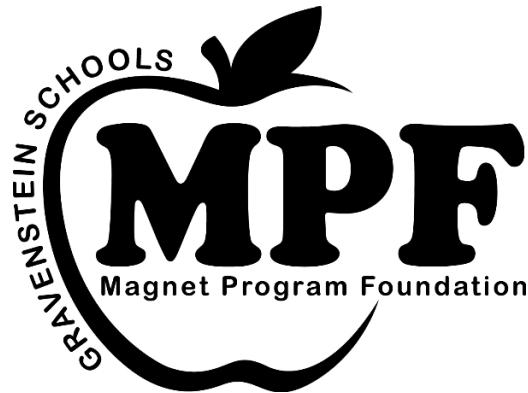


Wondering what's happening with MPF? Here's the latest on our budget, volunteer opportunities and other exciting news from the program.



## MPF News & Updates

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### **President's Message: ENRICH!. . . Not Just For Kids Anymore**



By Jim Barrios, MPF Board President

As parents, we are constantly amazed at our children's progress in this incredible thing called ENRICH! The program's faculty consistently goes above and beyond to challenge our children in academics and the arts and to introduce them to new ideas and perspectives in the educational process. But if you think it is only your child that is benefiting from ENRICH!, you are missing an enormous component of what the program offers.

It was back in 2006 when my son Zach entered ENRICH!. At that time the program was called REACH. My wife, Kelley, and I began that frequent, obligatory rotation through school socials, meetings and events. We would pile into the car rolling our eyes about having to squeeze in one more school event between a doctor's appointment and a long day at work. But a funny thing happened along the way.

We started enjoying these gatherings. Acquaintances quickly started becoming longtime friends. Our family began spending time with other families who had the same vested interest in this educational process. And as much as my wife and I enjoyed spending time with these other great parents, it was our kids who were reaping the benefits because there was this "buy-in" from their parents.

It is one thing when a child enjoys time with a school friend. It takes on a whole new dimension when your child also knows that his/her parents enjoy spending time with the friend's family. It creates an extension of a safe place to learn and to grow.

Kelley and I cannot imagine ENRICH! today without the faces of so many fun and interesting

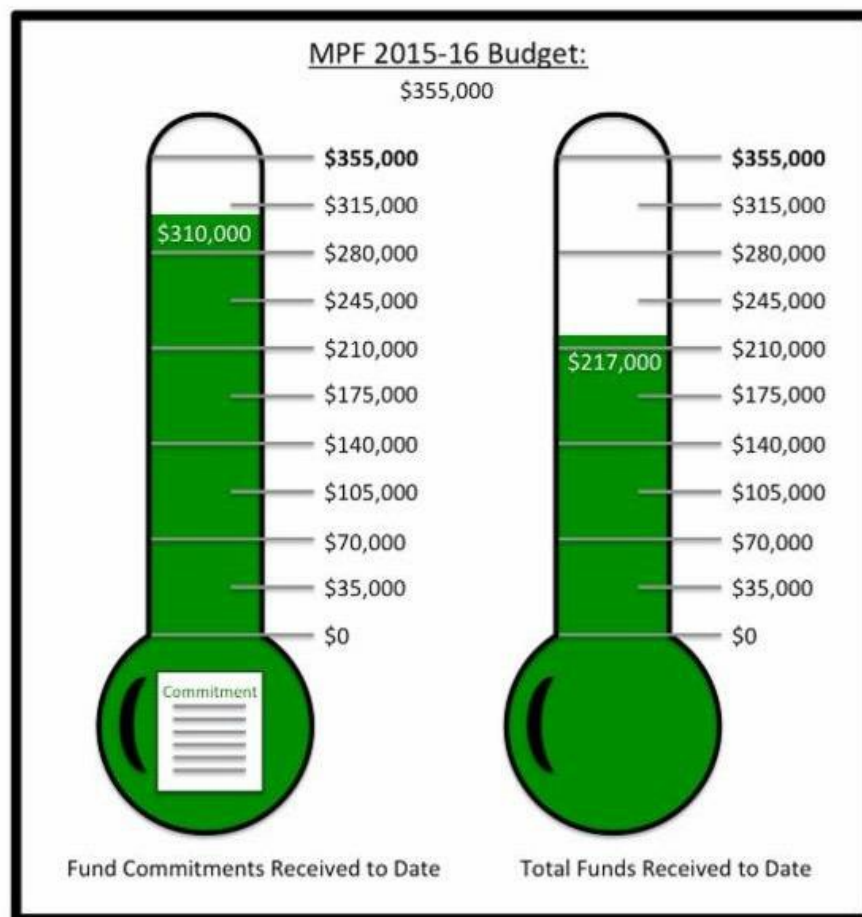
parents who we now count as great friends. Many of these parents even share our same core values and beliefs in education, recreation, and other important aspects of life. We have also befriended ENRICH! parents who have very different views from our own. These parents, these friends, continually give us a moment of pause in examining different perspectives and approaches in raising families. And while their views may differ from ours, we find them to be people of strong moral character and, quite frankly, people that we just enjoy being around.

If you haven't been to an ENRICH! social event or meeting recently, consider making that special guest appearance. At that event, start up one conversation with a parent you don't know from your child's class. I can guarantee you that one conversation will surprise you with what you may have in common with another family and how much your children enjoy learning and playing with one another. Bonds will be established. Friendships will grow. The investment you have in your child's educational future will strengthen. And you might just find that your involvement in ENRICH! grows along the way.

- jim

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## Fundraising Snapshot



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## Reports from the Field(trips):

These are just a few of the field trips and activities funded by MPF in December.

## **Finding Their Roots - 2nd grade**

The first week of returning to school in 2016 was highlighted with a historical and widely diversified ethnic celebration called Heritage Day on Wednesday, January 6th. Heritage Day provided an opportunity for second graders to showcase their ethnic diversity, which was celebrated in the MPR at Gravenstein. Students dressed up in the ethnic attire of their family and brought culinary delights from their ethnic background to share with classmates and other students. Each student was asked to create an informative display of the country he/she was representing. Some of the countries represented included Norway, Mexico, Austria, Portugal, Korea, Ireland and Germany. Several students from other classes visited the displays created by the second graders and enjoyed sampling the yummy treats from around the world.



## **Time Travel to Sonoma - 4th Grade**

In December both 4th grade Enrich! classes visited the historic Sonoma Mission and General Vallejo's home in Sonoma to broaden their understanding of our states history. A docent at the Mission explained how hard life was for the Spanish missionaries, explorers and most of all for the native peoples put to work at the mission. Students learned that they had to give up their native names and customs. After touring the mission and army barracks we took a nice walk to Gen. Mariano Vallejo's home, Lachryma Montis. Another energetic docent demonstrated the struggles Vallejo faced during the transition from Spanish rule to U.S. rule and then the gold rush. Students were surprised to learn that Vallejo's well-to-do daughters were required to render the tallow for candles, a rather unpleasant chore. History came to life in Sonoma.



## **6th Graders get exclusive access to Gotham**

The 6th grade Enrich! Classes visited AT&T Park to discuss statistics and get a tour of our home team's palace. Students discussed math and baseball statistics with an educator and then were treated to a visit to the away team's locker room and dugout. Students were so well behaved they were allowed a visit to the prestigious Gotham club, typically only accessible to members. Our docent said he had never had a school group admitted before, which he felt was proof our kids must be something special. I think we would all agree.



## Building Community

MPF Social Coordinators organize socials for their grade levels to help build the MPF community. As with sports and extra curricular activities it takes a community to make exceptional experiences happen.



## The 8th Graders are Cooking!

This year Mrs. Sporrer's and Mr. Shore's 8th Grade ENRICH! students made a cookbook. The cookbook is filled with favorite family recipes --all made from scratch! Recipes include salads, appetizers, dinners, desserts, you name it! Shortly before winter break the 8th grade ENRICH! students and their teachers planned a lunch time feast. Students brought in dishes (recipes from the cookbook) and put tables outside between the two 8th grade classroom. There was plenty of food for all to try each other's dishes and tons of leftovers. It was a great turn out for being the first time, and the teachers hope to do it next year.

-- Valentina Virji, 8th grade, Mr. Shore's class

## 6th Graders Care

On Dec. 18th the 6th grade Enrich! classes met for a winter social at Screamin' Mimi's ice creamshop. This year we decided on an outreach program that would support one of the local shelters. The classes collaborated with Shoebox Ministries and filled shoeboxes with items and toiletries for the Homeless Service Center in Santa Rosa. We filled over 30 shoeboxes and 5 grocery bags with socks, soap, toothbrushes, combs and other



necessities for homeless men in the area. Students then delivered the shoeboxes on Dec. 21st in time for the Christmas holiday. We'd like to thank all the families who donated items, wrapped boxes and participated in so many other ways to make this event successful and to be an important part in the life of local homeless men. We look forward to continuing this outreach program in the years to come.

-- Amanda Rose



## Our Kids are Hometown Heroes!

The students of Gravenstein Elementary have been selected as Hometown Heroes by KZST 100.1 radio for the school-wide community service project they completed in December. Students gathered many items for the families of Middletown Elementary School who were victims of the Valley Fire. Ms. Mattish & Mrs. Hillier were the organizers of this wonderful project and we are so proud of their efforts.

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## MPF Donor Testimonial

As a new family to Gravenstein I'd like to share our enthusiasm for the ENRICH! program. As we searched for a school we heard very good things about the program. When our daughter was accepted into the Kindergarten class we were excited at the opportunities for our daughter. The additional subjects and longer day have paid off and she is very excited about school and is learning more in kindergarten than we anticipated. The monetary contribution that is requested to support the program is a very small price for all the return to our daughter's education. All parents say they want to do everything possible for their children. The advantages of this program, at a cost much less than daycare, demonstrates we all need to make contributions, at whatever level, to keep the program intact. We're hoping the program will still be viable when our younger daughter is old enough for kindergarten.

-- Bill Nolan, father of Lulu Nolan, Mrs. Hanchey's class

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## MPF Board News

At the last board meeting two new board members were elected to the board. The board is excited to welcome Bill Nolan and Sean Miles as new members. The board consists entirely of volunteers and we are excited to have help in this work from our new members.



## Board Meeting Date Change

The date of the April MPF Board meeting has been changed to April 27th at 4pm so that we may meet with teachers after their work day has ended. If you would like to attend future meetings the board appreciates input from all our parents. Dates for the remaining meetings this year are:

February 17th - 6pm

March 16th - 6pm

April 27th - 4pm

May 18th - 6pm

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## MPF Enrich! in now on Facebook!

Always on Facebook? Well now we are too. Like "[Gravenstein Union Schools MPF Enrich](#)" to keep up on all the latest activities and events. This

is also a great way to get reminders about Enrich functions and board meetings.



## **MPF received \$2000 in 2015 as matching gifts.**

### **Will your company match your donation?**

Company matching donations are an excellent way to maximize contributions to MPF. In fact, depending on the company, employer-matching gifts can double or even triple the original donor's gift.



What is a company matching donation?

A company matching donation, or matching gift, is when a person makes a donation to a non-profit organization and their employer donates an additional amount, often equal or greater than the employee's donation.

How do I know if my employer matches my donation?

To find out if your company does matching gifts your Human Resources department for specific information on whether they have a matching program and how to request a matching donation.

Visit the MPF  
Website

## **Supporting MPF is Easier Than Ever!**

Each family's donation is essential for funding the enrichment classes, social events, and field trips that make up our ENRICH! program. To help make donating as easy as possible, Drop-Off boxes are in both school offices for your monthly donations. No stamps needed, just drop off your monthly donation in a sealed envelope. Boxes will be emptied on an approximately weekly basis allowing timely processing of checks. Please do not leave cash.



You can also make your monthly donation to MPF by credit or debit card. Simply fill out the form at [http://gravenstein-mpf.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/MPF\\_Credit\\_Card\\_Form.pdf](http://gravenstein-mpf.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/MPF_Credit_Card_Form.pdf) and mail it to the address below. Then, your credit/debit card will automatically be charged each month at the pledge rate you have set.

MPF  
c/o Alice Christensen  
P.O. Box 750036  
Petaluma, CA 94975

Please note that all major credit/debit cards are accepted, with the exception of American Express. If you have any questions about the status of your Donation Commitment Form, contact Alice Christensen at [mpfalice@gmail.com](mailto:mpfalice@gmail.com).

Thanks for taking the time to read about our amazing ENRICH! program. As always, feel free to contact us with any questions.

Sincerely,

The MPF Newsletter Team  
(Jim Barrios and Beth Craven)

Gravenstein Magnet Parent Foundation | [mpfcontacts@gmail.com](mailto:mpfcontacts@gmail.com) | <http://gravenstein-mpf.org>