SAVE THE DATE!

for Fun, Film and Festivities to benefit the Richmond District Neighborhood Center

Thursday, October 11, 5:30-9:30pm at Zephyr Café and the Balboa Theater

details at www.rdnc.org

NEW ADVENTURES

CHARLES CORSIGLIA:

AWAIT

“What I am most proud of is that we have an outstanding after school program, a model that could fit in anywhere.”

Charles Corsiglia at the 2012 Spring Arts Showcase

With mixed emotions, the staff and community of the Richmond District Neighborhood Center will bid a fond farewell and happy retirement to Charles Corsiglia this September. Charles is Senior Director of the Richmond District After School Collaborative (RDASC) and oversees the popular after school programs at Argonne, Alamo, George Peabody, and Lafayette elementary schools. He has been on staff fourteen years and previously was principal of Roosevelt Middle School.

RDNC: How did RDASC begin and what was your role?
CC: In 1994, after the school district had cut back on funding for arts, a group of parents organized to find arts-based after school programs for their children. While I was principal at Roosevelt, they asked if I would be interested in having this arts program at our school. I said “yes” and four years later, after I retired as principal, joined RDASC when Patricia Kaussen was looking for a program supervisor. There were two of us involved to start and now we have 6 full time administrators, a staff of over 40 and 330 children. We have come a long way from the beginning!

RDNC: What made you pursue a career in teaching and education?
CC: It wasn’t my first career. I was working at an insurance firm and was getting bored reviewing DBA forms. By noon it was hard to stay awake! I thought about the good experiences I had earlier in the Army Reserve while stationed at Fort Ord helping train a group of reservists who were native Alaskans. I taught them squad tactics and then thought about the good experiences I had earlier in the Army Reserve while stationed at Fort Ord helping train a group of reservists who were native Alaskans. I taught them squad tactics and then

RSNC: Looking back to when you were at Roosevelt, what were the biggest challenges facing the schools and families compared to the challenges of today?
CC: Honestly, I think the challenges are about the same: quality education, good teachers, a well-structured environment, safety. Today things are much faster. With the Internet, smartphones and Facebook you can’t hide anything in your life. Kids need some quiet time and should not always be on the go. I look at my grandchildren and consider what they will spend more time up there. I have a lot of “honey do’s”. We will be working on our house in Lake Tahoe so I will probably spend more time up there. I will have time to watch more of my grandchildren’s games, for my hunting, to try teaching. Science teaching led to counseling, then Dean, then Assistant Principal, then Principal— all at Roosevelt—and the rest is history.

...continued from front cover

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EXCITING TRANSITIONS AHEAD AT THE NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

by Patricia Kaussen

Many of you have heard the news that I plan to retire from the Richmond District Neighborhood Center in 2013. It is true! After serving an amazing 25 years as Executive Director, it will be time to explore a new stage of life. While I will deeply miss this place and the people I have worked with throughout the years, I could not be more optimistic about the future. Personally, I hope for more time to enjoy the company of my family and friends and embark on new adventures. Professionally, I am excited for the Neighborhood Center to embrace new leadership (just as I was embraced many years ago) as we march toward our 33rd year of serving and inspiring the people who live, work, and attend school in the Richmond District.

In the months to come, you will be hearing more from me and Jamie Choy, our Board President, about the exciting search for a new leader. In the meantime, two key staff members will be making their own transitions later this year and deserve special mention. First, Shawn Brown, Beacon Program Director, is following his heart and relocating to Washington D.C. later this summer. Shawn came to us over ten years ago to work in our Preschool Middle School after school program and now oversees middle and high school programs. Shawn has been a rich source of energy and enthusiasm. Charles Corsiglia, Senior Director of RDASC (the Richmond District After school Collaborative), is retiring in early fall. Like Shawn, Charles is creative and visionary; attributes that have been vital to the expansion of our after school programs.

You may have read about Charles in this newsletter, but I wish to share how fortunate we have been to retain these two talented and creative people. Charles and Shawn have been some of our best advocates, championing our vision for quality after school programs and helping to create two signature programs that are now recognized as models throughout San Francisco. Speaking for the entire organization, we thank them for their time and talents and wish them every success.

With the transitions that lie ahead, the Neighborhood Center could not be in better hands. Our highly competent and committed Board of Directors and staff are working hard to ensure that our solid programs continue to thrive. I am pleased to report that we have already hired Elaine Kaufman as our new RDASC Director. Elaine is now working with Charles and brings considerable experience in youth program development and arts education through her work with the Make-A-Wish Foundation and Coyote Point Museum. This summer, please stop by our office to welcome Elaine.

On behalf of Charles, Shawn, and all of our staff, we thank you for the encouragement and appreciation that you have provided over the years. It is our community—people like you—who make the Richmond District Neighborhood Center such a great place to work. In these exciting times, we thank you for your support!

When I was asked to write about how our family has participated in the Multicultural Children’s Arts Program, I ran around my house to search for some of my daughters’ artwork, and there was lots of it—environmental art, cardboard automata, handmade books, Day of the Dead sugar skulls, Chinese brush paintings and more! What I found triggered many memories. For example, there was the family class where we wove real reed baskets. When I look at those baskets I remember the gorgeous warm sunny day and the pleasure of sitting in the courtyard weaving with my whole family surrounded by other families, feeling happy about sharing time together. It was a truly lovely afternoon.

Unlike any other Art Program, MCAP actively cultivates family time together. Both the Saturday Art Workshops and neighborhood community events, like the Halloween Fair and annual Multicultural Children’s Art Fair, encourage the pleasure of exploring and doing art together. The art becomes intertwined with the pleasure of spending time with family, friends and neighbors, and when you remember the day you cannot separate one pleasure from the other. Art and memory are one.

MCAP offers many other advantages, as well. For starters, a child can participate in this program all the way through grade school—from ages 5 to 11. That’s a nice long connection with a program, and I think that the frequency of the classes once every 1-2 months is perfect. You know how you don’t see your own children grow taller because you only see them every day, but yet you notice how your cousin’s children have grown taller because you only see them every few months? I think that the MCAP classes are similar. They have been a perfect touchstone for artistic growth for my daughters—the continuity of the program and the frequency of the classes have allowed them to take notice and feel pride in their improvements.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

For RDNC Work Day on Saturday, August 4 from 9am–noon

Please come to the Richmond District Neighborhood Center for a morning of gardening and general clean-up. Work gloves and tools will be supplied or feel free to bring your own. For those who prefer to remain indoors, we are in need of volunteers to help stuff envelopes! A picnic lunch will follow from 12–2pm.

If you have any questions contact Emily at emily@rdnc.org or call 415.751.6600. Please RSVP to let us know that you will be joining us!

Our mission is to nurture a diverse urban community by developing and providing high quality youth, adult, and family programs that address critical community needs and foster respect for all people and our environment.

REFLECTING ON THE MULTICULTURAL ARTS PROGRAM (MCAP)

by Camille She, Parent/MCAP Volunteer

My daughters, Zinnia and Freesia, ages 9 and 11, have attended the MCAP classes since kindergarten. I remember how my younger daughter, Freesia, would come along with me when I would drop off my older daughter, Zinnia, at class. At that point, Freesia was not old enough to participate and she would press her little face up into the window each time, gazing longingly at the goings on inside, wishing her little heart out for the day to come when she would be welcomed into that room. I didn’t know back then that it was actually the whole family that was waiting to join Zinnia “in the room.”

Five years later, our whole family feels such a sense of belonging to this larger community. We are grateful for the connections that MCAP and RDNC foster—so we thank them for all that they do.

MULTICULTURAL CHILDREN’S ART WORKSHOPS

Would your child enjoy weaving baskets, creating handmade books, constructing robots or playing drums Caribbean style? The Multicultural Children’s Arts Program has relationships with Bay Area artists who enjoy sharing their love of art with children at our free art workshops. Art workshops are held most weekends from September-May at the Richmond District Neighborhood Center. Visit www.rdsn.org and click on “Art Workshops” to learn more.