



Fall Dragon Pageant Will Take Place on October 5



Ms. Lois' Class 3 last year brought back the dragon during February's festive Chinese New Year's Celebration.

Too Much or Too Little? Finding a Balance

A review of the festivals, events and fund raising activities that comprise the cultural life of the Live Oak school community is about to get under way. For more information see page 5.

From time immemorial, the image of a dragon has portrayed powerful forces in nature and the human being – creative forces needing to be harnessed and directed; destructive forces needing to be subdued and vanquished. After the Autumn Equinox, outer darkness and cold will grow stronger than the light and warmth of the sun. Fear and foreboding can torment us. Celebrations of a hero and heroine who overcome a fearsome dragon, and bring it into service, is an imaginative call for inner light, warmth and courage to come forth and master the dragon forces, leading us creatively into a New Year, born from the darkness. In this spirit, Live Oak invites you to a contemporary celebration of the classic, Medieval English play, **Sir George & the Dragon**, featuring performances by all classes. It will begin at 11:15 AM on Thursday, October 5, 2006, and will be followed by a Fantastic Farmers' Market.



Waldorf
inspired
public school



Cultivating
character
through a
renaissance
education



Where
science
is artful
and
art is
scientific

It's Time to Get Physical!

by Will Stapp, Executive Director

Just like a person, a school is a complex, living being that needs tending and nourishment at the emotional, intellectual, spiritual and physical levels if it is to actualize its fullest capacity. It's easy to get caught up in the excitement of the "heart" and "head" aspects of the school, and the "hands" can often be taken for granted. That is a costly mistake, for we live in a physical world and it is the physical that creates the space for other, more glamorous aspects of being to flourish. As I look over our campus, it is clearly time to rally around the physical aspect of the school. Here are two efforts getting underway to do just that.

The first is the establishment of a **Greenscape Committee**. Its mission is to take our exterior areas, both plantings and hardscape, to the next level of beauty and utility, a level that fortifies and serves many of the artistic, language arts, and natural science objectives of our Waldorf curriculum, while cultivating a coherent sense of planetary place in the children. (OK, so there is a little heart and head hiding in here.) Can you see the crop of broomcorn that the children

turn into brooms for sweeping the decks? Imagine an indigenous dye plant in the flowerbeds blended with local rocks and other mordants to create 24 different colors in handwork and chemistry lessons? How about a beehive-shaped oven made of local adobe that the children use to bake bread (or pizza!) for Farmers' Market? These are just a few of the ideas. It's a compelling picture, yes?

The second effort is the expansion of the **Site Committee's** mandate to include more facilities repair and revitalization, especially in the area of special projects and skilled labor. While many schools would have a full-time janitor doing many of the handyman tasks, and would contract for special projects, Live Oak does not currently have that option. Yet, there are light bulbs to change, sheds to build, drains to unplug, furniture to move, walls to build, rooms to paint, blackboards to install...the list goes on. We are lucky to have lots of skilled people who contribute in these areas, but it is time to get more organized and regular about how it occurs.

Both these committees need managers and worker bees. If you can lend a hand, please contact me at director@liveoakcharter.org and I do mean a hand, both of them!



Introducing Your Parent Representative to the Board of Directors:

Alydda Mangelsdorf

Those of you here last May will remember that the first school board election of Live Oak's history was held to identify the Parent Representative to the Board of Directors for 2006/07.

In past years, only one candidate at a time ever voiced an interest in the job and thus an election was never necessary. But, with two campuses and a growing community of families, it is likely that more and more people will step forward for this interesting and challenging work, as time goes on. The election was lively and fun and something I hope we engage in many more times in the future.

My name is Alydda Mangelsdorf and I am serving as this year's Parent Representative to the Board. One of the things I would like to accomplish this year is to fold more of the issues and perspectives of the larger parent body into the decision-making process of the Board of Directors. In my vision, the parent body would be thoroughly informed and educated on the issues confronting the school. It would know when and where to go to offer insights, ask questions, and engage in discussion. And, the forums created to inspire lively exchanges would spontaneously feed the ideas and information generated into the decision-making process.

To start on this path, I am currently brainstorming a series of agenda items to suggest to the Chairperson of the Board of Directors for inclusion on this year's agendas. If there are topics you believe the Board should consider this year, please contact me at alydda@mindspring.com or (707) 766-9626. I would also appreciate feed back on the idea of establishing a monthly parent discussion group. In fact, any ideas or feedback you would like to share, please feel free to contact me!

I look forward to this year's work and hope to see many more faces and hear many more voices at future Board meetings.

From the Board of Directors

by Jodi Boyle

We have officially launched the sixth year at Live Oak Charter School. The opening of another school year invites us to recognize how much we've grown from that 40-student school of six years ago. At the end of this year we will graduate our first class of eighth-grade students. These are the intrepid students and families who have shouldered the weight of opening many new doors for the school as we have worked our way up the grades. Their graduation this spring will be a time of celebration and an important milestone for the school.

As always, there is much growth ahead. At six years old we are still in our formative years, doing the big work of growing a body. Over the next two years, as we complete our first seven-year cycle, our community will engage with the task of setting in place the structures needed to take us into the next phase of our organizational life. This promises be an incredibly exciting time for Live Oak.

Working for the school at the board level are some very fine people. At our meeting in August we agreed on offices and committee assignments for board members (with an intended follow-up discussion after we welcome new members again in October).

JODI IS THE CHAIR OF THE LIVE OAK BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jodi Boyle: Board Chair, Governance Committee Chair

Peter Dunlap: Board Vice Chair, Nominating Committee Chair

Taylor Greenleaf: Board Treasurer, Finance Committee Chair

Chuck Wade: Board Secretary, Ad Hoc Development Committee member

Alydda Mangelsdorf: Board Parent Representative, Governance Committee member

At our next meeting on September 21, we will recognize the long-standing service of Ken Gallegos as he steps down from the board. Ken served for over four years, contributing invaluable legal and administrative expertise to the school. We will also hear from the candidates who are standing for the seats vacated by Ken and Elizabeth (both the second year of a two-year term).

Also under consideration by the board at the upcoming meeting will be a development proposal brought forward by the Ad Hoc Development Committee (including areas of new growth and further definition of the relationship between Friends of Live Oak and Live Oak Charter School), a proposed fund raising policy from Friends of Live Oak, and a part-time classified (non-teacher) employee health benefit policy.

Come join us and share your point of view on Thursday, September 21 at 6:30 PM in the Multipurpose room on the Upper Campus.

School Emergency Supplies Updated

To ensure that all our children are safe at school, the Live Oak Administration has begun to focus on better emergency management.

Last year, as a first step, the Class Coordinators worked with parents to create an emergency packet for every student on campus. These packets included food rations, emergency information, reassuring notes and photographs from home.

In addition, the school supplied water and emergency blankets for all students. Though we hope children will never have to stay on site

overnight in the event of an emergency, we want the children to be more comfortable if such a need occurs.

This year, we are updating our supplies. New families have been contacted by their Class Coordinators and next Wednesday, the Class Coordinators will meet to assemble new emergency supplies for each class. Be prepared to see storage sheds for these supplies on campus soon!

The Faculty and the Administration will move forward this year in planning and implementing further emergency preparedness. For further information, contact Marguerite Braun.

OUR MISSION

To raise funds for
and to promote
Live Oak Charter School

Friends of Live Oak Charter School is a separate non-profit organization whose sole mission is "To raise funds for and to promote Live Oak Charter School."

Openings on Friends Board of Directors

We currently have openings on our Board for new members. We are a multi-talented group and welcome inquiries from anyone who would like to work on fund raising and school development, either as a Board member or a committee member. We are also seeking someone with some accounting and/or bookkeeping experience.

We invite interested community members to attend our meeting on Tuesday, September 19 at 7:00 PM in the Upper Campus Multipurpose Room. If you would like to discuss possible board or committee membership in advance of the meeting, please feel free to call any board member.

Ed Hogan, Chair — 765-0743
Sabrina Kahn — 664-1531
Christine Kurtz — 769-7960
Theresa Mahoney — 769-1436
John Aliotti — 585-8655
Hilary Kinney — 415-897-5115

Friends of Live Oak Charter School

Friends Raised \$120,000 for the School Last Year

by Sabrina Kahn

Last year, Friends of Live Oak raised about \$120,000, and this year we have the formidable goal of \$160,000, to directly help fund the educational program of the school. We raise this money through a variety of programs and events, the most significant of which is the Family Pledge Program.

Here's some information on other programs we have lined up for this year. We're always open to ideas, so please feel free to chime in if you know of a great way to raise money!

AUCTION

Summer is over and the Friends gang can hardly believe we're looking at the fall calendar again and having conversations about getting started on the auction! The auction is truly a wonderful event for Live Oak. It's a magnificent party that brings our adult community together for a fun-filled evening of music, great food, laughter and a chance to enjoy each other while helping the school. Last year's auction raised \$40,000 for the school – an amazing feat for a small school. Don't miss this incredible evening!

In order for us to pull off this event successfully, we need a large team of people to plan and execute the evening. We have a strong group coming forward from last year but we need some new energy and ideas. You don't have to be a "fund raiser" unless you want to be. We do need people to solicit donations, but we also need people to plan the "party" part of the evening. We need themes, food, decorations, invitations, etc. We're planning a brainstorming evening on Tuesday, October 3 at the Upper Campus at 7:00 PM. Please join us!

SABRINA IS THE BOARD TREASURER OF FRIENDS OF LIVE OAK

ESCRIP

Another "no-brainer!" Just register your credit card with ESCRIP and a percentage of your purchases at certain retail outlets is donated directly to the school. If you charge your gas and groceries and shop in Petaluma, we can benefit from that! Contact Carolyn Lacerra at 769-8680 for more information. It's really easy.

HOLIDAY CARDS

You'll be hearing about this wonderful project soon. Each child creates a watercolor painting, which is copied onto cards in beautifully packaged sets, which are available for you to purchase for holiday gifts. You can buy sets of your own child's artwork, or mixed class sets or mixed all-school sets. They are beautiful and really help with the holiday gift dilemmas we all face!

SKATE NIGHT

This is the children's opportunity to participate in school fund raising. All they have to do is show up at Cal Skate in Rohnert Park and we get money! It's a great arrangement and the kids love it. Parents and friends can skate too, just say you're with Live Oak when you pay your entrance fee. If 50 people show up, we get paid! This year's first Skate Night is 5:30 PM on Friday, September 29.

RECYCLE AND DONATE

An easy way to help make money for the school is to donate your used ink jet cartridges, cell phones and lap tops. There is a receptacle in the School Office (Upper Campus) and the Development Office (Lower Campus) to drop them in. Also, if you can collect them at your place of work and bring them in, it'll add up much more quickly.

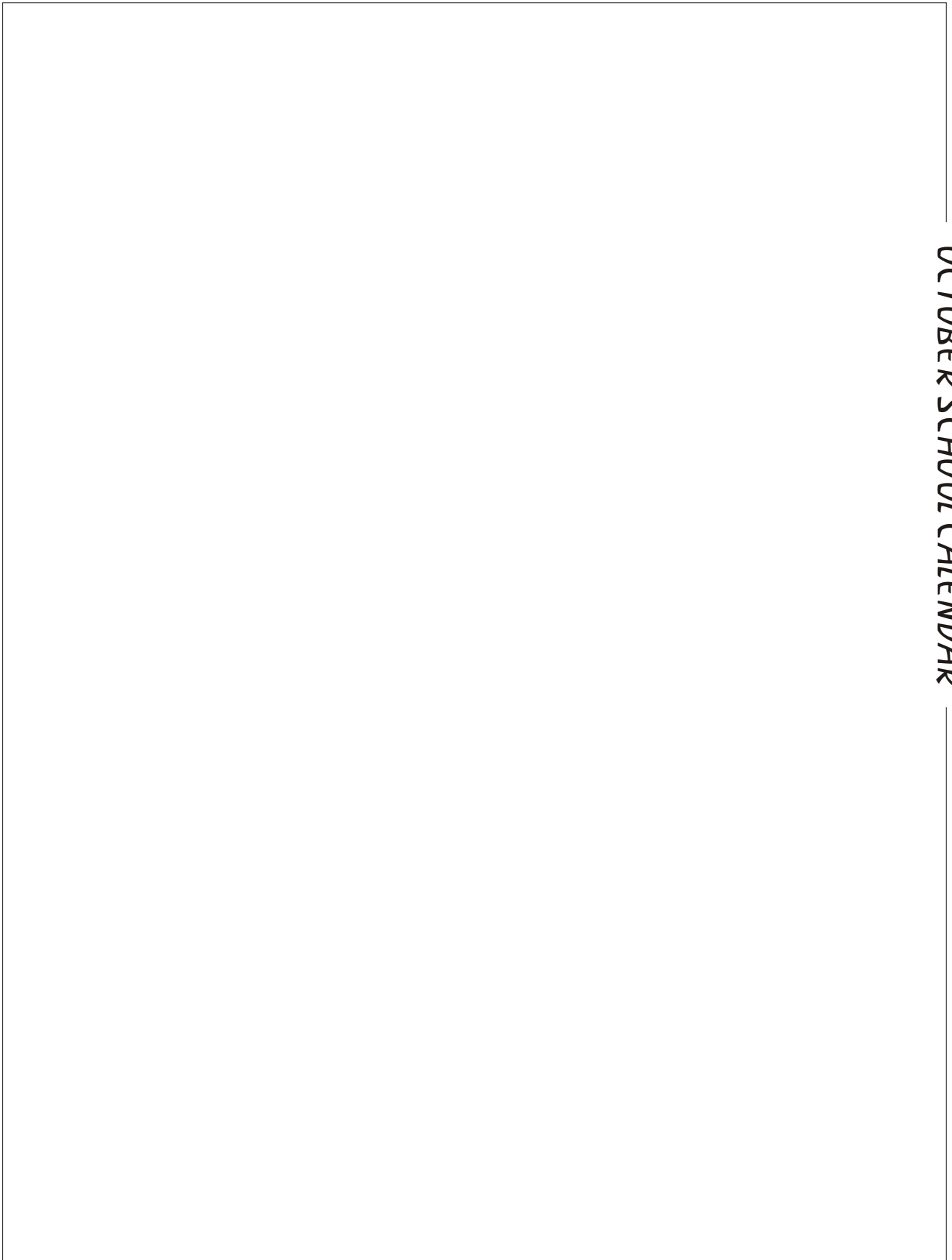
The Results are In from 2006/07 Parent Pledge Week: Half-way Home

Three weeks into the new school year, the parents of 89 students, or 48% of the student body, have returned a pledge card identifying their tax-deductible gift to help fund Live Oak's educational program for the coming school year. The spread of gifts runs from \$10 to \$2400 over 12 months, July 1 - June 30.

The breakdown by class is as follows:
Ms. Sue's Kindergarten — 45%
Ms. Melissa's Kindergarten — 43%
Ms. Lois' First Grade — 47%
Ms. Petering's First Grade — 63%
Mr. Temple's Second Grade — 50%
Ms. Jana's Third Grade — 43%
Ms. Lira's Fifth Grade — 29%

Ms. Juliane's Sixth Grade — 46%
Mr. Cohen's 7/8th Grade — 56%

At this point we are about half-way to our goal of 100% participation, and approximately half-way toward our dollar commitment as well. Thank you to all those who have signed on!



***Keeper
of the
Calendar***

Administrative Coordinator
Marguerite Braun stewards our
calendar process. To get an event
on the calendar – *any event* –
please contact her at 762-9020

or margueritebraun@yahoo.com.
Scheduling involves coordinating
many competing needs. It includes
booking rooms on our campus, and
often, making arrangements with

the Fair Grounds about space, gate
access, parking, etc. Always check
with Marguerite first, early on in
your planning for any event.
Thank you!

Thank You for Listening: Working with Allies in the Calm & Return Room

by Judith Helman

Soon after the first C&R Room opened, it became a place where older students – who knew they had a pattern of "losing it" – would "self-refer to C&R" so they could calm down and get ready to return to class, instead of disrupting the class. This was a great outlet.

As the year went on, and the pattern continued, Ms. River worked with students and teachers to find ways to deal with frustrations and "melt-down triggers" other than leaving the classroom. Some solutions were special seating arrangements, signals, and behavior agreements whereby a student wouldn't challenge something considered unfair until a recess break. Then the issue would be addressed by talking-stick discussion.

During this time, the aspect of Ms. River's teaching that affected the C&R Room the most was the idea, and use, of allies. An ally is someone, typically not involved in a dispute, who partners with a person to help make sure she or he can speak, and be heard.

An ally listens to what is being said, but doesn't necessarily agree that "his or her person" is right. Unlike a lawyer, whose task it is to present his or her client's position as the "correct" one, an ally is there to listen and

Live Oak's second Calm & Return Room for grades K – 3 opened this year on the South Campus. C&R is currently the center piece of a "Compassionate Campus" orientation to school discipline that was brought to Live Oak by our Educational Director, Bonnie River.

A Compassionate Campus is a "big picture" concept about communication between people – students, teachers, parents and staff – which supports respect and understanding.

At this stage of its growth, parent volunteers make the C&R rooms possible. If you are interested in learning about this innovative approach please contact Muriel Bertucci at 762-9020 to sign up for the "parents on campus" training.

make sure the student's thoughts and feelings are heard by others. With an ally at one's side, it is easier to say what you want to say, without anger, frustration or desperation. With allies, it is easier to seek a common understanding and solution, not just fight about "who was right."

This year, the Compassionate Campus training that Live Oak students undergo involves learning how to work with, and be, an ally.

In Upcoming Issues:
Student Tribunals ■ Parents in Partnership

JUDITH IS THE C&R COORDINATOR ON THE LOWER CAMPUS

In Development

Finding a Balance: Too Much or Too Little in our School's Cultural Life?

by Victoria Temple

Live Oak is undertaking a review of the many festivals, events and fund raising activities that take place in our community each year. The reason is threefold:

Meeting Student Needs: As we grow, in overall number of students and "up the grades" into a full junior high program, we need to assess how our festival life is meeting the needs of students and their curricula, across all the grades.

Meeting Parent Needs: The volume of social activities has grown quite large. In addition to our "classic" festivals – the Winter Spiral and the May Faire – we hold the all-school Dragon Pageant, the Lantern Walk in the kindergartens, and other class-based seasonal festivals emerging from the curriculum. We conduct a Social Hour & Music Fest, an End-of-Year BBQ, and a Fall Festival designed originally as an outreach activity. We sponsor Town Hall forums, and Board, faculty & staff retreats. There are also the essential fund

raising events guided by Friends of Live Oak, most notably the annual auction. The volunteer time associated with this extensive social calendar needs to be frankly evaluated.

Meeting the School's Developmental Stage: The time feels right to look at how all of our community building events – social, festival, and fund raising – came into being, and are interweaving and maturing. We want to do this in a way that honors the history and vision of the people who created these community traditions, with an eye for what is needed now, and what is sustainable over the long-term.

An "ad hoc" committee representing the faculty, staff, Board and parent body is forming to undertake this review and assessment. Its goal is to make recommendations by November 1. It will operate under the umbrella of the Development Office, and I will facilitate it. If you have thoughts to share, please contact me at 789-9388 or newarts2@sonic.net.

VICTORIA IS LIVE OAK'S DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

A Window into the Classroom

The 5th Grade Journey from Ancient India to the Glory of Greece

by Lyra Matthews

The 5th graders discovered a transformation in their classroom, not just in the form of a new room when they started school this year, but also into a different culture. Their teacher greeted them not with "Good morning," but with the Sanskrit greeting, "Namaste," for they had walked into the study of Ancient India, made apparent by silk prints draping the walls and incense burning. Here they found a place to sit in a circle on the floor in an area dedicated to silent contemplation and yoga exercises. By this daily practice before Morning Verse each day, the 5th graders have been experiencing the time-honored way of life that people in India have exercised for thousands of years. The mood of reflection has been further enhanced by listening to the many tones emanating from a Tibetan singing bowl and finding those tones in our voices as we sing Sanskrit words and songs.

The children have then been continuing Main Lesson by hearing, writing and drawing the stories, myths and descriptions of the land of India. Keeping with the Waldorf approach of learning through imagination rather than definitions, the mythology of the culture provides a rich context for pictures that depict a way of thinking and being in the world. By examining the beliefs and behaviors of the gods and the peoples of that olden time, the children are absorbing ideas that give them more than a little food for thought. In lively discussions, the students have displayed an exploration of the possibilities that become apparent after hearing about things like the four stages of life: Initiation (to learn the mystery of life), Studentship (with a guru for a teacher), Householdship (marrying and raising a family), and Hermitship (giving up material possessions to live out one's days in quiet contemplation).

Graceful movement and balance characterize the fifth-grader. The step is still light, the joy still natural. New capacities of thought are awakening, yet the children are still immersed in an intrinsic sense of beauty and order.

TORIN M. FINSER, *from*
School as a Journey: The Eight-Year Odyssey
of Waldorf Teacher and His Class

These and other topics are providing the means to guide the children through their own transitions, as they move from having encountered the separation inherent in the 9-year change, and are facing a deepening connection to the world as 10 year olds. Fifth grade will travel ever earthward in its journey: from the mystical inward world of the Indian culture which chooses to give up the material world; through the Mesopotamian, where written language and practical living began; to Egyptian, where mathematical formulas and geometric monuments were constructed (although life in the afterworld was considered more important than earthly life); and finally to the Greek culture that developed the means for life on earth, by establishing a political system of justice, artistic and athletic appreciation of the human form, and rational philosophy. So the journey of 5th grade has commenced, and will conclude at the Pentathlon Competition of the 5th grade Olympics in May.

LYRA TEACHES 5TH GRADE AT LIVE OAK

Community Bulletin Board

Welcome Two New Students!

Two new families joined the Live Oak Community this September. Please welcome [REDACTED], and his parents **Robin** and **Adam**, into Ms. Sue's Kindergarten.

Also welcome [REDACTED], and her parents **Hanan** and **Hamza**, into Ms. Petering's Class 1. We ask that you make them feel at home in their class, and help them find their way into the life of the school community.

Farewell and Best Wishes!

Seventh grader [REDACTED] and her parents **Kayleen** and **Magnus**, are

leaving the school community, as [REDACTED] will be home schooling and traveling with her family to Europe. We wish you all good things! And thank you for all you have done to help launch Live Oak Charter School.

Gardening Helpers Needed

Cheryl Witte, gardening teacher, has many openings for parents who want hands-on experience working in the classroom. She has posted the dates and times help is needed on class bulletin boards. Email her at tutoringtrain@gmail.com for more information.

Library Donations Now Accepted

Do you have gently used or nearly new books to donate to the library? We are now accepting donations of books in good condition. Bring them by the library, on the Lower Campus, before school, or drop them off at the library table at Farmers' Market. While we may be unable to add every item to the collection – sometimes we already have a copy, other times it's not quite right for our collection, or the binding is about to fail – we will put all donations to good use! Items not added to the library will be sold to raise funds for the library.

Barbara Gaston & Diana Spaulding