



# River Montessori Foundation

## A Message From the Foundation Chair...

It's difficult to believe we're only in our fifth month at River (*well, except for our founding families...who have been on a much, much longer journey!*). Still, can you feel the organic nature of our community as we are growing, shifting, adjusting?

There are so many ways we are becoming connected - at drop off or pick up, volunteering in the classroom, through meetings and committees, or our children's play dates -- as they explore their own new and already established friend-

ships. We families are weaving ourselves - moms and dads, students, siblings, friends, teachers - together into a beautiful and sturdy fabric, most evident at our wonderfully attended recent family event, the pajama/ book exchange. Even as our fabric strengthens, we continue to find our way as River community members and partners, just as our children find their way as students, friends, helpmates and guides (to each other and to us!).

We are all learning about our school and each other...and, there is much

joy and excitement in this. Still, there are vulnerabilities, passions, and expectations. It is easy to forget about being patient with the process of being beginners again, and to attribute the bumps in the road as failures, rather than as opportunities to move forward in community.

Without a doubt, we will have more growing and stretching, and there will likely be disappointments along the way. What I do know is that we are a GREAT group of parents, teachers and staff, here

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## River's 3rd Annual Pancake Breakfast

**Saturday, February 27th**  
**8:00-11:00**  
**Elim Lutheran Church,**  
**Fellowship Hall**  
**504 Baker Street**  
**Petaluma**  
**Adults \$10 Kids \$5**

Come help with this terrific, family-friendly event. It's such a fun day and it all goes to a good

cause.

There are various volunteer opportunities available Sign up to volunteer:

**Set-up:** Friday, Feb. 26, 2010 after 6:00pm

**Day of the Event:** Saturday, Feb. 27, 2010

- **kitchen staff** (dishwashers, coffee, cooks): 7:00 am - 11:00 am
- **servers:** 8:00 am -11:00 am
- **tickets sales:** 8:00 am - 11:00 am
- **greeters/seaters:** 8:00 am - 11:00 am
- **clean-up:** 11:00 am - 'til done

## Calling All Crafters!!

Do you knit? Crochet? Make bird houses? Quilt? Build? Create something with your hands? We need items for our upcoming raffles and to sell at our Rummage Sale. So, if there are handmade items that you have made or would like to make and then donate to raise money for River, please contact Cindy Lohrentz at 765-6448 or e-mail her at: [clohrentz@juno.com](mailto:clohrentz@juno.com)"

## Third Annual River Rummage Sale

Start putting aside your useful, sellable, no-longer-wanted items to donate to the River Rummage Sale which will be happening in May. Check with your neighbors, family and friends. This sale usually raises around \$1200 and this year, *we want to triple that* Information about storing items will be available in next month's newsletter. Want to volunteer? Contact Cindy Lohrentz at 765-6448 or [clohrentz@juno.com](mailto:clohrentz@juno.com)

### Family Events

Wasn't the Pajama Book Exchange Great! It was a great opportunity for the kids to have fun and for parents to talk to each other. We are looking for a parent to help with creating and coordinating a calendar of events to bring our community together in the future. We are also looking for folks interested in leading and participating on the River Family Events Committee. Contact Julie Carolan if you would be interested.

### River Wear

If you missed it in December, You have another chance to purchase river wear. Fill out the River Wear Order Form in the front lobby and return it with your check by **January 27th**. All profits support programs at River.

## Grant Writing Team

Wouldn't it be great to have an Art teacher join the River staff? An Environmental Educator? A PE teacher? Or have 2 hours/week of music for our students next year? **All of this depends on us.**

Besides supporting our school with our monthly Sustainer checks, the River Foundation grant writing team is working on finding additional dol-

lars to be able to continue current programs and start new ones. We continue to seek funding for an Art program, shade for the playground, library materials, and music for the coming year, among other things. Join us, if you can, for a Grant Writing Team meeting at River on **February 17<sup>th</sup> at 6:30.**

Contact Cindy Lohrentz at 765-6448 or [clohrentz@juno.com](mailto:clohrentz@juno.com)



### Pizza Fridays

Pizza Fridays continue to be a BIG HIT! The children love it and we are raising dollars for River. *100 slices served in January!* In February, we will again offer a gluten-free, dairy-free option. To order the gluten/dairy free pizza for your student, fill out the blue pizza form in the lobby and put it in the Foundation Mailbox by Wednesday, February 3. Questions? Contact Cindy Lohrentz at 765-6448 or [clohrentz@juno.com](mailto:clohrentz@juno.com)

## Ongoing Fundraising Activities

Don't forget about our ongoing fundraising Events:

- **Boxtops-** [www.boxtops4education.com](http://www.boxtops4education.com)
- **eScrip-** <http://www.escrip.com/>
- **Brain Freeze-** Use your wallet size cards any time, or visit Brain Freeze every 3rd Monday of each month
- **Scholastic Book Sales-** Our classrooms benefited greatly through all of the credits earned by your pur-

# River Foundation

Don't forget, the River Foundation is YOUR foundation! **We are the parent - teacher & staff - community group for River Montessori Charter School.** Though we are off to a great start, with a wonderful group of parent supporters, **there is so much to do.** We want to build our committees: family events, website/newsletter, the grant writing team; sustainer committee...and more! There are various fundraising events and activities (Pancake Breakfast, Rock for River, River on the Green, River Dine & Dance, eScrip, Boxtops,

RiverWear, Scholastic Book Faire, Pizza Friday), with lots to plan, lots to do, and LOTS of fun and great learning for our kids! **We need your support!** Please join us the first Monday of each month at 7:00pm on site, at River.

## After School Enrichment

Look for information about upcoming enrichment classes in Friday backpack mail or in the front lobby. Science For Kids begins February 2nd!!

## A Special Thanks....

Thank you to **Ginny Hautau** for the beautiful Heron Fundraising Thermometer in front of River. It will help us to track our fundraising efforts and watch as we make progress toward attaining our goal of \$50,000 for the school year.



## Sustainer Commitment Campaign

Get ready for our February campaign, "**For the Love of River**"! You will recognize many fellow parents, as we reach out to you the week of February 8<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> in an effort to appeal to you and generate sustainer commitments. You may feel pushed, pulled, prodded...and even wonder why the tenacity!?! The bottom line is that we are serious

about realizing the financial goals we have set, and the support that the school is expecting. We are determined our children will continue to enjoy the rewarding learning experiences that we envision for them! Look for more information in backpack mail and posters as we gear up to accept your pledges!

## Thanks to Sustainers

**THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU** to all of our supporters who have made a sustainer commitment! You are ALL stars to the River community!!!



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at River!!! And, I trust that each of us has chosen to join River, with the best of intentions to build a joy-filled and abounding community, for our children and ourselves. I continue to be amazed at what our founding families have created, and am so grateful to be a part of the River community...in the successes, and through the challenges, we are on this new adventure together, and I feel greatly blessed to be in it with you!

## Commentary

Friends of River Montessori,  
I'm writing because we are about to begin a pledge drive for River. I spoke with Tim, my husband tonight about what effect the budget cuts from the State of California had on River during our first year of operations. The school received \$58,000 less than it would have without the cuts. This is serious.

We will be reaching out to every

family to financially support the school with a **monthly pledge** and asking for 100% participation. If you are already signed up, thank you, thank you, thank you. **It takes all of us!**

## Other Upcoming Events:

**April-Dine and Dance**

**September- River on the Green**

*...Mark your calendars!!!*

# Children and Exercise by Cindy Lohrentz, Volunteer School Nurse

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When most adults think about exercise, they imagine working out in the gym on a treadmill or lifting weights. But for children, exercise means playing and being physically active.

## The Many Benefits of Exercise

Everyone can benefit from regular exercise. Children who are active will:

- Have stronger bones and muscles
- Have a leaner body because exercise helps control body fat
- Be less likely to become overweight
- Decrease the risk of developing type 2 diabetes
- Possibly lower blood pressure and blood cholesterol levels
- Have a better outlook on life

Besides enjoying the health benefits of regular exercise, children who are physically fit sleep better and are better able to handle physical and emotional challenges - from running to catch a bus to concentrating on school work.

## The Three Elements of Fitness

If you have ever watched children on the playground, you've seen the three elements of fitness in action when they:

- Run away from the person who is "it" (**endurance**)
- Cross the monkey bars (**strength**)
- Bend down to tie their shoe (**flexibility**)

Parents should encourage their children to do a variety of activities so that they work on all three elements.

## The Sedentary Problem

The percentage of overweight children has doubled in the last 30 years. Although many factors contribute to this epidemic, children are becoming more sedentary. In other words, they are sitting around more than they used to.

According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, the average child is watching about **3 hours of television a day**. When you combine all screen media (TV, computer games, etc...it adds up to 5 ½ hours!

One of the best ways to help children become more active is to take charge of how much screen time children have. Limits will help your child become more active and healthier. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children under the age of 2 watch no television at all and that older children should be limited to 1-2 hours of QUALITY programming daily. Many of us are opting out of television all together.

## How much exercise is enough?

The recommendation is 60 minutes or more and children should not be inactive for more than 2 hours (unless sleeping).

## So, let's get going!

Help your child participate in a variety of activities that are age-appropriate

Establish a regular schedule for physical activity

Incorporate activity into daily routines, such as taking stairs instead of elevators

Embrace a healthier lifestyle yourself, so you'll be a positive role model for your family.

Keep it fun, so you can count on your child to come back for more.