high quality.

Deanna Bartee

Ralston Music Boosters President



## Ralston Winter Music Concerts 7:00 pm in the Ralston Gym



Tuesday, December 13<sup>th</sup>: All 6<sup>th</sup> grade performing groups, Jazz Ensemble and Intermediate Chorus

Wednesday, December 14<sup>th</sup>: Symphonic Band,  
7<sup>th</sup> Grade Orchestra, Advanced Chorus, Advanced Orchestra and Honors Band



### Carlmont Arts Council Presents: Carlmont Arts Showcase Gala

*One night only! See all the Carlmont High School Arts programs featured in one gala event!*

Reception begins at 6 pm in the Arts Building, featuring student art on display, plus complimentary hors d'oeuvres, beverages, and desserts. At 7pm, we move to the Main Stage to enjoy an evening of Dance, Drama, Vocal and Instrumental Music performed by students.

**Saturday, November 5, 2011**  
**Performing Arts Center at Carlmont High School**  
 Tickets: \$35 Adults, \$15 Students  
 Includes pre-show reception & show

To order online:  
<https://www.ticketturtle.com/index.php?ticketing=cac>

### Carlmont Performing Arts Department Presents:

## William Shakespeare's Twelfth Night



*One of the Bard's most beloved comedies, Twelfth Night is a tale complete with twins lost at sea, mistaken identities, bewildering desires, practical jokes, and bawdy revelry.*

**November 17, 18, 19 at 7pm and  
 November 20th at 2 pm**

Tickets available at:  
<http://www.carlmontperformingarts.com>  
 \$12 for Adults, \$8 for Students & Seniors



# CARLMONT CORNER

## UPCOMING EVENTS FOR 2011-2012

We hope you had an opportunity to visit Carlmont High School during the "Parent Information Night" on October 25. This was the first in a series of events held throughout the year for 8<sup>th</sup> grade students and parents, which will also include:

- Student Shadowing Program (Preview Days and individual shadowing)
- Student/Parent Forums (January 18, 24 & February 9)
- Open House (March 29)
- Parent night hosted by the Guidance counselors regarding freshman registration (March)

In addition to these events, opportunities are available to attend sporting events and music and drama programs. Visit our website for the most up-to-date information. Our goal is to familiarize future Scots and their families with the wonderful experience Carlmont High School offers!

### SHADOWING PROGRAM:

**November 2011 – March 2012**

In an effort to meet the growing demand for shadowing at Carlmont, our Shadowing Program has been expanded to accommodate more students.

- Preview Days (November 30<sup>th</sup> & March 7<sup>th</sup>): Students who know they will be attending Carlmont are welcome to experience a day on campus, meet CHS students and teachers, visit classrooms, explore the campus, and meet our Principal, Dr. Zamora. Use this link for the Carlmont Preview Days Sign Up Form and a link to the required Preview Permission Slip: <http://tinyurl.com/CarlmontPreviewSignup>.
- Traditional Shadowing: This is a very limited program and mainly for those students who are making a decision about which high school they will attend in the Fall. Use this link for the Shadow Request Form: <http://tinyurl.com/CarlmontShadowSignup>.

### STUDENT/ PARENT FORUMS:

January 18, 24 & February 9, 2012

(Campus Tours 7:00 p.m., Forum 7:30 p.m.)

Three 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Parent/Student informational nights will be offered in January and February 2012. These evening events will be held in the Carlmont Library beginning at 7:30 p.m. and offer 8<sup>th</sup> grade students and parents an informal opportunity to learn more about the program at Carlmont and to ask questions of Carlmont Principal Dr. Raul Zamora, teachers, parents and current Carlmont students. Campus tours will be offered beginning in front of the library at 7:00 p.m.

### DEADLINE FOR INTRA-DISTRICT TRANSFER REQUEST:

**4:00 p.m., January 20, 2012**

The Sequoia Union High School District currently has an Open Enrollment policy. Each family is assigned to a high school based on their home address. Under Open Enrollment, students may apply to attend any of the 4 high schools within the district by submitting an Intra-District Transfer Request. These MUST be returned by the deadline of 4:00 p.m. on January 20, 2012. To find your "home" school and the Intra-District Transfer Request Form, visit the District Website at: [www.seq.org](http://www.seq.org) (Parents section).

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Carlmont website: [www.carlmont.seq.org](http://www.carlmont.seq.org) (Parents/Community section)

Sequoia Union High School District website: [www.seq.org](http://www.seq.org)

### MIDDLE SCHOOL LIAISONS

Central: Leslie Concilla [Lconcilla@hotmail.com](mailto:Lconcilla@hotmail.com),

Ralston: Terri Murai [ryley8@gmail.com](mailto:ryley8@gmail.com)





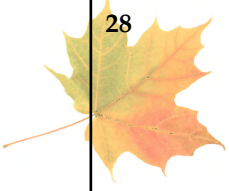

Tierra Linda, Charter, Non-Feeder: Cari McDowell  
[cari.mcdowell@sbcglobal.net](mailto:cari.mcdowell@sbcglobal.net)

Ravenswood: Carrie DuBois [cdubois@cbtnorcal.com](mailto:cdubois@cbtnorcal.com),  
Keiko Smith [keikosmith@yahoo.com](mailto:keikosmith@yahoo.com)

Please direct questions regarding the Carlmont Corner to Michele Carlsen at [michelecarlsen@aol.com](mailto:michelecarlsen@aol.com)

# NOVEMBER 2011



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2 Minimum Day	3	4 	5
<b>SCHOLASTIC BOOK FAIR IN OUR LIBRARY</b>						
6	7 	8	9 Minimum Day	10 PTA Meeting 7pm Ralston Library	11 Veteran's Day Holiday NO SCHOOL	12
13 	14	15	16 Minimum Day	17 School Site Council Meeting 3:30	18 School Dance	19 
20	21	22	23 Minimum Day	24 Thanksgiving Holiday NO SCHOOL	25 Thanksgiving Holiday NO SCHOOL	26
27	28 	29	30 Minimum Day			



**LOOKING AHEAD:**  
 December 19, 2011- January 2, 2012 - Winter Break  
 January 3, 2012 - Student's Return from Winter Break

# Ralston Ramtracks

PTA Newsletter



# RAMTRACKS



**Principal**

Jennifer Kollmann

[jkollmann@brssd.org](mailto:jkollmann@brssd.org)

**PTA President**

Keiko Smith

[keikosmith@yahoo.com](mailto:keikosmith@yahoo.com)

**Ramtracks Editors**

Lisa Meltzer Penn

[lisa@pennultimate.net](mailto:lisa@pennultimate.net)

Jacqueline Kraft

[kraftnow@airs.com](mailto:kraftnow@airs.com)

**Ramtracks Distribution**

Open

**RAMTRACKS**

**NOVEMBER 2011**

Ralston Middle School

2675 Ralston Ave.

Belmont, CA 94002

