

Tamisca*l*times

Fall 2004 • Vol. 16:1

MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Whenever I drive onto the campus of our clean, beautifully-landscaped school, I marvel at the community effort that produced such an inviting environment. My greatest joy is seeing the change in students' faces once they've been at Tamiscal a few days and realize that they will be known and accepted as individuals in this small, family-like learning community.

The 2004-05 school year has been going great so far!

Among the highlights:

- Parcel tax passed—alternative programs have continued funding
- API score of 808 (up from 745 in 2000)
- API score makes Tamiscal eligible to apply to be a California Distinguished School
- Landscaping dream is now a reality
- Enthusiastic students and involved parents
- Cleaner kitchen in the Hub (thank you, students!)
- Full Mock Senate and Senior Dinner this year
- Perfect fall wilderness trip for TEAM
- 100% participation in standardized tests so far this year
- Dedicated, highly skilled teachers and staff guiding all students to succeed
- **Don Kreider**, our volunteer math tutor extraordinaire
- A new instructional assistant for SIS, **Eduardo Mazzini**, who happens to be a retired math teacher
- **Lynn Lamb**, our new Full Circle counselor, available Mondays, Thursdays, and Fridays
- Student art and photos of happy, engaged students throughout the classrooms

As always, I invite you to call, e-mail, or visit me with any questions, suggestions, or comments. I value the open communication and effective partnership we have in place to help all Tamiscal students reach their goals.

As the holidays approach, I send my warm wishes to all of you for a happy and safe season.

Marcie Miller

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**Donations, Donations, Donations
Thank You, Parent Volunteers
Landscaping Miracle**

Back Cover

Our New Garden!



Watercolor by Ian Buchanan

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LEADERSHIP NEWS

from Nancy Tuhtan, Leadership teacher

Leadership class is off to a great start. This year in addition to planning Tamiscal student activities and participating in student government, we are developing a program dealing with ethics and character development. Each student in Leadership has been working on at least three of *The 12 Guiding Principles of Exceptional Character* which they have identified as areas for improvement. *The 12 Guiding Principles* is a program developed through the International Center for Leadership in Education (www.daggett.com). Each week as a class, we discuss one of the principles as it relates to the students in their academic and personal lives. Parents have also been asked to participate in giving feedback to each student. This week we are discussing Responsibility.

On October 21, Leadership students facilitated the opening activities at our fourth annual retreat at the Alpine Club on Mt. Tam. This was an opportunity for students who are generally on campus just a few days a week to meet other students who may be on campus on different days or during different times. Many students commented that they were very happy to have made several new friends and became closer to kids they saw in class, but didn't know well. Many thanks go out to our wonderful volunteers on staff and the parents who drove the carpools, helped in the kitchen, bought and delivered the food (which the kids all enjoyed, especially dinner!). Special thanks to **Diane Ballard, Dorothy Vandersteel, Crystal McDaniel and Vicki Nelson**. We really appreciate all of our parents and families who are so generous with their time and checkbooks! The retreat ended with a wonderful performance by musicians from the Ali Akbar Khan College of Music.

Also in October, our students were interviewed (with parent permission) by *People Magazine*. The article which deals with teens' attitudes about alcohol, drugs and sex, will be published by the end of the year. Some of our students are also working with **Judi Shils** on *The Diary Project*, an interactive site where teens of all ages can dialog with each other on issues important to their lives.

Leadership class will be going on a field trip to Alcatraz Island on December 8 (drivers are needed to carpool to ferry in SF). Their holiday community service project is to provide art supplies to set up a children's art therapy room at Marin Hospice's new location.

This year's Leadership students are **Nate Breckenridge, Lea Wiviott, Kate Aurell, Hannah Butler, Christina Argyres, Angelina Carpini, Monique King, Caroline Nunan, Megan Thorpe, Hannah Williams, Taylor Lorenz, Lisa Vitale and Sean Spence**. Hannah, Nate and Hannah W. serve on the School Site Council. **Casey Gillespie** is doing a great job as our student trustee for the District.

If you can help with carpooling for the December field trip, future trips, and/or would like to contribute funds toward purchases for our holiday community service project, please give me a call at 945-3759. Thanks!

SENIOR ACTIVITIES

by Susan Berkhout

The time is fast approaching for our annual **Mock Senate**. This year we have decided to do a true senate rather than the committees that we have done in the past. Each senior has drawn a senator's name from the hat and will impersonate that senator. Each senior will also write a press release touting a bill that the senator will present in the mock committee meetings. The four top bills will go to the floor of the senate for debate on Thursday, December 16 from 2:00–4:30 PM in the Carlisle Building. The other senators will attempt to attach their bills as riders to the four bills that are being debated, bills will be passed or killed, and some filibustering is sure to occur! This is our final exam in US Government, and students have passed the US Constitution test as well as have completed many assignments on the workings of our government.

Following the Mock Senate, we will adjourn back to Tamiscal where we will have the first **Senior Dinner**.

Parents are contributing food and decorations, and our seniors who will all be dressed up as senators will dine together and reflect on and discuss their Mock Senate experience. If you are interested in helping out with the Senior Dinner, please contact **Teri Peterson** at 927-1110. ■

SUPERVISED INDEPENDENT STUDY (SIS) IS HERE TO HELP

Need math tutoring? Could you use some help structuring your time or getting started on an assignment? Do you have tests to take?

We are happy to welcome **Eduardo Mazzini**, our new instructional assistant. He has extensive experience as a high school math teacher and is eager to help students. Remember, when a student falls behind in assignments, you can expect the teacher to assign the student to Supervised Independent Study to catch up. We send a form home in the mail, and it alerts students and parents that we expect to see the student on campus as assigned. Be sure to sign in.

Other students are always welcome to work with Eduardo, who can usually be found in the Library during the hours listed at right. ➤



Clay figures by Max Ryan



RUSSIAN EDUCATORS VISIT TAMISCAL

On November 12, Tamiscal hosted a luncheon and visit for a delegation of school administrators from throughout Russia. They were brought here by the U.S. State Department to see various public and private schools. Students, staff, and parents from School Site Council had a chance to eat and talk (through an interpreter) with the visitors. They were very appreciative of the great potluck lunch and the friendliness and enthusiasm of the Tamiscal community. They had lots of questions about both independent study and TEAM. One of their biggest questions was how we are able to support such wonderful programs through the public school system. The answer, on the heels of the successful parcel tax election, was that the voters in our district support public education enough to voluntarily tax themselves to provide exemplary schools!

This was a memorable day for all who were able to join us. ■

SIS SCHEDULE

Monday	10:00am–12:00pm
Tuesday	10:00am–12:00pm
Wednesday	10:00am–12:00pm
Thursday	12:30–2:30pm



COUNSELOR'S CORNER

by Susan Berkhout

This school year got off to a fast start with our senior meetings. Our senior class has 43 students this year, and for us that is large. After the senior meetings, we have had senior chats with most seniors and their parents about college and career plans. The first college applications were due November 1, 2004 and the last will be due after the holidays. It is important that seniors applying to the UC's and the CSU's get their on-line applications submitted by November 30 at the latest and earlier is better according to both systems.

Junior conferences will be next up on the counseling agenda. The junior class is always large because of the TEAM program, but this year we have an exceptionally large class of 55 students. We will begin both the TEAM group conferences and the Independent Study conferences during the second semester. All families of juniors will receive letters about the conferences in early December.

At these conferences, we will explain the college options and requirements as well as discuss other options after high school. Each student's transcript will be evaluated for graduation requirements as well as meeting college admission requirements.

Parent reminder: when looking at report cards, be sure that you check the number of credits awarded. Unlike the comprehensive high schools, Tamiscal awards credit for each grading period. At the last report card most subjects should be showing 3 CR, and at the semester most subjects will have 5 CR. ■

COLLEGE CAREER CENTER

by Judy Bloch

Wonderful opportunities for our students!

Regional Occupation classes are available to all students in Marin. The Regional Occupation Program (ROP) is one of the excellent programs provided by the Marin County Office of Education and offers many high school and adult classes throughout the county. ROP provides courses in the following career pathways: Arts & Communications, Business & Marketing, Health & Bioscience, Service Occupations, and Technology & Engineering.

Learning work place skills makes it possible to obtain jobs and explore fields of interest.

Classes offered at Redwood High School are Construction/ Remodeling Technology and Engineering Projects. Tam offers Auto Technology, Construction/Remodeling, and Drafting & Construction Design. Drake offers TV/Video and Computer Graphics /Desktop Publishing.

ROP not only gives students the chance to gain experience in an area of interest, it also makes them aware of new options in beginning the process of considering a future career. In addition, students can earn credits, if needed, to graduate from high school or use course experiences and internships for college applications. There is no fee. *Ask Judy Bloch for a complete list of county classes.*

Students should plan to sign up **now** for spring 2004 ROP elective courses such as construction and auto. These courses provide hands-on training in all aspects of the work environment. To enroll in a class or to get more information, students should meet with Judy Bloch, the College/Career Specialist. For additional ROP information, go to mcoeweb.marin.k12.ca.us/rop/

In addition, the **School-to-Career Program** offers student internships and job shadowing opportunities. The county of Marin provides the Tamalpais Union High School District with several liaisons to assist students with placements. *See Judy Bloch for an application.* Plus **College of Marin** offers Career Days. In the spring, students are invited to attend an Auto Tech Day, Information Technology and/or the Latino College Awareness Day.

And last but not least, the **Marin Education Fund** offers college access programs and information. They offer free workshops throughout the year in their offices in San Rafael. Topics they cover are; financial aid, selecting colleges, scholarship research, and essay assistance. One day college tours are arranged twice a year. They just took selected students to Sacramento to visit UC Davis and Sacramento State. They will be visiting Sonoma State and Santa Rosa Junior College in the spring. Their Summer Application Institute, for low-moderate income first generation college students (juniors only), is an intensive five-day dormitory experience at Dominican University and a yearlong mentoring program. ■

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS TESTING FOR JUNIORS

by Judy Bloch, College & Career Counselor

Juniors who are planning on attending a four-year college should sign up for college admissions tests this spring. The district counseling department recommends that juniors take the SAT I on May 7 and the SAT II on June 4 if they are considering attending one of the University of California schools. **Warning – the registration deadline for the May SAT is March 25** unless the student signs up late, by April 6, but an additional \$20 late fee is charged. Students are also allowed to go STAND-BY, which means that they are not registered but are allowed to show-up at a test center with their registration form filled-out, their money and two number 2 pencils after calling 1-709-771-7600 to reserve a space. This option will cost you \$35 more.

Colleges also accept the ACT. This test offers two test dates this spring, also, April 8 (sign-up by March 3) and June 10 (May 5). The ACT adds an additional \$17 for late registration (March 17 and May 19 respectively). Their STAND-BY fee is \$34. Call 319-337-1270 for open centers a few days before the test. The regular rates for the SAT I are \$29.50 and the ACT \$28.

This spring the ACT has added an optional writing assessment. There will be an additional charge of \$42. The score will not effect scores on the multiple-choice tests (as configured formerly). Instead the writing score will be a combination English/Writing score on a scale of 1 through 36. In addition, there will be one to four descriptive comments selected by raters to identify some of the essay's relative strengths and weaknesses. As of press time, the CSU's were not requiring the writing component. *For more information go to www.act.org/aap/writing.*

Changes in the spring SAT include: a writing component (score 200-800), critical reading (the analogies have been eliminated (score 200-800), math (the addition of a few advanced algebra problems & the quantitative comparisons have been eliminated (score 200-800). *Go to www.collegeboard.com/newsat for additional information.*

Questions that are commonly asked are: "Which college admissions test should my student take and which test preparation company is the best?" Perhaps the following information will be helpful.

Colleges will accept either the SAT and the ACT. These two tests are different and occasionally a student will score better on one than the other. In that case, students would send his/her best test score (whether it is an SAT or an ACT) to the college. I suggest that students take both tests to cover their bases.

The SAT is a reasoning test. It consists of math and verbal sections (this spring also a writing component – highest score of 200-800 with essay subscore of 2-12) each earning the student a score of a possible 800 or a total score of 1600. The ACT tests the student's knowledge in four areas: English, Math, Reading, and Science Reasoning with each carrying

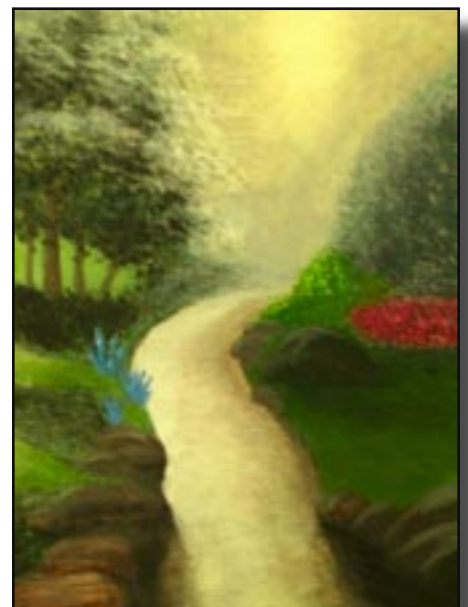
continued on next page ►



by Katie Castagna



by Rachel Babcock



by Alden Werner

¼ of the weight toward the total score of 36. Colleges know how to compare the different scores. Both registration forms are available in the College/Career Center or students can register on line at SAT (www.collegeboard.com) or ACT (www.act.org).

There is also the SAT II subject tests. The University of California system (not all colleges) require the SAT II tests. The admission officers want students applying to the UC's (the writing will be eliminated in March as the SAT I has it as a component) to submit two Subject Tests in two different subject areas of the student's choice. We usually recommend that students consider taking Literature as their second test. Other subject tests possible are; U.S. History, Biology E/M, Chem-

istry, Physics and many different languages. These tests are administered on a Saturday morning.

Because more students in Marin take the SAT than the ACT, there are four sites in Marin that offer the SAT. They are listed in the registration manual by the city name: Novato (Novato H.S.), Ross (Branson School), San Anselmo (Drake High School) and San Rafael (Terra Linda H.S. – the best bet for STAND-BY). The ACT is not offered in Marin except for two dates in the fall, the September and October administrations at Novato High School. If the student wishes to take the spring tests, they will have to choose test sites in S.F., Oakland, Berkeley, or Santa Rosa. Most of our students take the ACT at S.F. State.

Colleges will accept any admission test score taken before January of a student's senior year (exception: Cal Poly will not accept a Dec. test score and the CSU's are asking students to take either the October or November tests)). So, if students are unhappy with their junior spring test results, they have several test dates available in the fall to re-take the tests. The SAT offers test dates in Oct., Nov., and Dec. ACT offers administrations in Sept., Oct., and Dec. When students request that their SAT I test results be sent to a college, The College Board sends all of them. Colleges, however, are interested in the best scores only, so students shouldn't worry that even their "bad" scores are viewed.

There are several test preparation companies offering strategy classes in Marin. These courses typically consist of a series of 12 or so, group sessions. The one exception to that is Ivy West which sends tutors to your home. These sessions cost in the Neighborhood of \$600. In addition, the Tamalpais Union High School District Adult/Community Education Department offers test preparation classes at Drake High School. The SAT preparation by Revolution cost about \$400 last year and lasts for six weeks, beginning in March. Call 458-4320 to register. I cannot recommend any particular program over another but I can give you a comparative list of programs so you can call and ask any specific questions that you may have.

I hope this helps sort out some of your questions. Call Judy Bloch at 945-3779 if you have additional questions. ■

◀ *The Progression of Man, wire sculpture by Dan Pitbladdo*

ASSESSMENT CALENDAR: 2004-2005

MET 8 Reading & Math – Seniors who haven't met outcomes ONLY
Jan. 3-7

Direct Write – 9th & others
Feb. 7-11

High School Exit Exam – Starting with class of '06

Nov. 16 & 17: juniors who haven't yet passed

Mar. 15 & 16: all sophomores & juniors who haven't passed

May 10 & 11: sophomores who were absent for March testing

STAR – 9th, 10th & 11th graders

April 20-May

SAT I & II – Includes CSU Early Assessment for 11th graders

Dec. 4

Jan. 22

Mar. 12: SAT I only

May 7

June 4

Portfolios

April 29 to Tamiscal



DONATIONS, DONATIONS, DONATIONS

Many of you have already contributed to the Tamiscal Fund this year. Our dream project finally came to fruition this fall with the beautiful landscaping and garden area (*see "Garden," back cover*). So far this year we have also used the Tamiscal Fund to pay for the retreat, a luncheon for a Russian delegation of school administrators at Tamiscal, snacks in the Hub, and other special events. Thanks to the following who have already donated: **Teri Peterson, Loretta Lloyd, Judith Berger, Lucy Mercer & Danny Slomoff, Robert & Carla Small, Margaret & Patrick Ryan, Tracy & Brian Haughton, Diane Ballard & Michael Watkins, William & Christina Berry, Snorre & Gail Grunnan, John & Vicki Nelson, Sarah & John Oppenheimer, Richard & Karen Pitbladdo, Margo Zender, Celine Lorenz, Colette & Jim Parrinello, Clifford & Courtney Clark and Bill & Kathy Nunan.**

We are hoping to replenish the Tamiscal Fund for the money spent on the landscaping project. A suggested amount is \$500 per family. If you haven't donated yet, or if you are in a position to give again, we thank you in advance. You may be contacted by one of our parent fundraising volunteers.

A separate parent donation stream goes to support TEAM, which would not be able to exist without the financial support of TEAM parents to help cover trip and equipment costs. We acknowledge your generosity that makes the program possible. ■

THANK YOU, PARENT VOLUNTEERS

Tamiscal is able to provide exceptional service to students because of the generous gift of time from our parent volunteers. Our wonderful volunteers are mentioned in several articles of this newsletter. A special thanks to the following:

School Site Council	Amy Castagna Dorothy Vandersteel
Parent Rep to Superintendent's Com	Amy Castagna
Bookkeeping, Tamiscal Fund	Carla Small
Landscaping Committee	Julie Seha & Michelle Jodoin
Tamiscal Directory	Dena Van Derveer
Web Master	Dena Van Derveer
Hospitality Coordinator	Catherine Heagerty
Fundraising Co-Chairs	Kathleen Nunan & Jo Butler
Senior Dinner Coordinator	Teri Peterson
Graduation Parent Coordinator	Dorothy Vandersteel
Measure G (Parcel Tax) Rep	Melinda Ching
Tamiscal Times	Dena Van Derveer
Snack Shopper	Nancy Culhane

We also extend our appreciation to those who have helped by providing goodies for events, driving, working on the new landscaping and garden project, and those who are always willing to lend a helping hand. ■

LANDSCAPING MIRACLE

Thank you to Tamiscal mom, **Julie Seha**, owner of Muir Gardens, Landscape Design, Installation, and Management (258-8456) for making our dream come true! Somehow Julie was able to stretch a meager \$15,000 to provide all of the landscaping and irrigation for the parking lot and garden. She donated all of her own services and sought donations from a number of community businesses to create the luxuriant atmosphere that has beautified our campus. Just wait until spring, when the 500 daffodils make their appearance!

This project would not have happened without the perseverance and vision of **Michelle Jodoin** and her daughter **Claire**, who formed the Landscaping Committee last year. Michelle planned a successful Campus Beautification Day in October that was attended by some diligent parent and student volunteers. Some of the volunteers were parents: **Julie Seha, Dorothy and Stoddard Vandersteel, Teri Peterson, Danica Herskowitz, Michelle Jodoin, Leo Heagerty, Thomas Ripley**, and students: **Lissa Seha, Claire Jodoin, Taylor Lorenz, and Corwin Parker.**

TEAM students were away on their fall trip, or they certainly would have



volunteered! What's another Saturday, after all of the car wash-Saturdays?

Be on the lookout for an e-mail announcement of the garden dedication ceremony sometime in the next few months.



OUR NEW GARDEN

Have you seen our lovely place for contemplation, study, eating, and socializing? As part of the Tamiscal landscaping project, **Julie Seha** and her staff from Muir Gardens designed and installed a jewel of a garden, with everything from hummingbirds to redwoods. The original watercolor design was provided by student **Claire Jodoin**. A mural designed by students and staff at the retreat will be transferred to tiles and installed on the face of the built-in bench. **Bud Meade**, our photography and ceramics teacher, is heading this long-term project.

Next time you're on campus dropping off or picking up your son or daughter, bring a book and a snack, and escape for a few minutes with a panoramic view of Mt. Tam.



Tamiscal Times
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KEY DATES TO REMEMBER

FINAL EXAM SCHEDULE:

- Dec. 6 – Math & Science finals start
- Dec. 13, 14 – English & Social Studies
- Dec. 15-17 – Other high school finals

MOCK SENATE/SENIOR DINNER:

- Dec. 16 – 2:00pm, Carlisle Building

IN 2005:

- Jan. 3 & 4 – No school
- Jan. 5 – 2ND SEMESTER CLASSES START: All Independent Study parents must come to first appointment to sign Master Agreement & Course Agreements