

Future Entrepreneurs Give Back To Community

"RICHMOND STREET SCHOOL STUDENTS OPERATE STUDENT STORE FOR WORTHY CAUSE"

By Jack Plotkin

In an economy of bank failures and corporate mismanagement, 3rd graders at Richmond Street School are learning some other lessons about entrepreneurship: ones focusing on responsibility, work ethic, and civic duty. After an in-depth study of economic principles, students raised over \$600 operating a one-week student store at the school. The classes will donate the \$600+ of profit to two local needy families and El Segundo's Old Town Music Hall. Not only did they donate their proceeds, they learned about economic principles, practiced responsible spending, and developed on-the-job skills. "I really learned how much I could buy while still saving some money," explains 3rd grader Kami Davis, touching on a skill many of us still have not mastered.

Davis and her fellow students worked the week-long student store as the culmination of an economics unit. Over several weeks, teachers and students explored supply and demand, resources, inventory, marketing, and production. With their newfound knowledge, students filled out job applications for positions in the student store, ranging from sales associates, graphic designers, and bankers to public relations personnel and peace officers.

"I liked the advertising part," exclaims third grader Rosy Watkins. "When we announced we lowered the price of stuffed farm animals, there was this mad rush!" The store's popularity and the student skill in marketing and adjusting prices to meet demand allowed for a sizable return on investment.

The efforts of the teachers, the driving force behind this project, enabled the children's success. The 3rd grade team – Susan Saxonberg, Amanda Igi, Cathy Teitelbaum, Stacy Feinbloom, and Katie Gilbert – came \$600.00 out of pocket to make the initial investment for the inventory. Although this is a significant sum, the teachers expressed the need for students understand real world economic behavior in light of our current crisis.

"Kids certainly know what money is," notes Teitelbaum, "but many are not sure where it comes from or what to do with it. This experience helps them to build a more informed foundation for their future thinking and decision making regarding money."

However, the decision to donate the profits to local families was an easy one. Jake Collins, 3rd grader in Saxonberg's class explains: "some people believe kids just think about toys and playing, but on the inside, we really care about people." Two families will receive Target gift cards of \$250 each, and the class will donate the additional \$100 to the Old Town Music Hall who recently hosted the classes on a field trip.

The students completed the economics unit with a sense of pride and a firm foundation in economic principles, and two needy families will receive some economic relief. Third grader Jessica Martin confirmed the power of students to contribute to the community: "even though we're just kids, we can do a lot. Money is money no matter who earns it or gives it." And she couldn't be more right.

ESUSD Arts Festival Provides Something for Everyone



STUDENTS LARGE AND SMALL SWARM ESHS TO ENJOY ARTS ON DISPLAY

If as Ralph Waldo Emerson stated, "Every artist was first an amateur," then many of ESUSD's young artists have moved well beyond those ranks according to the extraordinary showing of local talent on display the afternoon of May 28 at El Segundo High School. The entire south side of the campus was awash in music, art, wood working, bubble blowing, face painting, sculpture, clay tile sales and much more. This year the Arts Fair even hosted a "Special Guest," which turned out to be the Marine Biology

In the woodshop, student projects were also on display, with everything from beautifully finished nightstands to cutting boards, to jewelry boxes to chessboards and CD holders. In the art room everything from oils to pastels to sculptures and ceramics boasted the collective work of budding ESHS artists. Down the hall in the photography room amazing photos shot by students lined the walls, along with efforts from the Graphic Arts classes that looked as though they were pages ripped straight out of magazines they were so vivid and professional.

While kids squealed with delight outside as they struggled to twist balloons into hats, a more serious air prevailed in the science lab, where students from the Marine Biology class displayed their Ballona Wetlands science projects. Projects ranged from testing the purity of El Segundo's drinking water to the amount of pollutants in the wetlands and its effect on wildlife. Luckily for El Segundo, the water tested at a 7.5 ph, very close to neutral and akin to distilled water. Unfortunately some of the fish in the wetlands didn't fare as well, as pollutants tended to have a deleterious effect on their well-being.

Outside a student strummed a ukulele, adding his personal touch to the magic of the arts as viewers continued to buzz between displays and booths, enjoying the afternoon. Scott Adams, creator of Dilbert, best summed up the artistic journey when he said, "Creativity is allowing oneself to make mistakes. Art is knowing which ones to keep."

Going by that definition, El Segundo Unified has quite a few "keepers."



Science Fair adjacent to the quad in the E building facing Mariposa Avenue.

The Cougar Choir from Center Street School serenaded passers-by on their way to the south quad, where music of another sort, specifically "Gloria," rocked from a boom box in the arts building. Students from the middle school helped little kids with chalk drawings on the pavement, while booths were set up for guests to create photo grams, make bead bracelets, indulge in face painting and create refrigerator magnets.

Center Street art student work was on display, as well as Richmond Street's Studio 109, a parent supported group started by parent Jon Barber, a professional photographer who decided to get other parents involved in their children's art educations. Videography of student projects played on a computer screen as enthralled viewers oohed and aahed at the level of sophistication of the young artists' works.



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