

The K.Z.V. Times

September 2008



Dear Readers,

I am taking this opportunity to introduce the new “KZV Newsletter!”

This monthly bilingual publication will be one of the main ways in which we plan to connect to the families of the children who attend Krouzian ZekarianVasbouragan Armenian Day School and to those who take an active interest in the well being of our school, the only Armenian American educational institution of its kind currently in operation in Northern California. Guided by a representative editorial staff, the KZV Newsletter will begin by featuring notable news items on the various activities and events that normally take place in our school, as well as viewpoints and reflections on topics that members of KZV faculty and administration consider relevant and critical to improving the educational and cultural quality of our daily environment.

Initially, we plan to bring this newsletter to you in two forms, a limited edition in print, available at the KZV Office, and online, through a link to the KZV Website. For the time being the newsletter will have four sections: Administration Speaks, The Armenian Corner, News From Around the School, and Trends In Education. Each section will be led by either a KZV teacher or an administrator. Ms. Adina Haun, our second grade teacher, has graciously accepted the additional responsibility of editing the newsletter. An immediate plan is to add a fifth section, one that would accommodate reader responses to our monthly offerings.

In addition to contributing to an improved quality of communication between school and home the KZV Newsletter aims to achieve two other main objectives.

1. Enrich the intellectual atmosphere necessary for any school to become a more vital center of teaching and learning, and as a result, to help retain current faculty as well as increase future chances of attracting qualified and committed teachers to the school.
2. Expand the existing network of Armenian and non-Armenian individuals, organizations, and communities that are presently aware of KZV—its mission and activities—with the dual aim of increasing student enrollment and offering a curriculum as rich in its diversity as is the cultural and linguistic landscape characteristic of the San Francisco Bay Area.

We look forward with enthusiasm to this educational venture, as we do to your feedback on the future issues of this newsletter.

Sincerely,

Yeprem Mehranian

Principal, KZV Armenian School

Միայն Եօ՞թը...

Գռուլեան-Զաքարեան-Վասպուրական Ազգային վարժարանը
28րդ անգամ ըլլալով բացաւ իր դռները Օգոստոս 28, 2008ին:

Մարդկային եւ Հայկական իրականութեան մէջ եօթը թիւը
կախարդական հմայք ունի: Աստուած սրեղծեց եօթը օրեր, ծիածանը
ունի եօթը երանգ, Հայաստանեաց Առաքելական եկեղեցին՝ եօթը
խորհուրդ, Հայերէնի Այբուբենը ունի եօթ ձայնաւոր գիրեր, հայերը
եօթը պորտը կը փնտռեն եւ եօթը օր եօթը գիշեր խնճույք կ'ընեն:
Ամերիկայի մէջ ալ հեռաձայնի թիւերը եօթն են: Խոստովանիմ, որ
եօթը իմ ալ նախասիրած թիւս է: Սակայն, Վարժարանիս հինգերորդ
կարգի աշակերտներն ալ եօթն են այս փարի: Եօ՞թն ալ սիրելի:
Ուրեմն մենք մեզի հարց կու փանք: Միայն եօ՞թը ընփանիքներ կը
հաւաքան Հայկական դաստիարակութեան:

Ամէն փարի, նոր փարուան շէմին, ամերիկեան սովորութեան
համաձայն, մարդիկ որոշումներ կ'առնեն իրենց կեանքը բարելաւելու
համար: Դպրոցական փարեշրջանը կը սկսի Օգոստոսին եւ հայ
ծնողներ յանդուգն որոշում պէ՛տք է առնեն իրենց զաւակները
Ազգային Վարժարան առաջնորդելու: Որոշում մը, որ հոգեկան
գոհացում ալ պիտի փայ իրենց:

Մեր վարժարանին մէջ Հայ դաստիարակները ճիգ չեն խնայեր
ազգային արժէքներով թրծելու հայ մանուկն ու պատանին: Միայն
Ազգային վարժարանին մէջ հայ աշակերտը կը սրանայ հոգեմտաւոր
դաստիարակութիւն եւ պարկանելիութեան գիտակցութիւն: Նոր
սերունդներու փրկութիւնը եւ հայօրէն շարունակելու նախապայմանն
է Հայկական Վարժարանը:

Գռուլեան-Զաքարեան-Վասպուրական Ազգային վարժարանը
սիրտն է մեր գաղութին: Մեր բոլորիս պարտականութիւնն է առողջ
պահել «սիրտը», որպէսզի երկար փարիներ բաբախէ եւ իր
հայակերտումի առաքելութիւնը շարունակէ:

Տիկ. Փ.

«Օտար գաղութներու մէջ, շրջապատի այլասերող եւ
ապազգայնացնող հապար ու մէկ վրանգներուն մէջ, ինչպէ՞ս կրնայ
նոր սերունդը հայ ըլլալ եւ անկախութեան պայքար մղել:
– Երկու միջոց կայ՝ ԴՊՐՈՑ եւ ԳԻՐՔ, որո՞նք միայն կրնան փրկարար
դեր կատարել, հայ մարդու պայքարը մղել, հայ հոգիներուն մէջ
ազգային մակարդակը պատրաստել»:

Լեւոն Շանթ (1928)



NEWS AROUND THE SCHOOL

by Tutu Heinonen

What is going on in the classrooms?

Classes at KZV are in full force. Here is a little sampler of what you would find if you were to walk into a classroom.

Mrs. Huff's First Grade and 6th Grade Social Studies Classes:

Mrs. Huff's first graders have been busy learning about their five senses in both science and reading. Week of September 15 they began to study plants in science. The 6th grade social studies class is learning about location, and the concept of understanding place in the family, community, and the world. Students will be making maps of the school and of their neighborhoods. Later they will build a model city. Mrs. Huff's math class is beginning to explore subtraction. First grade's first field trip will be the traditional journey to a pumpkin patch. They are also planning trips to Pier 39 to visit the sea lions and a trip to the Aquarium by the Bay.

Mrs. Emily's Third Grade Class:

We have been studying government and, since the start of school, deciding upon rules and procedures that benefit us all and support a safe and productive classroom community. These laws can now be seen in our Classroom Constitution which we signed this week and which hangs just inside our classroom when you walk in. Today (September 17th) is Constitution Day and we will be acting in a play that simulates the actions taken over 200 years ago at the Convention. Also, tomorrow we will be holding an election for Class President for Day. Students have been working together on three campaigns and soon we will vote. We hope our classroom is a shining example of democracy at work! We welcome members of the KZV community to come and see our Constitution and to see what else we're learning in the 3rd Grade.



Mrs. Haun's Second Grade Class:

As a step toward implementing the ideas of emotional literacy (see article in the "Educational Trends and Perspectives" section) at KZV, Mrs. Haun is introducing the Wheel of Choice to her second graders. Future plans include lessons on identifying various feelings and an examination of appropriate and helpful behavior choices.

Mr. Orr's Fifth Grade Class:

October 23, Mr. Orr's 5th grade class will take a field trip to the Jelly Belly Factory in Fairfield, CA. They will tour the factory and the special Haunted Jelly Swamp.

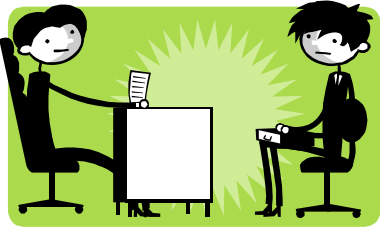
In the month of September Mr. Orr's class was busy reading and doing a novel study with the book "Dear Mr. Henshaw".

In Social Studies the students interviewed an immigrant to the U.S. and wrote a report on it, and in English the students wrote their own personal memoir about an event in their life. In science students learned about different body systems, the parts of a cell, and osmosis.

Ms. Heinonen's 6th, 7th, and 8th Grade ELA Classes

Ms. Heinonen's ELA students are reading different memoirs and are also writing their own personal memoirs following the writing process.

Keeps your eyes open for more classroom news in the next issue of the KZV Newsletter. Until then!



Interview with the new KZV teachers

conducted by the 6th grade students

There are three new teachers at KZV this year. Lala Demirdjian came to KZV through the Amity Institute, an program located in San information on Amity Demirdjian is teaching leading the after school taught in a charter coming to KZV, and is Heinonen taught ELA in New York and is now the middle school ELA teacher here at KZV.



international teaching exchange Diego, California (for more visit www.amity.org). Ms. Armenian Identity and is also in program here at KZV. Mr. Orr school in San Francisco before now teaching 5th grade. Ms. a public high school in Brooklyn,

The following interview questions were produced by KZV's 6th grade students.

Interview with Ms. Demirdjian:

1. What kind of job did you have before coming to KZV (Marsel)?

I was working with non-governmental organizations on developing projects in different schools, and concerning education in general, for the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. I spent a lot of time visiting schools, meeting with community members and teachers in the refugee camps. Previously, I was a fifth grade teacher in a private school, in Beirut, Lebanon.

2. Why did you decide to become a teacher (Nicole)?

I believe education is the core of maintaining human values, respect and tolerance towards other people, cultures and nations. Education is the strongest weapon to overcome oppression. As I was living in a post-conflict country, I was eager to be part of the change that Lebanon was going through. I thought the best way of doing so would be by using my own knowledge and skills in order to educate the new generation.

3. Where do you come from (Raffi)?

My roots come from Armenia, my childhood memories are engraved in Athens, Greece. Traces of my student life are found in Cyprus and England, but my final destination has been Lebanon, the country I was born in.

4. Do you like being a teacher (Marina)?

I find teaching very rewarding and satisfactory. The best part about it is not teaching, but the process of learning from your own students! It is amazing how students become your own teachers!

5. How did you get the job at KZV (Diana)?

I visited KZV and met with Dr. Mehranian during the last academic year. When I returned to Lebanon, I was constantly in touch with the school's administration and after a couple of phone interviews and discussions, my position was clarified and I accepted the offer.

6. How many languages do you know (Lori)?

I know four languages; Armenian, Greek, English and Arabic.

Interview with Mr. Orr:

1. Where were you born? (Lori)

I was born in Alton, IL where the famous Lincoln-Douglas debates were held and lived there until I was 16.

2. What school did you teach at before coming to KZV? (Diana)

I taught 5th grade math to 60 students at KIPP Bayview Academy in San Francisco last year. Before that, I was a manager for American Eagle and Gymboree! And even before that, I taught 3rd grade and Kindergarten in Florida!

3. Why did you want to become a teacher? (Marina) I wanted to become a "life-changer".

I wanted to affect the future generation in a positive way. In so many ways, our world can be a dark and gloomy place. Our new generations need positivism and light at the end of the tunnel!

4. If you could have one wish what would it be? (Raffi)

I would want to travel around the world without worrying about how much money it would cost and who might hate me because I am American.

5. Do you like books? (Nicole)

Yes, I like to read when I have the time. I like fantasy and fiction mostly. I like to get lost in another world sometimes!

6. Do you like your job here at KZV? (Marsel)

Yes, so far I am enjoying every minute of KZV. The students are friendly and lots of fun, even though they can be a bit chatty sometimes!

Interview with Ms. Heinonen:

1. How many years have you been a teacher (Marina)?

This is my 7th year of teaching full-time.

2. Do you speak any other languages than English (Raffi)?

Yes, I speak Finnish and Swedish. I was born in Sweden into a Finnish family.

3. Why did you decide to become a teacher (Nicole)?

Well, when I was growing up I wanted to become a teacher just like my mother, but I “grew out” of that dream later in my teenage years and early twenties. Then I stumbled upon a part-time teaching job in a night school in Sweden where I taught beginners English to adults, and I fell in love with teaching!

4. What is your culture (Marsel)?

I am half Finnish and half Russian, but because I grew up in a Finnish family I try to stay true to my Finnish heritage as much as possible.

5. Who is your role model (Lori)?

My role model is my mother. My mother has gone through so much in her life and has always, no matter what, stayed positive, strong, and spirited. I love my mother’s sense of humor and admire the way she uses it as a tool for surviving hardship and tragic events in life.

6. What do you do when you are outside of school (Diana)?

I read a lot during my spare time. I also spend time with my best friend who has just had her first baby; children put things in perspective for you and there's nothing better than a little baby to make you laugh and feel good about yourself, inside and out!



Trends in Education

by Adina Haun

Emotional Literacy

Since the publication of *Emotional Intelligence* by Daniel Goleman in 1995, there has been a movement across the academic landscape to extend an emotional literacy education curriculum to the classroom. The model for teaching the fundamentals of emotional literacy to school age children has been developed by Mark Greenberg PhD., a professor in developmental and pediatric psychology from the University of Virginia. His focus has been on helping children become aware of their feelings and those of others, and to formulate appropriate responses. The program has been designated PATHS or Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies. PATHS continues to be broadly adopted in schools across the United States and Europe. This work also correlates with the latest brain research. Since the brain is the last organ to mature anatomically—into the late twenties— the early years in a child's life provide an important window of opportunity to forge brain pathways that ensure emotional mastery.

An effective curriculum includes four guidelines or ideas to live by. First, children are introduced to the idea that emotions are important pieces of information, not to be feared but to be brought into awareness. Children need to understand that everyone experiences jealousy, happiness, sadness, joy, guilt, fear, elation, disappointment—the full range of emotions. Emotions are natural and do not in and of themselves pose a problem. Second, children learn that emotions are separate from behavior. Many children mistakenly equate their emotions with behavior. The question then arises—what kinds of behaviors are okay? These explorations within the school community allow children to shine the light of intelligence on various options that constitute helpful, kind behaviors from those that are not beneficial to themselves or others. To sum up: All feelings are okay. Behaviors can be okay or not. The third idea is that children need to cultivate calmness as a necessary condition to seeing events clearly and thereby taking positive action. The fourth idea harkens back to ancient wisdom—the Golden Rule: treat others as you wish to be treated. This guideline encourages students to broaden their perspectives to include the well being of others. These four guidelines require repeated practice with the entire school community—the teachers, the principal, and other staff who work with children. Emotional literacy tools not only guide children in their school careers, but have positive lifelong implications for adult personal and professional successes.

As a step toward implementing the ideas of emotional literacy at KZV, teachers are introducing the Wheel of Choice. This is a tool that allows children the opportunity to solve inter-personal difficulties as they arise. The wheel provides possible options that the child may choose to use (for example, saying “I’m sorry”), thereby becoming empowered to function in a self-reliant and confident manner. Adults then become supporters of their decisions. Future plans include lessons on identifying various feelings and an examination of appropriate and helpful behavior choices. These ideas truly encompass the education of the whole child.

Contributors

Dr. Yeprem Mehranian – *Administration Speaks*

Mrs. Garine Panossian – *The Armenian Corner*

Ms. Tutu Heinonen – *News From Around the School*

Mrs. Adina Haun – *Trends in Education*