A Message from our DBPC President:

Dear Wonderful Monte Gardens Families,

‘Tis the season for giving thanks and for spreading peace and joy. As we find ourselves spending time with our family and friends, we reflect on those things which fill our hearts with gratitude. We are so grateful for the support and participation of our Monte Gardens families, for our devoted teachers, our helpful staff and for our dedicated principal. We are very fortunate to have our children surrounded by so many wonderful people who spend countless hours enriching their learning experience and help them become responsible, respectful and hard-working students.

In November, we had our Singapore Math Game Night for students and parents, a Restaurant Night at Chili’s, a very special fundraiser (Square 1 Art) which featured your child’s artwork, our monthly parents’ club meeting and a teachers’ luncheon.

In the first week of December, fifth grade students will embark on a memorable Outdoor Education journey to Camp Loma Mar where they will understand “self,” have lessons in the great outdoors and may even experience their very first kiss...with the illustrious banana slug! Each Monte Gardens family will also receive our school directory, which will be hot off the press.

There are many grade-level holiday programs planned during this time, too. For fundraisers and community events, we will have two Restaurant Nights, our 17th Annual Winter Social and a Monte Gardens Holiday Party hosted by Sports Basement. And finally, those who ordered special gifts through our Square 1 Art fundraiser will receive their goods just in time for our Winter Recess break. Then it is time once again to be with family, friends and loved ones where goodwill, fellowship and merriment resound!

Thank you so much for all of your support and we look forward to a prosperous and wonderful new year!

~Jenifer White
Principal’s Message

Fall Events
It has been a busy and exciting time at Monte Gardens! At every grade level, our students have been involved in a variety of hands on activities associated with the season and families have been participating fully in all of our events. Thank you to all of the families who participated in Fall Centers, Grandparents’ Days and Meet my Family presentations! Your ongoing participation supports your student, and also shows them that you value their education.

Outdoor Education
Our fifth graders will be heading out to Camp Loma Mar on Monday, December 2. Thank you to Ms. Gerdts, Mrs. Fischer Holton and Mrs. Rogers for continuing this wonderful program for our fifth grade students! Thank you to all the families who donated to all of our fundraising efforts to make this happen for our students. We are seeking fourth grade parents to begin the process of fundraising for next school year. Please be sure to attend our Parents’ Club meeting on Friday, January 17, 2014 at 8:15 AM as we will be presenting information for Outdoor Education costs and fundraising.

English Learners Advisory Committee (ELAC) Meeting will be this Tuesday, December 17 at 5:30 PM (*note date change). Please join us for our ELAC meeting. At Monte Gardens we are fortunate to have a diverse population with many students coming from bi-lingual homes. Please join us on Tuesday, enjoy a potluck dinner and learn about the programs and supports for our English Learners. Mrs. Rogers will present information on the upcoming Love and Logic class for parents. Mrs. Stewart will talk about Kidpower strategies and how to reinforce the strategies being taught at school.

Early Dismissal for Parent-Teacher Conferences
Parent Teacher Conferences begin December 9 and continue until December 20. This is an important time for parents to meet with teachers to review student progress, and to answer your questions about the report card. Take a few minutes before your conference is scheduled to write down any questions you may have. Keep in mind that teachers are meeting with many families, and each conference is scheduled for approximately 20 minutes.

I know that many families have to make arrangements for child care and alternate transportation due to early dismissal during conferences. Please make sure to mark your calendar and inform everyone transporting your child about the early dismissal time each day during conferences.

We will follow our Wednesday schedule during this time, as follows:

Kindergarten – AM: 8:05 to 11:30
Kindergarten – PM: 9:05 to 12:30
Grades 1-5: 8:10 AM to 12:45 PM
All children must remain with parents if they are invited by the teacher to attend the conference. There is no supervision on campus for children during conferences. These meetings are so valuable for our partnership in working together with each child. Thank you for all you are doing!

Benchmark Assessments
At grades 1-5 the Curriculum Associates Math Benchmark Assessments and Ready English Language Arts assessments were given again in November. Teachers are using the assessments to analyze how their classes are doing to plan instruction towards meeting specific standards. While we are pleased with our progress towards end of the year standards, we continue to focus on improving our performance in language arts for all students.

Please support your child by reading to and with your child daily. Discuss the books you are reading, and ask questions that require your child to think about the story, and to analyze, evaluate or compare and contrast stories. While reading ask them to predict what might happen next. Help them to analyze characters and what the character might be thinking or feeling. Remember that Raz Kids is an on-line resource for building reading comprehension. The Common Core State Standards emphasize the importance of reading informational text as well as fiction. Try to incorporate science and social studies into your daily reading menu. Most importantly, enjoy this special time with your children.

School Safety
We are always working to refine our school procedures to insure school safety. Parents, please observe the following guidelines:

- The car pool gate (behind the MU) will only open for students during the morning entry and after school dismissal. The gate will be closed, but not locked. Please do not use the car pool gate, the back gate by Dianne Adair or the lane behind the A-wing to enter school during the school day.

- All parents should enter through the front of the school at the front gate and come directly to the office to sign in and obtain a visitor’s pass.

I wish all of you a joyous holiday season, a restful break and a Happy New Year!

Susan Peters
Principal
Diablo Basics Parents’ Club Meetings

Everyone is encouraged to attend the monthly DBPC General Membership meetings, and participate in the many social and fundraising opportunities that DBPC has to offer.

We appreciate those parents who were able to attend our November DBPC meeting. We approved several proposals including: the addition of a second computer lab, headphones support, the addition of an English Language support staff member, and emergency safety training for staff.

Our next meeting will be **Friday, January 17, 2014 at 8:15 AM.** (There will NOT be a General Meeting in December.) Please come to the parents’ club meeting where you can gather valuable information, help make important decisions and share your ideas and concerns. We need your assistance and input to make this a successful year for our school community and we hope to see you there!

ROOM REPRESENTATIVES: ATTENTION ROOM PARENTS

Did you know that Room Representatives are more than just Room Parents? The duty of a Room Parent includes more than simply communicating the needs of your student’s teacher and organizing classroom events. Room Parents also act as liaisons between their teacher and the Diablo Basics Parent’s Club (DBPC).

Room Reps are contacted throughout the year to help organize and solicit volunteers for many of the social and fundraising events that DBPC sponsors. In order to provide the best service to their classroom teacher, Room Reps are also strongly encouraged to attend monthly DBPC General Meetings and report back to their teacher any valuable information. This is a magnificent way to be involved.

Thank you for serving our wonderful school!

SCIENCE FAIR!

Begin today, don't delay!

The Monte Gardens Science Fair will be held on February, 13 & 14. All fourth grade and fifth grade students are expected and required to enter an experiment or a project for judging. Preparing and collecting data requires time. Please work with your child to develop an idea and begin working on this during the holiday breaks.

The actual packet of information will be coming home on the 9th of December.

Time goes by faster than we think, especially on long term projects. Please work with your child to get started on their project now. If you have questions you can email Laurie Rogers at rogersle@mdusd.org.
A New Parenting with Love and Logic series is coming! Parenting can be challenging and make us all wonder, what do we do next? Parenting with Love and Logic offers some new strategies for raising responsible children in a fun way. It gives insight into how to lessen backtalk and bickering. Homework can be trying; Love and Logic gives ideas of how to end those battles and develop it into more quality time with your child.

The new series of classes will run six weeks. The cost for the series will be $20.00 to cover materials and workbook. Laurie Rogers is the facilitator for the series. Mrs. Rogers is currently working on arranging child care through Diane Adair. She will have more information on that in December. Look for an additional flyer. The classes will begin on the 23rd of January and run until the 27th of February. The session will be every Thursday and start promptly at 6:00 PM and are finished by 8:00 PM.

If you have any questions or would like to enroll in the upcoming class just send an email to lauriesclasses@pacbell.net or just put a note in Laurie Roger's school mailbox.

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Kindergarten Sign-Ups for 2014-2015 School Year

To be eligible to start kindergarten for 2014-2015, a child must be 5 years of age on or before September 1, 2014. Children who will be starting kindergarten at Monte Gardens for the 2014-2015 school year must be put on the waiting list.

Sign-ups are on Wednesdays from 1:30 – 3:00 PM.

THE LAST DAY TO SIGN UP IS WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2013

THIS INCLUDES SIBLINGS of students currently attending. ALL SIBLINGS of Monte Gardens students MUST BE signed up in order to be included in the lottery. Having a student already enrolled at Monte Gardens does not mean their younger sibling can be enrolled automatically. If you have not already signed up your child, you need to do so before the kindergarten lottery.

The kindergarten lottery will be held on December 10, 2013.

Notifications will go out by early January.
FUNDRAISERS

RESTAURANT NIGHTS! December is such an amazing, wonderful, fantabulous month that we have TWO - count ‘em TWO - restaurant fundraisers! Please come out to one or both to support Team MG!

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11 – RED ROBIN

Come on down to Sun Valley Mall between 1PM and 9PM and enjoy lunch or dinner at Red Robin. They will donate 15% of our dine-in food sales back to the Diablo Basics Parents’ Club. This was our best restaurant fundraiser last year - let’s see if we can beat our $$ this time!!!

MONDAY, DECEMBER 16 – CHIPOTLE

You asked for it and you got it. Chipotle. December has lots of half days due to conferences so why not celebrate one of them with a delicious burrito, salad or quesadilla lunch?! Dine in or take out at the Chipotle at 785 Oak Grove Road in Concord between 1PM and 5PM on Monday the 16th and a whopping 50% of your meal proceeds will go back to our school!!!

eSCRIP  www.escrip.com
Link your Safeway Club Card to eScrip and Safeway will donate up to 4% to our school. And not only Safeway cards but credit, debit, department stores, etc. There is no cost to you; it’s FREE money for our school! Please sign up today. Any questions, please contact Jennifer Wallig (mrswallig@aol.com).
Sports Basement Holiday Party!

Mark your calendar and come to the Sports Basement in Walnut Creek on **Friday, December 20** from **6:30 PM** until **8:30 PM** and enjoy a holiday party held just for Monte Gardens families and guests! This is the perfect opportunity to get together, shop at a discount, and support our school - **10% off**, with **10% going back** to our school on this shopping day! Plus, Sports Basement will provide snacks, drinks, and adult beverages so we may toast the holiday season!!! If you have someone on your list that enjoys the great outdoors, come to the Basement and support our school.

Thanks for your support!

Clorox GIFT Campaign – Matching Funds! Woo Hoo!

Many large companies offer annual corporate matching programs or monthly payroll deductions. This year, DBPC has been given a generous opportunity to receive up to $2,000 by Clorox Company Foundation in matching funds if we are able to raise that same amount! That’s up to $2,000 in **FREE** money to go towards things such as our second computer lab! So far, we have already collected over $750, which Clorox will match. We just need to gather about $1,250 more in order to reach our goal!

If you are able to donate $10, $5 or even $3 please send in a check (made payable to DBPC) with “Clorox GIFT campaign” in the memo. Every little bit helps. Thank you for your support!

CANS FOR CAMP Recycle Program

The success of our Cans for Camp recycle program runs solely on volunteers that give up their valuable time and efforts. Can you believe that cans, plastic bottles, and other CA CRV recyclables raised $2852.56 not including this week?! Because of all of YOU amazing volunteers our 5th grade students are attending Camp Loma Mar from December 2 - 6 at a fraction of the cost, and will make memories to last a lifetime. At this time I would like to give a special “thank you” to Kimi Watada, who ran our Cans for Camp recycle program during the 2012/2013 school year! We couldn't have done it without you! Beginning December, 2 all recycling profits will benefit our 4th grade students that are starting their fundraising so that they too can have the amazing opportunity of attending camp next year. If you can help donate, sort, or drive recyclables on Thursday mornings at drop off please contact Joline Sewell at joline_grondin@yahoo.com.
**WINTER SOCIAL & CANDY CANE LANE**

**Saturday, December 14, 2013**

Dining Times: 9:00 AM, 10:00 AM, 11:00 AM

Special Performance at 9:00 by our 2nd Graders

Menu: Pancakes, sausages, orange juice and coffee

Prices: Adults - $6.00 ~ Children - $4.00

Checks payable to DBPC

Our 17th annual Gail Adams Winter Social and Candy Cane Lane is a holiday tradition at Monte Gardens. Come and enjoy an all-you-can-eat pancake breakfast and visit with Santa from 8:30 – 11:30 AM. Let the little ones stroll past Candy Cane Lane, where they can purchase presents for their family and loved ones at very affordable prices. Our beautiful tree will also be up for raffle.

Due to the large amount of people attending this event and the fire code in the Multi-Use room, there will be three assigned dining times. Order forms have already been sent out in your child’s Monday Envelope. Please return the form and payment by Friday, December 6, 2014. Once you have purchased your tickets, they will be sent home with your (eldest) child with your assigned dining time. You can only attend at the dining time you have been assigned (note: Second Grade Parents only – you may indicate the 9:00 AM time on your order form so you can be there to see your child’s performance). Thank you for your understanding.

In order for this festive event to be a success, we need your assistance. This is wonderful opportunity for parents to volunteer by taking orders and serving food to our community or flipping pancakes in the kitchen (dads especially love this job). If you’d like to volunteer to be a part of this fun, festive event, please go to our SignUpGenius site at [www.SignUpGenius.com/go/30E0C44ADAE2DA57-2013](http://www.SignUpGenius.com/go/30E0C44ADAE2DA57-2013)
LOST AND FOUND

With warm coat weather finally here, our Lost and Found cart is full to the brim with jackets, sweaters and sweatshirts; not to mention lunch boxes, books and other random items. We would love for these lost items to be reunited with their owners, so please come and check out the cart! It is out at the back gate every Wednesday morning until pick up.

Items will be DONATED to the Bay Area Crisis Nursery on Friday, December, 13 after school.

Any items remaining after pick up on the 13th will be finding new homes through the Crisis Nursery. We will make every attempt (weather and volunteers permitting) to get the cart out in the front of the school at pick up times during the week of the 13th. If you have any questions please contact Melissa Giomi at mgiomi@outlook.com. Here’s to many happy reunions!

MONTE GARDENS SCHOOL DIRECTORY IS HERE!

Each family will soon receive one school directory. If you have more than one child in school, the eldest child will be given a directory to bring home. This directory is distributed for the personal use of the families of Monte Gardens Elementary and is NOT intended for any public use, solicitation or any other business purpose. Parents, please help your students use discretion and respect when using the directory to contact peers and classmates.

MEMORY BOOK – Deadline Feb 28th

Our memory book (aka – yearbook) is a volunteer effort coordinated this year by Kathy Weires, Seena Larkin and April Jacobs. We need your help in order to build a book that includes memories from each grade.

We count on parents to snap photos of students engaging in fun school activities like field trips, Day on the Green, Carnoween and holiday class centers. Don’t forget to bring your camera to the Pancake Breakfast and snap shots at your child’s performances and family nights too.

Please send in your photos by emailing (1 to 5 images) or by burning to a disc (6+ images). Bring the discs to the school office. Discs will not be returned to you. If you are emailing take care not to let the images get resized in the email process.

When submitting, please do the following:

• Identify the teacher, grade and the event
• Include contact info on discs
• Images should be no less than 1mb.
• Images should be from a school activity, please no photos of non-school functions
• Group photos of kids (2-8) are preferable
THANK YOU’S

Square 1 Art Fundraiser: Thank you, Angela Stewart and Mary Vines, our Ways and Means co-chairpersons for bringing a wonderful and creative fundraiser to our school (and to the parent who recommended it to them!). The teachers appreciated the ease and execution of this fundraiser from a classroom stand point and parents raved about how cute their child’s art turned out.

Singapore Math Game Night: Math concepts, terms, and methods in teaching have changed. In order for parents to be helpful when it comes to math homework, we must understand what is now being used in class. Three of our teachers took time out of their personal lives to host a super-fun Singapore Math Game Night, providing hands-on games for parents and students. Thank you, Mandi Smith, Megan Gerdts and Janet Riley for showing us all how to have fun with math!

Thank you to all families for contributing to our canned food drive! Grades 1,2 and 3 were able to completely fill the bins provided by Monument Crisis Center! All three bins were overflowing! Our school collected a total of 1,038 lbs. This will go on to feed over 2,000 meals to families in this area!

All grade levels made huge contributions. Thank you to all for your kindness and generosity.

Thank you to Ms. Petty for coordinating this effort!
VOLUNTEERS of the MONTH: NOVEMBER

For the month of November, we would like to acknowledge the tremendous efforts of the following parent volunteers:

Emily Fischer, for graciously taking on the hefty task of putting together our school directory. Countless hours were spent on data entry, formatting pages and following up with families. Here is what one parent said about Emily: "Emily did all of this while working full-time as a teacher (grading papers, filling out report cards, scheduling conferences)! What a hero!"

Joline Sewell, for leading her “Cans for Camp” crew of Fourth and Fifth Grade parents and students. Each week, she coordinates the gathering, sorting and transport of CA-CRV recyclables for redemption. Here is what one parent said about Joline: "She has done so much for the program, collecting cans, lining up volunteers, rallying the troops, etc. Joline is amazing."

Claire Weer, for being an extraordinary resource on campus. New to our school, she has stepped up to help out in the carline after school and is a dedicated volunteer during motor skills. Here is what one parent said about Claire: "Claire helps out with 1st grade motor skills a lot, she helps the children to their cars when school gets out, etc"

Suzanne Chaix for her work on our Restaurant Night fundraisers. Each year, DBPC provides Restaurant Nights as a means for fundraising and community building. In past years, this fundraiser was a little, uh... how should we say... lackluster? Since Suzanne took over the task of managing Restaurant Nights, we have seen tremendous results! Here is what one parent said about Suzanne: "She has been rocking the restaurant night fundraisers!! Her effort has produced some of our most successful events. She makes an effort to get to know the other families in the MG community and she can always be counted on to pitch in and go above and beyond whenever there's a need."
**2013- 2014 Monte Gardens Year at a Glance**

*(Please note that dates and events are subject to change)*

### DECEMBER

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 – 6</td>
<td>5th Grade Outdoor Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Last sign up day for Kindergarten 2014-15 Lottery – including SIBLINGS of MG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Winter Social ticket orders due</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 9 – 20| **Conference Weeks**  
|       | **Early Dismissal (12:45 PM) Grades 1-5**                           |
| 10    | 2014-2015 Kindergarten Lottery                                       |
| 11    | Restaurant Night: Red Robin                                          |
| 14    | Winter Social (Saturday morning)                                     |
| 16    | Restaurant Night: Chipotle                                           |
| 16    | Square 1 Art Orders are in                                           |
| 17    | ELAC Meeting                                                         |
| 20    | Sports Basement Holiday Party 6:30-8:30                               |
| **12/23-1/3** | Winter Break - No School                                                                 |

### JANUARY

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<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Spring</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Flower Power Fundraiser</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>School resumes</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Kindergarten Pre-Registration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>DBPC Meeting: 8:15 AM</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>MLK Birthday Holiday - No School</td>
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### FEBRUARY

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Lincoln’s Birthday – No School</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Restaurant Night: E.J. Phair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Science Fair</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Fall In Love With Reading</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>President’s Day – No School</td>
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<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>DBPC Meeting: 8:15 AM</td>
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### MARCH

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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Restaurant Night: Digger’s Diner</td>
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<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>DBPC Meeting: 8:15 AM</td>
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<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Walk-A-Thon</td>
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### APRIL

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Restaurant Night: Bambino’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>DBPC Meeting: 8:15 AM</td>
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<tr>
<td>21 – 25</td>
<td><strong>Spring Recess – No School</strong></td>
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<td>TBA DBPC Elections</td>
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### MAY

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<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Restaurant Night: Panda Express</td>
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<tr>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>Family Fun Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>DBPC Meeting: 8:15 AM</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>Memorial Day Holiday – No School</td>
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### JUNE

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<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Restaurant Night : Skipolini’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Last Day of School</td>
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Monte Gardens Elementary  
3841 Larkspur Drive  
Concord, CA 94519  
(925) 685-3834  
Attendance Hotline: 682-8000 x4469  
[http://montegardens.mdusd.org](http://montegardens.mdusd.org)