



# FAITH NETWORK NEWSLETTER

**Our mission** is to give hope to disadvantaged children by showing them God's unconditional love and by guiding them into becoming whole persons - socially, intellectually and spiritually.

January 2004

Faith Network of the East Bay, Inc. Monthly Newsletter

## PRAYER REQUEST

Oakland School Administrator Randolph Ward made public a list of 13 campuses that may be closed next year because of declining enrollments and financial deficits, including two elementary schools served by Faith Network, i.e., Burbank and Emerson. Dr. Ward will hold a public hearing Jan. 8, 5 p.m. (District headquarters, 1025 Second Ave.), on the closures and is expected to make final decisions by mid-January. Please pray that the concerns of all stakeholders will be heard, sound judgments will be made, and that both short and long-term interests of our children will be served.

## BEAR FRUIT CD

*Bear Fruit...Grow Our Children* CD is still available!

To order, email us at [orders@faith-network.com](mailto:orders@faith-network.com) or call (510) 336-7055. CDs cost \$10.00 plus \$2.00 each CD for shipping.

## CONTACT

Interested in volunteering?  
Contact us :

email: [info@faith-network.com](mailto:info@faith-network.com)

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fax 510.336.7055

## The Kids Meet Kristi!

Children from around the Bay Area anxiously laced up their skates, some for the first time, in anticipation of getting on the ice with Olympic gold medalist Kristi Yamaguchi. On December 10th, children from Today's Youth Matter (TYM) and Faith Network were invited to San Francisco to get ice skating lessons and skate with Kristi Yamaguchi. After a fun filled time on the ice, lunch was provided followed by a visit from Santa. Each child received two gifts and a picture with Kristi. This special occasion was a joint collaboration between the Always Dream Foundation and The Family Giving Tree.



Sisters from Fruitvale Elementary pose for a picture with Kristi Yamaguchi

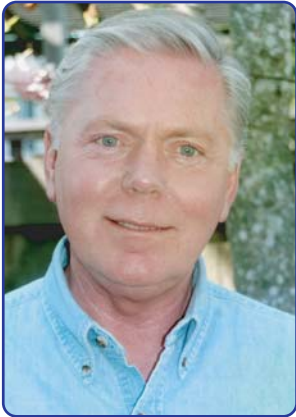
## Cox After School Program by Chelsea Roth

At 3 o'clock students flood through the doors with abundant energy and smiles on their faces. They are told to bring their homework, pencil, and of course a positive attitude. The Cox Elementary after-school program, solely run by Faith Network staff and volunteers, is meant to be a safe place for students to come and get help with their homework. Some kids need one on one attention, some work with other classmates at their table, and some are whizzing through homework and asking for more. Most importantly, the children value an encouraging adult by their side. On average there are twenty-five 1-3 graders attending and four Faith Network volunteers. Due to lack of funding, Cox is unable to provide any staff support for this program. The more volunteers we have, the more attention and practical help the students receive. The program runs on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from 2:45-4pm. If you are feel called to help on one of these days, please indicate your interest on the response card provided.



Some of our dedicated volunteers at Cox's after school program: Rayo Overtone, Barbara and Norman Brooks

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER



Dear Friends,

Rogelio, a 5th grader at Burbank, approached me on the playground and said, "Mr. Roth, I want to show you something." Searching his back pocket he produced a wallet, opened it, and took out a business card with cursive writing on it. "Remember this?" he asked, and proceeded to read it aloud: I promise to give Rogelio \$100 upon his graduation from college. - Signed, Mr. Roth

"Remember, Mr. Roth, you owe me a hundred bucks when I graduate from college." "Yes, Rogelio, I remember." He smiled, put the card back in his wallet and resumed shooting hoops. I smiled back, touched that such a small gesture could mean so much to a 10-year-old boy. It was last spring when I wrote that promissory note to Rogelio, thinking it's not too soon for him to start thinking about higher education.

Rogelio is deemed an at-risk child because of his adverse circumstances. Labels such as "at-risk" or "disadvantaged," while intending to be a way of identifying those who need help, can cause us to underestimate our youth and inadvertently throw cold water on the embers of their hope. I am indebted to Timothy Stuart and Cheryl Bostrom who sensitized me to this tendency to mislabel children in their recently published book, CHILDREN AT PROMISE (Jossey-Bass, 2003). They offer a practical perspective that inspires caring adults to change an "at-risk" situation into an "at-promise" reality, and helps them interpret adversity to build character.

As we enter the New Year with all its challenges and opportunities, may God help us all to hold a crown before our children and watch them grow into it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Randy". The ink is dark and the signature is written on a light-colored background.

## THANKS TO

- Claire & Paul Smith for providing Thanksgiving dinner, dishes & groceries for a family in need.
- Jon & Elaine Blankmeyer small group for preparing Christmas treats for Laurel Elementary teachers & staff.
- Today's Youth Matter for donating a washer & dryer to the Fite family.
- All Nations Church, Judy & John Hindman, Kathleen Conroy, Judy & Lowell Dawson for providing Christmas presents and Safeway gift certificates to needy children and families.

## I Am by Vanessa, 5th grader - Cox Elementary School

*I am a good, helpful, nice, kind girl.*

*I wonder why the teachers have meetings.*

*I hear someone knocking on the door.*

*I see spirits flying over my room.*

*I want to be rich.*

*I pretend to be a doctor.*

*I touch Jesus.*

*I worry about my brother and sisters could die.*

*I cry because my parents or someone in my family could die.*