



**ROSALIE RENDU
C E N T E R**

Rosalie Rendu Center ... where seeds are planted
1760 Bay Road, #24, East Palo Alto, CA 94303
(650) 473-9522 • www.rosalie-rendu-center.org

Spring 2010

Rosalie Rendu Center Advisory Board

Sr. Trinitas Hernandez, D.C.
Executive Director

Sally Falkenhagen
Advisory Board Chair

Sr. Fran Ciluaga, D.C.

Debbie Denton

Carrie Du Bois

Sr. Betty Marie Dunkel, D.C.

Sr. Paule Freeberg, D.C.

Julie Mahowald

Dan Marshall

Sr. Mary Loretta Pitino, D.C.

Marianne Stoner

Melanie Yunk

IN THIS ISSUE

- *Parent Involvement Program at the RRC*
- *2010 Friends Luncheon*
- *RRC Website Gets a Facelift*
- *Volunteer Spotlight*
- *RRC Needs*
- *Thanks to Our Generous Donors*

A Message From Sister T

Dear Friends,

Sitting here at my computer my head is filled with so many happy thoughts that I want to share with you. I guess I should start from the last time I wrote which was in the fall.

Thanksgiving was celebrated with several families, 80 people in all, at Maltby's Restaurant in Los Altos, a beautiful place that serves delicious food and treats our families like "Family." One of the students told me how surprised she was that Katie and James' family and friends did the serving and not paid staff. Maltby's is great if you are ever looking for a great place to relax and enjoy a delicious meal.

The Angels were extra busy this Christmas wrapping, delivering and bringing joy to many little ones. The Playschool staff and families and the Daughters of Charity Health System Office associates were busy spreading good cheer and making dreams come true.

In January, Sister Mary Loretta, Rick Anderson and I began our classes anew with several new students and have been going strong since. In fact we were able to add a new class. Having Sister on our team has given us the ability to serve more students and with Sister's help I may even begin to get organized.

Of course this year's big event was our 2010 Friends Luncheon. It was wonderful to see so many former volunteers and donors who came to help us celebrate 12 years of serving adults and children at the Rosalie Rendu Center. David Herrera, Principal at Cesar Chavez Academy, gave us much to think about, especially helping our incoming high school student transition into large high schools out of the area.

At our Cinco de Mayo party I spoke with Sonia Sanchez, now in her second year at UC Berkeley, about her early days in college, a huge transition for children coming from EPA. She said, "At first there was no one person to go to," which made it uncomfortable in the beginning. She felt academically prepared; it was just the "people support" one has living in a close-knit family, that was lacking. Now Sonia has settled in and is doing well and is considering Law as her major.

The patio plants are growing as are the children living here. Our special Homework Club Volunteers are preparing a wonderful summer program where more seeds will be planted to keep our children connected and focused through the summer.

Without your help and support no flowers would grow or flourish at 1760 Bay Road. I thank you and bless you for all your care and support of the programs here at the RRC.

Sister Trinitas Hernandez, D.C., Executive Director



Sponsored by the
Daughters of Charity Ministry Services Corporation

Parent Involvement Program

At The Rosalie Rendu Center

Principal David Herrera spoke about the Parent Involvement Program during his keynote speech last week at the Rosalie Rendu Center's 2010 Friends' Luncheon. He described it as one of the great success stories at his school. As he spoke, three former students of the Center glowed in the audience. Martha Perez, Nancy Alvarez and Imelda Jovel now participate as Parent Involvement workers at the Ravenswood School District, and it is their work that Herrera described so eloquently. According to Mr. Herrera, these women have not only lifted up the spirits of parents, but have also lifted up the entire school community.

Shortly after Sister Trinitas Hernandez opened the Center, Bill Somerville came to her with a new idea. He had heard about a teacher in East Palo Alto who had

difficulty communicating with the parents of her students. The teacher didn't speak Spanish, yet 80 percent of her students' parents were new immigrants and just learning to speak English. This gave Somerville the idea of starting a Parent Involvement Program, with translators working as liaisons between the teacher

for the job. Perez initially was hesitant but eventually agreed to become a translator.

Perez soon discovered this was the ideal job for a young stay-at-home mother with two small boys. Most of her work was done on the telephone at her convenience. Soon, she began to spend more time at the school. The first year Perez worked, parent participation increased from 5 percent to 100 percent at the annual back to school night. Parents were relieved and excited to have a new translator work with them. Perez has been in the program for 11 years. Nancy Alvarez and Imelda Jovel soon followed, and this wonderful program served even more parents.

The women earn \$15 to \$25 an hour and work part time. They also earn occasional bonuses. "The work is very good, and I enjoy it so much," Perez said.

Computer equipment recently was stolen during a break-in at Cesar Chavez Academy. Because one of the parent involvement workers had thought to contact the press about the incident, newspaper articles generated new equipment donations and a new alarm system for the school.

Herrera also mentioned that first-ever PTA groups are now being formed with the help of the Parent Involvement workers. Sister T said of the program, "What I like most about this program is that it has filtered down to all the family members. As the women became more involved with public education, they became more convinced that their children would succeed in high school. Nancy Alvarez became so passionate she started taking classes at Canada College and now wants to become a teacher. Each of the women started with small steps but now give back in very big ways. This program is one of the greatest success stories of the Rosalie Rendu Center."



Parent Involvement Workers from left to right, Martha Perez, Nancy Alvarez and Imelda Jovel

and the parents. When Somerville asked Sister T about recommending her students for the job, she was immediately enthusiastic. Martha Perez was the first student from the Center recommended

RRC Website Gets a Facelift!

Our new website, produced by Bullfrog Media (www.bullfrog-media.com), is up and running. You will find the history of the Center, our events calendar, volunteer opportunities, success stories, our newsletter and an online donation page. Visit us soon at

www.rosalie-rendu-center.org



Thank You!

The Rosalie Rendu Center is grateful for a generous grant from the Palo Alto Community Fund. The grant will be used to help the Center enhance the quality of the English language instruction by hiring a certified Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) instructor. This teacher will teach part time, train our volunteer teachers in best practices, guide development of metrics for placing students and measuring their progress, and advise on enhancement of the curriculum.

2010 Friends Luncheon

On Wednesday, April 28th the Rosalie Rendu Center hosted the 2010 Friends Luncheon, "Growing through Education". Although outside it was raining off and on, the inside of the Parish Hospitality Center at St. Elizabeth Seton School was cheerful and lively. Bill Somerville, president and founder of Philanthropic Ventures Foundation gave a short history of the Center and introduced the keynote speaker, David Herrera, principal of Cesar Chavez Academy in East Palo Alto. Mr. Herrera shared with the guests some of the struggles that his 5th through 8th grade students encounter



Principal David Herrera at the Luncheon

and emphasized the importance of parent involvement in a child's education. He gave examples of how the Parent Involvement Workers encourage and support the parents at his school. They help parents stay in contact with teachers and have created programs that have brought parents in contact with the whole school community. Guests in the audience were inspired by Mr. Herrera's presentation and after the luncheon were talking about what they could do to help. We thank all of the Center helpers for their hard work preparing the wonderful meal and serving!

Thanks to Our Generous Donors!

Donations received from May 2009 to May 2010

INDIVIDUALS

Lucie Marie & Keith Albee
 Richard Anderson
 John & Marlene Arnold
 Elizabeth J. Asher
 Terry L. Atkinson
 Erlinda Banzon
 Susan A. Barkan
 Ignacio I. Barragan
 Sam & Trisha Battles
 Missy Bechtel
 Lynn & Daniel Benas
 Christine Blackburn
 Christine & Ed Brackenbury
 Richard & Carolyn Brennan
 Victor & Barbara Carranza
 George & Ruth Chippendale
 Colin & Kathleen Cho
 Sister Fran Ciluaga, D.C.
 George Clark &
 Susan Williams-Clark
 Robert Cook
 Marian Daly
 Frederique Dame
 Mary Anne Daniels
 Johnny Dawkins
 William De Mers
 Paul & Deborah Denton
 Vincent DeSalvo
 Murali & Priya Dharan
 Sandra Marie Dhuey
 Carrie Drake
 Grant & Carrie Du Bois
 Duane Bay & Barbara Noparstak
 Alain & Rosemary Enthoven
 Craig & Sally Falkenhagen
 Margaret Feuer
 Bret & Caitie Field
 Diana Ford
 Sister Paule Freeburg, D.C.
 Victor R. Fuchs
 Wendy Garrish
 Gail Gavello
 Barbara Gelpi
 Barry & Claire Goss
 Daniel & Marian Graney
 Dean & Michele Grason
 Robert Grassilli
 Lester Gray & Elizabeth
 Wooten
 Diane Guinta
 Craig & Wendy Haesemeyer
 Elsie Hirscher
 Mark & Pallavi Homan
 Tim & Miriam Huntley
 Ann Idzik
 Delia Itanen
 Stephan & Heather Keller
 David & Maureen Kennedy
 William & Donna Krepick
 Joan L'Heureux
 Kathy & Michael Ladra
 Mildred Lee
 Margaret & Craig London
 Ron & Marilyn Long
 Neil & Alisa MacAvoy
 Peter & Julie Mahowald
 Estefana Mares
 Sister Charlotte Marie Clark, D.C.
 Perry Marlon
 Dan Marshall
 Shelly Masur
 Lucy McCrary
 Patrick & Nancy McGaraghan
 Patty McGraw
 Betsy McSherry
 Kent & Melanie Yunk
 Annie Melikian
 Jon & Danielle Mewes
 Loretta Mingram
 Mark & Elizabeth Moragne
 Terri Muschott
 Ginny & Chuck Nile
 Jo Jean Nuanes
 John & Cecilia O'Driscoll
 John Orcutt & Martha Edwards
 Henry Organ
 Brian & Karen Osborn
 Carmen & Nicholas Pekelsma
 Robert & Martha Perez
 Cathie Perga
 Peter & Margaret Perrone
 Chris & Naomi Peters
 William & Beatrice Peterson
 Mary Pickford
 Dave Pine
 Ruth Pinkus-Resnik
 Claire Quesnel &
 Sharic Queini
 Garrett & Jennifer Rice
 David & Sue Riggs
 Carl & Sarah Rosendahl
 Karen & Steven Ross
 Ira Ruskin

Debbie & Bob Scheidtman
 Todd Schroeder
 Jane & William Stocklin
 Marianne & John Stoner
 Andrew & Aimee Swanson
 Janice Sweeney
 Lisa & Tom Tayeri
 Charles & Elaine Travers
 Anne Vitullo & Jonathan Poe
 Alexandra & Randall
 Von Feldt
 Charles & Sandy Welch
 Clark & Cheryl Westmont
 Dean & Laura Winslow
 Woman's Club of Palo Alto
 Jan Woolsey
 Amy Wright
 Kent & Melanie Yunk
 Anna Zara & Robert English
 Renee Zimmerman

FOUNDATIONS

The Carl Gellert & Celia
 Berta Gellert Foundation
 Daughters of Charity
 Foundation
 Palo Alto Community Fund
 Philanthropic Ventures
 Foundation
 Schniedwind Family Trust

IN KIND DONATIONS

Carrie DuBois
 Genesis Photography
 Julie's Fine Gifts
 Marianne Stoner
 Melanie's Fine Foods, Inc.
 Sally Falkenhagen
 Starbucks
 Trellis Restaurant

We do our best to include all donors in our list and apologize if we've inadvertently missed your name. Please send omissions to rosalierendu@yahoo.com



Volunteer Spotlight

Richard “Dick” Brennan’s friends kid him when he says he is retired—they say, “Retired from what?” Dick, who recently celebrated his 88th birthday with a Zeppelin tour over San Francisco, is a regular volunteer at the Rosalie Rendu Center’s Monday morning Conversation Club. Dick and his wife Carolyn, have a long time affiliation with the St. Elizabeth Seton School. Carolyn was on the school board and currently teaches Art in Action. Sister T spotted Dick when he drove some Seton School students, who attend Hidden Villa summer camp on scholarship, back to their homes after camp. The East Palo Alto students were recruited by George Chippendale—and Sister T told Dick that if he “works” for George, then he has to come to “work” for her! Never one to turn down a chance to help, Dick comes twice per month to speak English with women who are comfortable speaking at a basic level and want to learn more.

Dick had a long time career as a science writer and technical editor in the aerospace industry and in a Washington, D.C. think tank. Since he retired, he has published three books about science, including *Heisenberg Probably Slept Here* and *The Dictionary of Scientific Literacy*. The Spanish version of the *Dictionary* is on the Center’s bookshelf and recently came in handy for a mom. Dick assigned each of the moms some homework. Each mom picked a topic they were interested in learning about. They were to do the research, write a short English paper about what they learned and do a short presentation in class. One mom chose global warming and used Dick’s book to help write a very interesting paper. Dick is a great example to our families, showing them that there is so much more



Volunteer Dick Brennan with Elena.

life to live after retirement. He also shows that learning never stops. We were all amazed when we found out that when Dick leaves the Rosalie Rendu Center, he goes to take a tennis lesson! He believes in the idea of life long learning!

We are always looking for volunteers for our Monday morning conversation club at 10:30 a.m. at the Center. There are a lot of students who have basic English skills who are eager to practice them! Maybe you can help?

Help the Rosalie Rendu Center Reach Our Vision

At the Rosalie Rendu center, our vision for our families is: Every client is educated, financially independent, integrated into the community and computer literate.

WISH LIST

- School supplies for K-12, including one- and two- inch binders
- New back packs for all ages
- Monetary support for the Center’s programming

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Volunteering at The Rosalie Rendu Center is easy and fun. We provide meaningful volunteer opportunities at a variety of times during the day and evening, and we’ll train you before you begin helping out. Consider:

- **Conversation Club** – Spend ninety minutes on Monday morning talking with adult students from the Center. Individual conversation practice with our volunteers may be the most valuable tool available to our students. Additional days will come available as more volunteers sign up.
- **Evening English** – Join a seasoned volunteer to help provide more individualized instruction.
- **Homework Club** – Come twice a month on Tuesday or Thursday to help our young students with homework and reading.
- **Financial Management** – The Center offers life skills classes when our students indicate interest. We are planning to offer a simple, practical class in financial management, and we’re looking for a teacher and a curriculum.

For more information, please contact Sister Trinitas Hernandez at (650) 473-9522.

