



March 2006

The Acorn

Personal Development Cultural Awareness



The Valley Oaks ESLRs define the culturally aware student as a productive citizen who contributes time, energy, and talents to improve his classroom, school, community, and the world. Culturally aware students should also have a general understanding and appreciation for our diverse society, be able to demonstrate individual responsibility, personal integrity, and perseverance, as well as have an understanding of the principles required to be productive citizens in a democratic society.

Teaching good character that leads to culturally aware productive citizens is not always easy, however, numerous resources exist to assist you in your efforts. An excellent website with links to sites stressing personal responsibility, dependability, perseverance, tolerance, integrity, and in general, good character is www.palmyra.k12.wi.us/PAWS/Character20Education.htm. Using geography lessons as a cultural awareness tool is good means of expanding your child's global horizons. Research and celebrate a holiday you don't normally acknowledge: Chinese New Year, Bastille Day, Guy Fawkes Day, (a great website for finding such holidays is http://www.earthcalendar.net/_php/lookup.php?mode=country), host an international food fest, or attend a performance or festival celebrating diverse cultural communities. Some local celebrations include Cinco de Mayo, Oktoberfest, Philippine Weekend, Kwanzaa, Scottish Gathering and Games, Native American Indian Hills Pow Wow, and Greek Heritage Festival. Try a restaurant serving foreign cuisine. Bakersfield has Chinese, Mexican, Vietnamese, Italian, Japanese, Basque, French, and German to name a few! You may contact the Bakersfield City Hostess, Bakersfield Chamber of Commerce, or Bakersfield Information Center for event times and locations.

Teaching recognition of and respect for the opinions, practices or behavior of others is essential. Helping your student develop cultural awareness and value diversity will prepare him/her to be a productive citizen in any community.

Science Fair . . . A Big Success

The 2006 Valley Oaks Science Fair was held February 22nd with over forty participants and 23 judges on hand. Students representing Valley Oaks Charter School, based on their total scores, in the Kern County Regional Science Fair on March 29th at the RaboBank Convention Center are Emma Lacey, Courtney Bittle, Ricky McGill, Austin Lewis, Matthew Soderstrom, Jimmy Thomas, Luke Singleton, Ray Trott, Phillip Gillies, and Mark Duer. The following students had the highest score within their grade level:

4th Grade – Luke Singleton

5th Grade – Max Greason

6th Grade – Matthew Soderstrom

7th Grade – Meghan Komin

8th Grade – Ray Trott

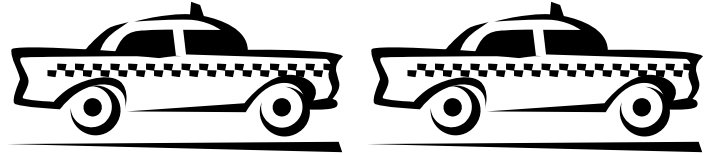
High School – Mark Duer

Congratulations go out to all those students who participated, parents who assisted, and community members who judged. The Valley Oaks Science Fair was a success due to your hard work. Thank you!



Judge Rick Hewett questions VOCS high school student, Mark Duer, on his science fair entry.

We're Off...



register for classes with CALM, by calling Debby at 872-2256 ext. 12 or Kim at 872-2256 ext. 14. Students will not be allowed to attend without registering by the Friday prior to the class they wish to take. The next CALM class is scheduled for March 14th at 1:00 p.m. at CALM.

Scheduled classes are:

| | | |
|----------|-------------|------------------|
| March 14 | Decomposers | |
| | April 4 | Rodents |
| | May 9 | Native Americans |



Brown Bagin' It



Pack your lunch and join us for a Bakersfield Symphony Brown Bag Concert. The concert will be held Friday, April 5, 2006 at the Rabobank Convention Center from 12:15 -12:45 p.m. The concert is free.

Knott's Berry Farm Gold Rush

Students grades 4-8 will learn about early California history, ride the log ride and mine ride, pan for gold, and more. The trip is scheduled for Tuesday, May 9th but you must reserve your space no later than March 24th by paying \$11.75 and signing up at the front desk. No children under 5 will be permitted. A minimum of 24 students must sign up or the trip will be cancelled.

VOCS SPOKES

The April 28th ride will meet at the Bike Path parking lot on Manor Street at 9:00 a.m.. You must provide your own bike, helmet, and water. Students must be accompanied by a parent rider. Sign up at the front desk for our next bike trek. The last ride of the year will be May 19th.



Tidbits from Taft

After four months of practicing, about 20 students in Taft displayed their talents by performing the "Sound of Music" March 3 and 4 at the First Baptist Church in Taft. Many thanks go to Tami Salazar and Vicki Wikoff, who were the parents that made it happen. They gave much of their "free time" to this project, having multiple practices a week (there were 21 scenes), teaching singing/acting, re-working scenes and scripts, choreographing movements, coordinating lighting/sound, and collecting props/costumes. The dedicated students participated in many ways--some worked with costumes, others props/backgrounds, stage managing, singing, dancing, and speaking. It was a successful learning experience for everyone involved. They were such a cute, little VonTrapp Family and they hope to perform a song or two at Extravaganza.

Students also presented their Science Fair Projects at our culminating class last month. Clarissa Wikoff, Christine Wikoff, and Ashlee Wickliffe captured the top prizes and received Cold Stone gift certificates. Younger students enjoyed such activities as building ice castles in the "Winter Wonderland" class. The next enrichment period will begin Thursday, March 9th at 9:00am and will continue for another 3 weeks. We will have a class called "Careers" where we will bring in different speakers to share about their occupations. Also, we will have a drawing class for older students and younger students will continue to learn about having positive character traits while reading about different animals in nature in the Character First class. We will then participate in History Camp beginning April 3rd. As always, we are having fun on the West side!

Tehachapi Talk

Swinging hammers, picking up shingles, 'mudding' drywall, and painting, were new skills acquired by four Valley Oaks students at the end of January. Emma Knowlton (2nd grade), Cole Murcavitch (9th grade), and Kirsten and Caleb Hayes (11th and 12th grades), along with their families, flew to Mississippi for the week of January 21st - 28th, to help repair damages from Hurricane Katrina.

Teaming up with four other church groups from different parts of the U.S., our Tehachapi group (from Country Oaks Baptist) worked on several different homes in the D'Iberville - Biloxi area of the Gulf Coast. The devastation left by Hurricane Katrina in this area was overwhelming - many homes were completely demolished, others were still standing, but had water damage up to 6 feet in their homes, and nearly all had heavy roof damage from the winds.

With a day on each end of the week for travel, we spent Sunday in church, and then toured the D'Iberville - Biloxi area to see what we were going to be working on. There was silence in the van as we drove through much of the town - television coverage had not prepared us for the reality of the damage that we saw. It was a sobering drive - both for children and adults.

Monday set the pace for the rest of the week - a loud bell awoke us at 6:00 a.m. for breakfast at 7:00 a.m. - then we were divided into teams and given our assignments. Some were roofing houses, others dry walling and painting, still others picking up shingles. We worked hard, and returned to our church headquarters by noon for some real "Southern cooking", compliments of two lovely ladies from the Georgia team. Then it was back to the job sites, until dark, when we returned tired and hungry for another great meal! Needless to say, in spite of long days and hard work, no one lost any weight on this trip!

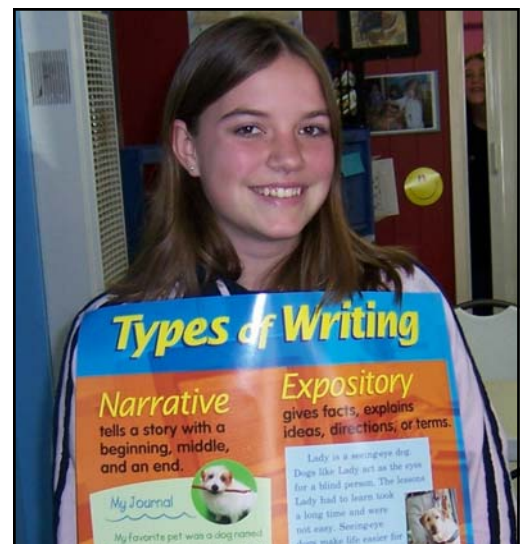
Evenings were pure fun as we spent time together with the members of the other church teams playing ping-pong, visiting over dessert, and sharing stories of our day. We even had personal mail-bags (which we had decorated our first evening there), in which we could leave "warm-fuzzies" complimenting some one on their hard work, or "cool-pricklys", the 'not-so-nice' messages for shirkers! However, you had to sign your name to those, so they were handed out sparingly!

By the end of the trip, we had made life-long friends with the other team members and had developed a real appreciation for the Mississippi people we met who had lost so much, yet were so grateful for the help we gave. A week given to serving others, was one of the best "vacations" we have ever taken!

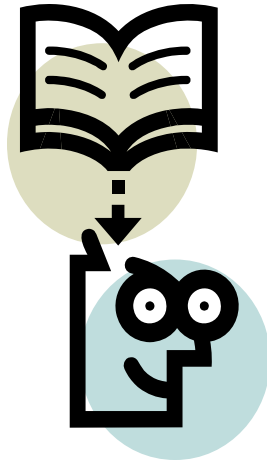
FRAZIER PARK



Mrs. Perone teaches the students how to write penguin poetry using alliteration and helps them make penguins to complete the project.



Sydney Swope illustrates writing types at a recent Frazier Park enrichment class.



Young Authors' Fair

Saturday, May 13, 2006 - 8:30 AM to 12:30 PM
Standard Middle School Gym - 1200 North Chester

There are two ways for your budding author or illustrator to take part in the Young Authors' Fair: 1) Submit a book your child has written or illustrated this year. Drop it off at VOCS by May 11th. 2) Take your child to the FREE fair for the opportunity to view books written by other Kern County school students and hear published authors and illustrators share their personal and professional expertise.

Authors and illustrators attending this year's fair are Lisza Bechtold * Tim Egan * Robert San Souci * Sharon Sharth * Brenda Woods * Martin Burton * Alexis O'Neill * MaryAnn Fraser * Jane Tenorio-Coscarelli * Joe Cepeda * Wendelin Van Draanen All book submissions must be turned in to Valley Oaks no later than THURSDAY, MAY 11th! Each book needs to include the **Author's Name, Grade, Resource Teacher, and School**. Books will be returned to VOCS on Monday, May 15th for you to pick up or will be placed in the Extravaganza display in the warehouse. For more information, contact Juli Bishop at 835-8411

Now is the time to prepare your submission for the Valley Oaks Yearbook, *Oak Leaves*. If you would like to have your family page included in the 2005-2006 school yearbook, you must have your page submitted **no later than Friday, April 14, 2006**, to the front desk or to Mrs. Roberts.

1. All pages must be submitted on **white** 8 1/2" x 11" paper.
2. Photos may be color or black and white but must be originals (not photo copied).
3. Family name must appear on page. Also please include the names and grades of your Valley Oaks students.
4. Only one page, one side per family is allowed.
5. While photos and designs may bleed out to all edges, it is a good idea to remember that your page could be bound from either the left or the right side of the page. Accordingly, be sure to leave at least a one inch margin for important wording or pictures on either side.
6. All originals will be returned to owners if properly identified.
7. The 2003-2004 yearbook is available for your perusal or as an idea source and is located in the Parent Place.
8. You may include photos, art work, poetry, short descriptions, titles, picture captions, etc., however, all submissions must be yearbook appropriate and are subject to administrative approval.

History Camp is Coming

The second history camp of the year will be held from April 3rd thru April 6th. Students who did not participate in the fall camp session have first priority. Sign ups begin Monday, The \$20.00 cash non-refundable fee is due at the time of sign up. Your fee will cover three days of activities and take home projects as well as

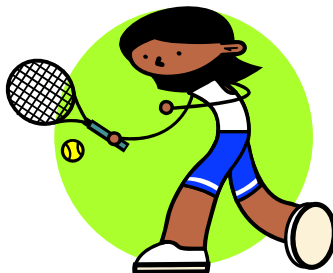
lunch on Thursday.

There are a limited number of spaces available so do not wait, sign up early.



Tennis Anyone?

On Friday, March 17th, teacher Bev Wetterholm will hold a Spring Tennis Clinic. It will be held at Jastro Park Tennis Courts from 1:00-2:00 p.m. This is open to students from grades 3-8 and is for beginner level. She will give drills targeted at beginning tennis skills, such as the forehand stroke. Please sign up at the front desk with your phone number by March 16th to participate. Be sure to let us know if you will need a racquet. For more information contact Mrs. Wetterholm.



BOXTOPS



Boxtop News: We have a Winner!

The winning student in the 2005-2006 Boxtops Contest is 8th grader Monique Moreno. Her contribution of 735 boxtops also made her resource teacher, Michelle Duncan, the winning resource teacher. Honorable Mention goes to resource teacher Chris Dragomanovich, whose students brought in over 500 boxtops. Thanks to all of you, our school mailed in 5,270 boxtops and bonuses worth \$527.00 for our school. Keep clipping those boxtops and get a head start on saving . . . Another contest will be announced in the fall.

VOPAC



The Valley Oaks Charter School proudly presents their Spring Scholastic Book Fair, beginning on March 6th and running through March 10, 2006. The book fair will be held at Valley Oaks Charter School, 3501 Chester Avenue, from 8:30am until 3:00 pm each day.

The Scholastic Book fair will provide our home-school families with an excellent selection of both hard bound and paperback books for all levels of reading, from pre-readers to high school level. Fiction, non-fiction, parent/teacher resources and fun activities will be for sale at the great prices we can only get from Scholastic.

The VOCS book fair will also feature exciting activities for the students. On Wednesday, March 8th at 9 am our "Pre-School Reading Hour" will be open for all preschool aged children. We will read stories featured in our book fair and serve cookies and juice! On Thursday at 12 noon, we will have our "Reading Feast" giving our students grades 3-6th the opportunity to preview our books and feast on pizza! Special contests for a free book will be held during this "Reading Feast" hour.

For more information concerning the Valley Oaks Charter School Spring Scholastic Book Fair, please contact Valley Oaks Charter School at 633-5288 or the

book fair Coordinator, Erin Rogers at 393-4556. You may also check out the Scholastic web site at www.scholastic.com

Extravaganza volunteers are needed!

VOPAC will once again sponsor the annual Valley Oaks Extravaganza scheduled for May 18th. Your help is needed for a variety of jobs: set up, clean up, booth building, decorating, and booth manning. If you are willing to give us a hand, please contact a member of the VOPAC board or resource teacher, Lorrie Roberts.

VOPAC meetings are held at 1:00 p.m. at the Chester Avenue site. All are welcome to attend. Please mark your calendars for the following upcoming meetings:

March 15, 2006

April 5, 2006

April 26, 2006



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