

From our principal: Prepare students for future with “habits of mind”

Dear Parents and Friends of Rolling Hills,

On February 16, Dr. Donald Phillips, the Poway Unified School District superintendent, visited Rolling Hills to share a presentation on College Readiness. He discussed the importance of helping our students prepare for the future beyond their K-12 education by developing “Habits of Mind,” which include:

- Problem solving
- Critical thinking
- Inquisitive nature
- Willingness to accept critical feedback
- Openness to failure and learning from experience
- Ability and desire to cope with frustrating and ambiguous tasks
- Discern relative importance and credibility of various sources of information
- Draw inferences and reach conclusions
- Use technology as a tool to assist learning

At Rolling Hills, the staff creates opportunities for our children to practice developing habits of mind for learning through a variety of curriculum materials and instructional strategies. A major school-wide focus for all students this year is teaching and guiding the process of individual learning goal setting. Teachers and students meet to look at daily work samples and assessments for learning to establish the specific skills the child needs to focus on in order to improve academic achievement.

In addition, our students are learning to self-assess their work to discern where improvements or corrections need to be made before the teacher assesses the written product. These processes encourage our students to develop and enhance problem solving and critical thinking skills. Students are learning to look at their work and ask:

- Is this quality work?
- Is this my personal best?
- How can I improve my work?
- Does this help to meet my learning goal?

Parents, you have an amazing opportunity to support the process of building positive habits of mind by encouraging your child to talk and think about what he/she is reading and learning in school and in the community. The classroom, soccer field, dance class, and sleepover at a friend’s house are typical examples of learning environments that our children encounter. Each presents a true opportunity for growth in developing habits of mind, while communication with your child about daily experiences is the key to opening the door to future success.

If you would like to view Dr. Phillips’ power point presentation on College Readiness, you may access it on the Rolling Hills website, <http://powayusd.sdcoe.k12.ca.us/pusdrhes/>.

Warm regards — Kathleen Marshack

Neither rain nor snow nor ...

“Neither tears nor grumpiness nor empty bellies nor gloom of naptime stays these mail carriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds.”

The Rolling Hills preschool class, under the direction of their teacher (and postmistress) Valarie Proudfoot, set up the preschool express mail delivery service from February 7-14. Students, parents and staff members were able to use the service to send mail — and Valentine’s Day missives, presumably — around the school.

The preschoolers picked up mail each day from several drop boxes around the campus and took it back to the post office they set up in their classroom. They graphed each mail they picked up each day, sorted it and made daily deliveries to the classrooms.

The kids learned about how much work it takes to run a post office, a lesson that will be reinforced when they visit the community post office this month. Students got experience writing letters and preparing them to be mailed. Parents were able to send their children mail at school. Thank you, Rolling Hills preschoolers!

PTA needs volunteers for 2006-07 Board

Rolling Hills PTA is looking for trailblazers to join our Board in the 2006-07 school year. The Board establishes policies and recommends how the PTA will raise funds, spend them and use its resources to improve our school.

Our Nomination Committee — Karen Arvin (kisharvin@san.rr.com), Karen Keefer (Karenkeefer@hotmail.com) and Kim Stadler (stadlerfamily@earthlink.net) — needs volunteers for 10 elected officer positions: president; treasurer; secretary; vice-presidents of programs, membership, ways & means, community programs; financial secretary; auditor and historian. We also need volunteers for president-appointed positions.

The Committee will assemble a slate of candidates for the officer positions, which will be chosen by a vote of dues-paying PTA members at the April 27 Association meeting. Contact one of the Nomination Committee members to join the slate!

Thanks to talented Talent Show crew!

The PTA and our community thank Barbara Hamilton, our Talent Show chairperson, and her fellow volunteers who enabled the school's rising stars to shine last month. Our volunteers: Kathy Marchbanks, Karen Arvin, Monica Sturhann, Elaine Wilson, Nancy Seffron, Beverly Ronnigen, Karen Waltz, Paula McGuire and A-Quan DeShano.

We also thank the Holman family, for the use of their karaoke machine; Spencer Hamilton, for the use of his mom, and Katie Hsu, Cherokee McFadyen, and Natalie Peters for their announcing skills. (And we apologize in advance to anyone we left off this list.

Needed: Book Fair chair

The PTA plans to hold another book fair during the week of April 3-7, **but it will not take place unless we find a coordinator for the event!** Book fairs are very popular because they offer students, parents and teachers an opportunity to buy good, inexpensive books from Scholastic. Make the spring book fair happen! Please contact PTA President Mark Stadler at rhptaprez@earthlink.net or 672-1481.

The PTA continues to seek writers for *Puma Tracks*. There are plenty of interesting people, programs and projects at our campus that would make great subjects for articles. Please contact Mark if you can help.

"New" custodians on duty

You may have noticed that Rolling Hills has two new custodians who aren't really new. Louie Ruiz, who previously was the school's night custodian, has been named lead custodian, replacing Mayo Manganaan, who retired in December. Hired to replace Louie as the night custodian was Chris Sinclair, who also is a familiar face to many because he helped out last year when Mayo had an extended absence and has been the substitute night custodian since Louie moved to the day shift.

Stay tuned to *Puma Tracks* for more information about our "new" custodians.

Fourth-grade writing tests March 7

Parents: Fourth grade STAR writing tests will be held on Tuesday, March 7. Please make sure that your fourth-graders are at school on that day, well-rested, well-fed and ready to go. Thanks!

Enroll for preschool in Mar.

Enroll your child for the 2006-07 Rolling Hills preschool in March. Our preschool is open to children who will be 3 or 4 when they begin attending it. The program is open Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m.-6 p.m.; instruction runs from 8:30-11:30 a.m.

Parents with returning students may register them on March 7 from 5-7 p.m. New students may sign up on March 14, also from 5-7 p.m. Registration will take place in Room 1. Parents can pick up registration packets in the school office. Fill out the forms in the packet and bring them to registration along with your child's birth certificate, immunization records and a \$50 registration fee made payable to PUSD. The program cost is \$645 per month.

Parents also may call 672-3400, extension 3101, to hear an informative message about the preschool. Parents who would like to see the classroom need to call our preschool teacher, Valarie Proudfoot, to schedule a time.

Students also may enroll for the summer session, which begins June 26 and follows the ESS schedule.

Give your opinion to PTA!

The PTA is distributing a brief survey in the information packet that goes home with students this week. Please give us your opinion of three actions that the PTA is considering for the next school year: raising annual membership dues from \$8 to \$10/person; establishing a Puma Fund for an annual tax-deductible donation of \$50; and transforming *Puma Tracks* into an electronic newsletter. We also need opinions on programs and some involvement information..

Please fill out the survey and return it to the school by March 17. Tell us what you think, *and we will listen!*

Order yearbooks now!

PTA Yearbook Chairpersons Karen Keefer and Julia Eaton and their classroom helpers are putting together the book of the year — the 2005-06 Rolling Hills Yearbook. They will take orders for the yearbook in March ... **and only in March.** The only way to get copies of the yearbook is to purchase them in advance, for \$17 apiece.

The PTA will not print additional copies and will not accept additional orders past the March 31 deadline.

Avoid disappointment in June by keeping an eye out for the yearbook order sheet going home in the students' information packets on every Friday in March. It contains all the information needed to order one or more yearbooks, which will be distributed by classroom at the end of the school year.

Poetry, fantasy and an enchanted world

Have you been to the opera lately? Your children have!

Thanks to your membership in the Rolling Hills PTA, six young professional singers with the San Diego Opera brought their exciting production of *The Sleeping Beauty* to the entire Rolling Hills student body. The staging of the familiar fairy tale featured a piano accompanist, beautiful costumes and artistic sets.

Music teacher Mrs. Quackenbush has also been covering operatic themes in her recent lessons on Mozart and *The Magic Flute*. Bravissimo! And thank you for supporting the PTA!

PUMA TRACKS

"Total school communication"

Rolling Hills Elementary School

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Rolling Hills Elementary School PTA

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Affiliated with Palomar Council, 9th District, CCPTS,
California PTA, National PTA