

WAGNER RANCH UPDATE

Wagner Ranch is very proud of our two Employees of the Year! Out of a very strong staff, Jean Thuesen has been selected as our Classified Employee of the Year. Jean's exceptional work ethic, dedication to our school, and ability to support teachers and students is second to none. Jean's contributions are so exemplary that she was selected as the Orinda School District employee of the year and will move on to the County level.

In February students used Fliprgrid to share their pets with the rest of the school. Some pets were live, some were beloved stuffies, and some were fantasy pets such as penguins and tigers. It is fair to say that these pets - real and otherwise - were invaluable company throughout the hours spent at home during the pandemic!

March's spirit day was Creation Day on which the students shared creations they had made at home. Entries included, rockets, cardboard box robots, Lego creations, clay roses, baked goods, and many other wildly creative ideas!

In addition to a number of grade specific lessons and activities for Black History Month, we had an evening showing of A Kid's Play About Racism. This powerful play delves into some of the manifestations of racism and the impact it can have on a person. After the play, the Director, Khalia Davis, led us in a conversation about the play and the topic of racism. She did an exceptional job of making the concepts in the play accessible to our kids, sharing information about behind the scenes making of the play, and creating a sense of community with a group she didn't know at all. She was also a lot of fun! Thanks to our Community Coalition for facilitating this event!

After a long, involved process with a great deal of input from many stakeholders, we have finalized a design for our upper grade playground and signed a contract for purchase and installation. One important factor was to create a playground that would be accessible to kids of all physical abilities. We are using Parent Club funds that, over the past few years, have been specifically allocated for this purpose. Although a long shot, we are hoping that students will be making use of it this year! This year or next, it will be fun and exciting and will support the physiological needs of our upper grade students.

In March we welcomed in our new student council. These fourth and fifth grade students, under the very able leadership of Mrs. Manese and Ms. Campbell, do a great deal to build school spirit and to create meaningful activities for our students. Their work includes creating our monthly Flag Salutes, arranging spirit days, and leading charity drives. I appreciate the active role these youngsters are taking in their school community and hope that it leads to a lifetime of engagement and leadership.

In February our wonderful Parents' Club showed their love and appreciation in ways big and small. Highlights included: school wide decorations, kind hand written notes, students dressing

in their teacher's favorite color, delicious grab and go breakfasts, a delectable Thai lunch, a coffee cart, Flipgrid tributes, beautiful succulents, and a thoughtful gift bag. In this year, more than any other, the support and acknowledgement of our parent community is critical to sustain and propel us.