



Welcome Back!

AFE Welcome Back Gathering Wednesday, September 2nd, 2-4pm

Welcome to a new AFE school year! Please join us for our all-school gathering! Meet us under the trees at the picnic area in front of the main building (two-story building) on our Branciforte Small Schools Campus, Wednesday, September 2, from 2-4pm.

This is an opportunity to start off our homeschooling year as a community, meet with our staff, welcome new families, and sign up for classes. It is a great opportunity to find out about upcoming events and network with other homeschooling families.

If you have a course, workshop, apprenticeship, study group, or an event of any kind, please come prepared to set up information and sign-up sheets at one of the tables. We will also have blank sign-up sheets available in case you are inspired to network or offer a group or activity.

Please contact Joanne Brown at 429-3898 x 237 to reserve classroom space for classes or events that you would like to host on our school site.

Table of Contents

- [This month at AFE](#)
- [Welcome, from AFE Teacher Consultants](#)
- [AFE Community News](#)
- [Enrichment Classes](#)
- [AFE Community Classes](#)
- [Homeschool Highlights](#)
- [Student Corner](#)
- [Around Town](#)
- [Resources](#)
- [AFE Annual Camp Loma Trip](#)
- [Drive for Schools— Annual Car Giveaway](#)
- [AFE Parent Club](#)
- [Newsletter submissions](#)

Remember to bring a blanket or chairs to sit on, hats or other types of sun protection, and snacks to share. We'll gather in both large and small groups to share our plans and dreams for this homeschooling year. Your participation enriches the program for everyone! We look forward to seeing you soon!

–The AFE Staff

Communication at AFE:

- [Staff directory](#)
- [Calendar](#)
- [Class information](#)
- [Online Bulletin Board](#)

Quick Dates for this month:

Date	Event	Time
9/2	AFE Community Gathering	2-4
9/8	Clay Class begins [details]	1-3
9/14	Enrichment Classes begin	
9/17	County Fair Fieldtrip	
9/18	Beach Potluck	5-10pm

Parent Club

Don't forget to visit [the Parent Club box](#) at the bottom of this page. Parent Club supports theater, music, clay studio, sports, and more!

This month at AFE

Camp Loma Camping

Camping is **September 11-13** this year. [Visit the box at the bottom of this newsletter](#) for details.

County Fair Fieldtrip

Thursday, Sept. 17

AFE is going TO THE SANTA CRUZ COUNTY FAIR in WATSONVILLE. Parents may drive their own family or carpool. Meet at the RC at 9:30 to carpool or drive directly to the Watsonville Fairgrounds and meet at 10:00 in front of the Main Entrance. Please email Therese with the number of Fair tickets you would like: tjohannesson@sccs.net. We have 40 spots for students and passes for 10 adults. (1 per family please.) Parking is \$5.00 per car so carpooling is recommended. [Please see the website for more information.](#)



Nico racing this summer. Share your students' activities in Homeschool Highlights next month!

Beach Potluck & Bonfire

Everyone is invited to a Beach Party on **Friday, September 18th** at Twin Lakes Beach (at the end of 7th Ave.) from 5:00–10:00pm. Please bring food to share, a water bottle, and your own dinnerware. If it's easier just to bring dinner for your own family, feel free to do so. We want you to come! I'll bring skewers for folks to use. Bring: firewood, beach toys, instruments, warm clothes, blankets, chairs, or whatever else you think would make for a fun evening. Call Nancy for more info 429-3898 x334

Drive for Schools Fundraiser

This month the [Parent Club](#) will kick off our annual Drive for Schools fundraiser—[click here for details](#). Tickets are \$5/each or 6 for \$25 and are for sale in the Resource Center until **October 18**. Buy tickets for yourself or sell them to others—purchases support the parent club and help replenish funds so we can continue to support activities like theater, sports, clay studio, classes (this year rocketry and photography!) and more. Questions? [See below for details](#) or [email Zan](#).

[\[Return to Table of Contents\]](#)

Welcome from our Co-Principals

Steve Hambright

Welcome back to the 2015/2016 school year. I look forward to an exciting year of personal and campus growth. My name is Steve Hambright, the new co-principal at Branciforte Small Schools. I am extremely humbled, honored and energized by the move from room 13 at Costanoa (where I taught for the last five years) to the co-principal role. This year, I will be primarily responsible for admin duties related to Costanoa and the Ark. I also plan to engage closely with the Monarch and AFE communities.

As I embark on this first year as a full-time administrator, I plan to have the same open door and open communication policy that I had in my classroom. Together, with open

communication and a spirit of partnership, we will strengthen our school community where kids and adults are learning and thriving in a rich and safe environment.

We have full commitment from District leadership, a team of talented AFE staff, external allies in the community, and the collective will to make great things happen for our students.

I am so blessed to be in a place that is committed to my own core professional values. At BSSC, we provide high academic and social expectations in an environment of real caring. We have an incredible opportunity to innovate to achieve personalized and deep outcomes for our students. Cheers to a great start that sets the tone for an awesome year ahead.

Lysa Tabachnick

Hello AFE Community,

I am excited to be joining the AFE community in a new role this year. I have been an AFE teacher in the past and most recently an AFE parent. For most of the last 12 years I have been part of the Small Schools community. First as a Monarch teacher and parent, then as an assistant principal and, after a short time away, as a co-principal. Most the time I have worked primarily with Monarch and the Ark Independent Study High school. Before I was lucky enough to become involved with alternative education I taught preschool in the Bay Area, then Elementary school in Novato in Marin county, and at Gault here in town. I am also the principal of the SC Adult school and spend part of each week over there on the La Fonda campus across from Harbor High.

As a former home school parent I have some idea of the challenges and joys that home school can bring to your life. I know that each family is unique and creates the home school experience that works for them. I think this variety is a strength and is part of what makes home schooling special. At AFE you have the added pleasure of being part of a home school community and partaking in that in the way that works best for your family. Community is one of those things where you get out of it what you put into it. I hope that we can find ways for each family to contribute and be a part of the AFE community. I encourage you to join the AFE Parent club, AFE Community Council or our BSSC School Site Council to your voice heard, as well as support our program and our school site .

When I am not at school I love to read, travel practice yoga and dance. My daughter Anika took the CHSPE last year and is now a Cabrillo student and MAH intern. Jasmin was her AFE teacher. My husband Dave is retired, plays disc golf and fixes up our house. We have a cat and a bunny. I live right down the street on Branciforte so I can be at school in minutes.

Steve and I as co-principals hope to be visible and known in all four school communities. We also will be working with representatives from all four schools to continue to build connections and community across campuses. In public education we rarely have enough resources and by working together we can maximize what we have. There have been

opportunities in the past and will be more in the future for cross-school activities and events. Please share with us any ideas you have for how we can help support making this happen for our entire campus.

I hope to meet many of you this year!

Welcome, from AFE Teacher Consultants Nancy Aylsworth

I love working at AFE! What excites me most about this work is being in a community of people deeply committed to the well-being of children and youth. I feel fortunate to have been a part of this community since the beginning, initially as a homeschooling parent and then as a teacher for 18 years.

It is rewarding to witness the unfolding of students as they discover or explore their passions, stretch themselves to learn new skills, develop friendships, and grow in countless ways. Naturally, parents are doing much of the same as they support their children on this journey we call homeschooling. Even though I have been here for so long, the community continues to morph as staff and families come and go, often changing the flavor of our activities, events, plays, and classes. School policy has its effects on us too. All this to say that it never feels stagnant to me, but instead a flowing, changing extended family.



Outside of school I enjoy being with family and friends, connecting around whatever is meaningful in the moment. Ric and I are lucky enough to have our adult children and their partners nearby, and share the bittersweet journey of caring for my mother who has Alzheimer's. Can you read "relational" between all my lines? I also enjoy learning, reading, gardening, and camping.

This year I look forward to exploring California History with a group of 3rd-5th graders. We will have many hands-on opportunities to look into the history of our state throughout the year. In addition you will notice that I enjoy bringing people together at a variety of community events, starting with the camping trip coming up this month.

Joanne Brown



How exciting to be starting my sixth year as a consultant teacher at AFE and my twenty-seventh?!? year in the teaching profession! I appreciate our school's commitment to family and community. It's a pleasure to work with so many creative and enthusiastic people. I'm especially excited to continue teaching a class this year related to my educational background in biology and ecology. For fun, I love to go hiking, camping, and traveling whenever possible. This summer I had

an amazing time visiting family in Alaska and New Mexico. Speaking of family, ours has grown by two in the past year, with the births of our grandson, Zen, and granddaughter, Evelyn (who was born August 20th). That brings the number of people in our immediate family to (I think) thirteen. I love family time, animals, nature, music, books, movies, art, friends, meeting people, chocolate, and meditation. This school year I look forward to working with our families as well as teaching Ecology and Writer's Workshop for our high school students. Together may we all have a fun and successful homeschool experience!

Peter Deutsch

I'm finding myself very excited and positive for the start of my ninth year of teaching at AFE and I feel so fortunate to be here! Having my successful hip surgeries last year leaves me feeling very happy to be moving well and moving forward!! As always, I look forward to connecting with my consulting families, getting to know more students and families, coaching the AFE volleyball team, and working with the 6th-8th grade class working with science fiction and literature.

For those who don't know me yet, my teaching background has focused mostly on science and experiential field study but has also included multiple subject teaching positions and coaching in basketball, volleyball and ultimate frisbee. I have also worked as a journeyman carpenter, a sea kayaking guide and trip leader (in Santa Cruz and the Sea of Cortez, Baja) and an Outward Bound instructor in the wilderness of Minnesota, Ontario, and Texas.



My family had great opportunities to spend wonderful time relaxing and exploring this summer and special times with family and friends. A big highlight was RV camping in Alaska! Such amazing mountains, glaciers, oceans and animals!!! I also enjoyed a weeklong backpacking trip in the Sierra with a good friend. With all of that I'm recharged and ready to go.

Jasmin Gerer

After a summer in my hometown in Bavaria, caring for my parents, swimming in mountain lakes and hiking in the Alps, I'm looking forward to connecting with community and learning at AFE again.



For those who don't already know, I was born and raised in Bavaria, Germany and started my career teaching English and German in Munich. After moving to Santa Cruz to attend UCSC, I worked at the UCSC extension with students from around the world and then lived and worked in Spain for year and a half to learn Spanish. After returning to California, I worked with migrant students and the GATE program in Pajaro Valley, met my husband Clark, had two children, and

25 years ago embarked on the homeschooling journey at AFE. Both of our kids were homeschooled "cradle to college" and we are fortunate to still have them nearby. Our daughter lives in Santa Cruz with her husband, also an AFE alum, and teaches 3rd grade. Our son lives in San Francisco where he is the business director at a start-up.

As a family we cherish life long learning, our close connections, and the many fond memories that homeschooling has given us to look back upon.

Looking forward, this year I'm excited to lead a Communication and Leadership workshop for high school students in the fall and take an enthusiastic group of students and parents to the Shakespeare Festival in Ashland in the spring. I'm also happy to help coordinate our theater program and the Follywood Film Festival, handle Enrollment at AFE, meet new families, sing and play games on the camping trip this month, share resources and discoveries, and learn from all of you!

Thérèse Johannesson

AFE has been a wonderful chapter in my life as a teacher. The community is so welcoming and it is filled with differences of every kind, which I find exciting. This year is my fifth year as a parent at AFE and my fourth year as a teacher. I wish all of you a wonderful educational journey here at AFE.

A little about me: My grandfather played fiddle and my mom played piano with us seven kids standing around singing and harmonizing. We moved 13 times before I was in 8th grade, and our family's piano went through every move with us, wrapped in many moving blankets. I graduated from Watsonville High School in the late 70's, studying music with a choral director who taught us 15th century madrigals to contemporary jazz, including musicals. Later, while I studied music at Cabrillo I also taught music to children in a Mexican-American Marimba group in Watsonville, boasting 40 kids throughout the school year and 200 in the summer. I performed with this group in towns from San Francisco to Mexico, including Disneyland at quinceañeras, festivals, social and political events. I learned to sing in Spanish and began my life long pursuit of being fluent in the Spanish language. I graduated in music in a small liberal arts university in San Rafael, got my teaching credential and Masters in Social Work at San Jose State, my bilingual competency through the National Hispanic University. I taught music in Watsonville, in Spanish, for 10 years mostly at Alianza, a two-way Immersion Program. I also taught bilingual kindergarten- 3rd grade for several years and Adult Education for a couple of years. I was a clinical social worker for 6 years.



I love to make music, particularly vocal music, with anyone who shares that passion. I especially love to watch my twin boys, Dominic and Linus, as they grow into young men and awesome musicians.

Dorothee Ledbetter

Our family joined AFE in 2004 after independently homeschooling for 12 years. What a great community! I have worked in our Resource Center with Mollie for 9 years, first as a volunteer and then as a part-time employee.

I'm happy to continue Mollie's legacy of supporting you, students and families, to follow your interests and dreams, and to help you find materials that support your journey. Our own three very diverse children, Julia & Diana now adults and Erik a senior at AFE, have inspired me to trust their development, and also to research learning differences and neuro-science (I'm a biologist by trade).

Other than my part-time AFE library job, I work at Bonny Doon Farm, hang out with my fabulous husband Loren (who is a true Renaissance man and can fix anything), meet friends, read a lot, play games, hike & bike, bake cookies, make herbal remedies, and generally have a blast.

I'm looking forward to meeting all of you and asking your names at least ten times before I'll remember them!



Mark Thomas

I've been at AFE for more than a decade and I love my work. Helping families find the best educational opportunities for their children is as challenging as it is rewarding.



Once again, I will be working at AFE part-time, 70%. This year I look forward to offering a Marine Science enrichment course for 6th to 8th graders with lots of hands-on opportunities to learn and have fun while doing so. I love the ocean and know the coast in this area well.

My wife, Meghan, and my kids keep me busy and happy. Zander, 20, attends Cal State Chico; Summer Solstice, 17, and River Rose, 15, will continue to attend SC High.

I have a soft spot for animals and my wife and kids exploit it mercilessly. Besides caring for our pets (dogs, cat, & "Bigfoot" the giant tortoise), our lives are filled with love, friends, and lots of fun. We enjoy water polo, basketball, surfing, rafting, and bicycling as a family.

In the other part of my professional life, I work as a realtor for Lighthouse Realty. I really enjoy helping folks find their dream home or sell a home. I am also trained as a lawyer which helps me read between the lines of the many legal papers one encounters in modern real estate transactions. Both my mother and grandmother were into real estate as well, so I grew up learning the trade, as well as the importance of the awesome yet wonderful ethical responsibility. If you have a real estate question or concern, I'd be happy

to help. Thanks, Mark

[\[Return to Table of Contents\]](#)

AFE Community News

NOTICE: Peanut Allergy

Dear AFE community: We currently have a member of our community who suffers from a severe peanut allergy. Please do not bring peanuts, foods cooked in peanut oil, or other peanut-based foods to any community gathering. If you eat peanuts on campus, please wash your hands and dispose of your garbage safely. Thank you!

Whole Foods Fundraiser

NEW ONGOING FUNDRAISER WITH WHOLE FOODS and the AFE Parent Club. The AFE Parent Club funds many AFE programs that would not exist without money from the Parent Club like: Theater, Sport Teams, Clay Studio, etc. [See Parent Club details.](#)

The Parent Club will be selling Whole Foods gift cards for \$100 each. The value on the card is \$100 so there is no additional cost to the buyer for supporting AFE this way. Use the card to pay for any of your purchases at any of their stores. Please keep the card and load more money onto it with a check or on-line transfer. The card can hold up to \$500. You can add funds to the card anytime, up to \$400 at a time.

AFE gets 3% of the money our community members pay for gift cards and loading them. If you shop at Whole Foods this is a great way that you can contribute to AFE without it costing you any additional money. Just use your card to pay for your goods and the donation comes from Whole Foods. [Email Melisa for more info.](#)

Yearbook Re-order

I accidentally oversold last year's (2014-2015) yearbook! I am going to try to make one small re-order. If you missed it, this is your absolute last chance. You can place an order at the Community Gethering on Sept 2, on a sign-up sheet in the RC, or by contacting me directly at afeyearbook2015@gmail.com or zannaboo@ymail.com. All orders must be pre-paid (\$25).

–Zan

News from the RC

Welcome to a new year at AFE, families!

Our library houses over 30,000 materials for you to check out! Look for shelf maps to locate what you want, or ask me or Mollie, who will hopefully be coming back to our great community many times.

There's a special shelf for new arrivals, and a couple of shelves for adult books to bring in and check out.

If you want to volunteer, helping with library activities or keeping the RC shipshape, please contact me. (Trading for community service credits and cookies!)

–Dorothee

THANK YOU

...to the **AFE Parent Club** for our new sheds!!! We are deeply appreciative of this community of parents who fundraised and supported the building of two sheds on the side of the Palazzo Studio. Last year we had our shed broken into and PE equipment stolen twice. Now we have doors with deadbolts to hopefully allow us to keep our sports and garden equipment safe. Immense *thank you* from the staff and all of the community for this gift. The sheds are primed (is that a word?), but do still need painting to protect them from all the rain we are going to get this year. We have the paint and would appreciate anyone willing to help with this project. If you would be willing to join us on a weekend for a painting day, please let me know asap - naylsworth@sccs.net. Many thanks.

[\[Return to Table of Contents\]](#)

Enrichment Classes

K-2 Enrichment

Kindergarten-Second Grade

Monday/Thursday 10-12:30, starting September 14

Thérèse Johannesson

Maker Monday Parent Co-op: The Maker Monday Learning Circle will be back by popular demand! This Parent-led Co-op will happen as long as we have parents signed up to lead the activities. We need every parent to sign up to lead 2-4 lessons/activities/field trips throughout the year, depending on the number of students in the class. A teacher will anchor the group by gathering the students for circle, managing transitions and any other group management. The activities will all be parent led. If you have a child in this Learning Circle, there will be a mandatory meeting in September to further explain how the Parent Coop works, and to explore the available resources.

Thursday Movers and Shakers w/Therese: This Music and Movement Learning Circle will continue to sing and explore music and movement in an Orff inspired way using our whole bodies and large instruments with a focus on listening, creating, and cooperating. Thursday Movers and Shakers will also include some field trips, with "the Bounty of our County" as our theme. Each month we will also include some literacy activities and a trip to the BSS library.

FIRST CLASS MEETING ON THURSDAY 9/17 will be a FIELD TRIP TO THE SANTA CRUZ COUNTY FAIR in WATSONVILLE. Parents will drive their own family or carpool.

Meet at the RC at 9:30 or drive directly to the Watsonville Fairgrounds and meet at 10:00 in front of the Main Entrance. Please email Therese with the number of Fair tickets you would like: tjohannesson@sccs.net. We only have 40 spots. I have passes for 10 adults 1 per family please. Parking is \$5.00 per car so carpooling is recommended..

K-2's In the Garden: Our class will continue to tend our AFE garden. Come see our tomatoes, peppers, chard, pumpkins and sunflowers. We will be making a scarecrow.

California History

Grades 3-5

Wednesdays 10:00–12:30, beginning September 16th

Palazzo/Room 1

Nancy Aylsworth

This year-long class is a very hands-on opportunity to explore the history of our town and state, which will include many field trips. Field trips will allow us to see firsthand where and how some of California's first people lived, view exhibits with artifacts from the various phases of the state's history, explore our local mission, and spend the night of reenactment in Sutter's Fort in Sacramento. Our Sutter's Fort overnight is Thursday, March 31st. Class will include a snack time and outside games when weather permits. **Parents should plan to attend a very important informational and planning meeting on Wednesday, September 23rd at 12 noon in Palazzo Studio.** Students may join us for this meeting, or play together outside supervised by a few AFE teens. Please call Nancy Aylsworth for more information at 429-3898 x334.

Marine Science

Grades 6-8

Tuesdays from 10-12:30 starting Sept. 15

Mark Thomas

Marine Science for grades 6-8 will meet in the Palazzo studio from 10-12:30 every Tuesday starting 9/15. The class is designed to introduce the world of marine biology in a fun yet challenging series of activities, exercises, research reports, field trips and games. Students will be asked to share their work at every class. In fact, since research notes that teenagers learn best from each other, we will do activities designed to learn from one another. The last Friday of the month will be reserved for field trips from 10-2:30. This will give us the opportunity to study organisms in their natural element on foot and by boat as well as those on display in Aquaria.

In the Fall semester the class will offer more academic rigor, particularly with regard to reading and writing skills. The Spring semester class will still have all the same fascinating elements but will offer more scaffolding exercises to develop reading and writing skills.

Any questions, drop me a line or give me a call, 566 0631. Thank you, Mark

Science Fiction Literature

Grades 6-8, fall or spring semester

Tuesdays, 10:00–12:30pm in Room 2, starting Sept. 15

Peter Deutsch

Peter and students in grades 6–8 will explore the genre of science fiction literature and some classic stories and authors. We will look at the common questions and issues that are addressed in this genre (What might the future be like? How might technology and science discoveries affect us? What if...?). In class we will: read short stories, view science fiction films and shows, discuss and analyze the materials, work in teams to design alien worlds and fictional stories, and share this work through art, performance and writing. Students will be expected to read and analyze a novel and a movie outside of class time. Active learning, games and some PE will be a regular part of the class. We will also have a short break for snacks in the middle of the class time.

Peter will teach both fall and spring sessions. Questions? Contact me at 831-429-3898 ext 330 or pdeutsch@sccs.net.

Topics in Ecology, Part 2

High School

Thursdays, 1-3pm AFE Room 2 beginning September 17th

Joanne Brown

Open to all AFE high school students

Ecology is the broadest field of biology. This semester we'll explore a variety of topics related to ecology, including geology, water, fire ecology, aquatic ecosystems, population ecology and career opportunities. The class will feature numerous guest speakers and field trips, including one habitat restoration. We'll read and discuss current articles related to the field of ecology. You'll be expected to attend and participate in all class activities as well as complete weekly homework assignments and two class presentations. Contact Joanne Brown jvbrown@sccs.net 429-3898 ext. 237.

Leadership & Communication

High School

Grades 9–12. Thursdays, 10am to noon, Room 2

Jasmin Gerer

Would you like to communicate with greater confidence and make a difference in life? If yes, join this course to become a more effective speaker, listener, and writer. Learn how your own and others' communication styles influence your relationships. Gain more confidence and skills for job interviews, learn how to present your ideas persuasively, and

focus on developing communication skills that are of particular interest to you. To receive the full 5 English credits, at least three hours of research, reading, writing, and speaking practice outside of class weekly will be an integral part of the course. For questions contact Jasmin Gerer at 429-3898 x332 or by email at jgerer@sccs.net.

[\[Return to Table of Contents\]](#)

AFE Community Classes

Clay Studio

CLAY STUDIO for ALL AGES!! If you like to get your hands dirty then this is the place for you! AFE's open clay studio meets once a week for 2 hours. You can come every week, you can come for half the class, you can bring your parent, or NOT, unless of course you are under 9 years old then they have to tag along.

The class is unstructured which allows you to work on whatever project you like once you have the basics down, which most of you do. For newbies to clay I will get you up to speed and you will be making cool sculptures or cups or bowls in no time at all. The class is mostly hand building, we have a slab roller and lots of texture tools and we do have wheels that you can try, and try, and try until you are throwing like an animal. Of course wheel work brings the hands dirty up another level, sometimes to head to toe messy.

I believe the class will meet on **Tuesdays from 1-3pm, starting September 8th**, yes earlier than most classes. The cost is \$35 per student per semester, this fee pays for clay, glazes and firings, no one will be turned away however. Any questions, you can call me at 818-8660. Ciao, Kathleen

Sustainable Design

I'm interested in teaching a Sustainable Design class this semester for 11/12 graders.

The course will explore whether society could fulfill our needs in ways which regenerate the environment we depend on. We will focus on water systems, but will also explore topics such as solar energy, sustainable architecture, restorative food systems and alternative social institutions.

The class would meet once a week for two hours and start the end of September.

Day of the week/time is not finalized; I'll try to work with interested students to find a good time slot.

For more information, [email me](#) or call 831-334-2750. Thanks! Barak Wouk

AFE Volleyball

Our Coed Volleyball teams compete in the Alternative Schools Sports League (mostly High Schools). The teams are open to students in 6th–8th grade as well as our highschoolers.

The practice schedule is **Monday 1:00–3:00** and **Wednesday 10:00–12:00** and will start on 8/31/15. I also really encourage students to organize a regular informal practice. These practices and our games will be on the beach courts between the wharf and the Boardwalk. Games are on Fridays between 12 and 2 and players need to arrive by 11:45. Games will likely start on 9/11 and go through 12/11.

I really encourage any parents who can to volunteer and assist with practices and/or coaching. It makes a big difference! We will also need to recruit one or more parent(s) who are able and willing to help supervise and support the players at the games. Our school needs to have a minimum of one adult supervisor for each team we have in the league at the games. No coaching or volleyball experience is needed to fill this role.

Due to serious allergy issues we need to be sure to not have any peanuts or food with peanuts or made with peanut oil at any practices or games. This is really important and your support is greatly appreciated!

To support AFE and AFE sports, including Volleyball, we ask students/families to help with AFE fundraising efforts to cover the costs for our league dues. A great goal for fundraising is \$60 to cover each player.

Please be sure to get onto the email list as this will be how information is going to be distributed. Please complete and sign all parts of the sports forms for volleyball and return them to Peter asap!

Any questions contact me directly at 429-3898 ext 330 or pdeutsch@sccs.net.

AFE Theater

We will return this year to our smaller age-group productions. We have four fun and exciting plays picked out for this year!

- High School: Zap: A Play by Paul Fleischman (starts **Tues. September 22**, performs October 24 & 25)
- Grades 6 - 8: A Midsummer Night's Dream (starts **Tues. October 27** performs December 11 & 13)
- Grades 3 - 6: Where the Mountain Meets the Moon (starts in November)
- Grades K-2: Two Left Feet (Spring Semester)

Regular play practices will be on Tuesday afternoons, except for the K-2 rehearsals which are still undecided. There will be sign up sheets and detailed schedules at the Community Gathering on Sept 2, and in the RC. Please email Zan at zannaboo@ymail.com with any questions.

Games Group

Come over to Classroom 2 every **Friday from noon to three** (or whatever part of those

three hours work for you) for good times with friends old and new, and AFE's very large collection of award-winning and classic games for all ages! Bring your own games and/or snacks to share as well! The youngest among us can often be found sitting in the middle of the room playing with Lego or blocks, or outside playing tag, in addition to the games, and parents can usually be found socializing, knitting, etc. while playing games, so truly something for everyone! There is also a group of young artists who like to come and sketch and show each other their artwork in addition to playing games.

JSA

JSA (Junior State of America) is a student-run organization focused on politics and current events, and AFE students can participate! Our chapter will meet **every Wednesday at 1:00pm** in Room 2, with a variety of activities such as debates, thought talks, and crisis scenarios. Our first meeting is on **September 16th**, and we will be debating whether the quality of music is determined by its popularity. JSA is predominantly a high school club, but interested eighth graders are welcome to attend!

Photography

This class is sponsored by the AFE Parent Club and is no cost to students. (There may be a small materials fee for prints.) It is geared towards students grades 7 - 12. To get the most out of the class (and elective credit for high schoolers) students need regular access to a 5+MP camera but it is not required to take the class.

The class will consist of ten demo/lecture/practice sessions where we will cover standard photographic concepts such as exposure, composition, lighting, processing, and output for various media including print. Special consideration will be given to event photography to help students gain experience and confidence taking photos for the AFE yearbook. But shooting for and sharing pictures with the yearbook is not a requirement.

We will start the 3rd week of September, exact time TBA. More info and sign ups available at the AFE Community Gathering on Sept 2 and in the RC. Please email Zan at zannaboo@ymail.com with any questions. —Zan

AFE Guitar/Ukelele Group

Thursdays, 1:30-2:30 Palazzo

This is a parent led class. Please consider joining us! Look for sign ups at the Back to School Gathering. We will be starting with the song, "Somewhere Over the Rainbow."

AFE Madrigal Singers

If you are an experienced Choral singer with an affinity for early music and would like to join our group, please contact Therese at tjohannesson@sccs.net

AFE High School Acapella Group

Are you a moderately experienced High School singer that would like to branch out into more challenging music, like covers that the group "Pentatonix" does? Please consider joining this group. Learn more about it and look for sign ups at the Back to School Gathering in September. We have enough interested singers for a strong group, but we need more and will need to schedule a rehearsal time when we know all of the participants available times.

Shawn's Super Sewing Class

Tuesdays from 1:00 to 3:00, set up is 12:45 to 1:00 and clean up is 2:50 to 3:10 (note this for planning purposes). You do not need to have sewn before. We start with paper and then move onto controlling a seam allowance. Students from the previous year will resume where they left off. Requirements are a working sewing machine, sewing machine manual, 3" binder, plastic pages, sewing box with sharp shears, pins, seam ripper, fabric, and thread. This is a fee based class taught by a current parent, Shawn Lorette Hoover (Rory's mother). The fee covers instruction time, set up and clean up. Class instruction is based on the use of a sewing machine and each technique builds upon each other and most projects can be completed in one to two classes. Class size is a minimum of 5 students and a maximum of 8. Twelve (12) Classes, starting on September 15th. Palazzo Studio. For a complete list of supplies or to answer any questions, email me at shawnlorette@mac.com.

Model Rocketry Class!

We'll have a Model Rocketry Basics class this fall:

- 3 build sessions at AFE (**Thursdays 3-5pm** starting 9/10)
- Moffett Field Rocket Launch on Saturday 9/26.
- for any level, and materials will be supplied (there will be different options if you already completed the class last year)
- students 12 years or younger must be accompanied by a parent helper
- we'll have a signup sheet in the Resource Center

* students who did the Advanced Rocketry class last year are invited to be teaching assistants. Email jay@cinemagic.com for more info.

We'll also have a TARC Club where experienced model rocketry folks (along with general managers, marketing and publicity, & fundraising folks) who would like to lend their talents will build rockets to very specific specs to fly two eggs to a specific height within a specific timeframe. Great team-building STEM experience and lots of hard work! TARC will



meet every other week from October thru December and then weekly from January to March.... Fall launch schedule is tentative, but likely to be the following Saturdays in 2015: 10/24, 11/21, and 12/19. There will be additional launches the team will use to qualify during January through March 2016.

We'll have more info at the 9/2 AFE Community Gathering all-school activities event!

Adventurous play for 3 - 6 graders

AFE 6th grader, Spencer Kanar has written a fun action-packed adventure play titled Adventure Kids! The Beginning. He would like to produce/direct it with AFE 3 - 6 graders (and parental supervision). Time TBA but Thursday 11am or Wednesdays at 1 are strong possibilities. Sign ups will be available at the Community Gathering on Sept 2 and in the RC. Please email Zan at zannaboo@ymail.com with any questions.

An Introduction to Money

Time: Wednesdays, 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.; first class September 9.

Instructor: Elizabeth Andrews

Price: Free. Students should bring a scientific calculator to class.

Course Description: In this mixture of personal finance and economics, we will explore how money moves through our lives, businesses, and societies, through hands-on activities, real-world simulations, and class discussions. Because the class is designed to be a challenging and engaging application of mathematics to social science, it is open to middle school and high school students who are already proficient with prealgebra skills including exponents, the use of variables in equations, and calculations with negative numbers and percents. Optional homework will consist of videos and/or podcasts reinforcing the topics discussed in class. Topics will build on each other, so it would be best if students can plan to attend regularly.

About the Instructor: Although this is my first year with AFE, I have been teaching for over 20 years, including teaching math and entrepreneurship to independent studies students for the last 6 years. This class is modeled on a summer class I designed and have taught multiple times for the Center for Talented Youth. Feel free to email me with questions: elizandrews24@gmail.com.

Water the Weeds Improv

[Contact Joya for information.](#)

[\[Return to Table of Contents\]](#)

Homeschool Highlights

AFE Triathletes

Kees placed second in 9 year old boy age group for the Silicon Valley Kids Triathlon and first in the Santa Clara Kids Triathlon. **Nico** placed 5th in the Menlo Park Kids Triathlon, 6 year old boys age group.

At the end of the summer they give out the awards for the previous summer series winners (for 2014). To be eligible you have to do all three races. Both Kees and Nico placed second.

[\[Click here to view full-size photos.\]](#)



Highlight Your Homeschooler!

We all love to read about what other students are AFE are doing.

Did your student travel? Write a funny short story? Win an award? Build a cool fort in your backyard? Please [email Suki](#) (and include pictures!). This is the forum in which bragging about your kids is encouraged!

[\[Return to Table of Contents\]](#)

Student Corner

Summer = Doing What I Love

by **Benno Kolland**

If you know me, you know that I spend every minute I can flying — mostly model rockets, although drones and RC planes will work, too. So when I heard about a new travel scholarship from the National Association for Rocketry to travel to NARAM (their annual summer week of competition launches, presentations, and sport launches) I applied and won one of the awards. That gave me \$800 towards a week-long trip to Tucson, Arizona and paid for my plane ticket, hotel, and lots of good Mexican food. Part of the travel award required entry into at least two competitions, so I entered... [\[click here to read on!\]](#)



[\[Return to Table of Contents\]](#)

Around Town

Ironman Volunteers

Volunteers Needed for Bike Parking at IRONMAN Santa Cruz, Sept. 13. Bike Santa Cruz County is looking for 20 volunteers to help with bike parking at Depot Park on September

13 from 11:00AM – 5:00PM. We'll be retrieving bikes for folks who have finished the race. Volunteers receive lunch and t-shirts, and will help us earn up to \$1,000 in grants. If you can help, contact Amelia at (831) 425-0665 or director@bikesantacruzcounty.org

Outdoor Adventure Classes

FORMING NOW! - Ramblin Adventure Club has 2 homeschool groups forming and we are looking for more adventure-seeking kids to join us. These groups meet weekly to explore the wonderful natural environments offered to us in Santa Cruz. We will hike, swim and play. We also learn nature skills, knife skills (if age appropriate), and about the different types of wildlife and plant life in our county. Adventures have a monthly theme. HOMESCHOOL SCHOOL CLASSES ARE ON MONDAYS - 10-3 - GRADES K-5 and THURSDAYS - 10-3 - GRADES 4-6. Pick up and drop off at Ocean View Park. Please see ramblinadventureclub.com for more information and sign up or email - myhappygang@yahoo.com if you have questions. My sons will both be participating and really enjoyed the adventures and time with their friends last year! Laura

[\[Return to Table of Contents\]](#)

Resources

Free Math Books

Calculus By and For Young People and other Don Cohen books are now [available free online](#).

American History

HISTORY® Channel and The University of Oklahoma have teamed up to create an interactive online course like no other. It will examine the defining moments in American History since The Civil War. Students will debate and discuss post-Civil War America and connect with people around the globe in a unique, immersive and collaborative social platform, Janux. The course combines video lectures with readings, quizzes, discussions, and essays. Video lectures have been professionally produced and include rich, multi-media assets from HISTORY® Channel. [\[info\]](#)

[\[Return to Table of Contents\]](#)

AFE Annual Camp Loma Trip
September 11-13

JOIN UN FOR A FUN TIME IN THE SANTA CRUZ MOUNTAINS!

Join us for our annual camping trip to Camp Loma, located at 29650 Highland Way, which is a continuation of Summit Road off HWY 17. It takes about 45 minutes from AFE. You can also come up on Old San Jose Road or Eureka Canyon Road if you are coming from the south county area. The route from Santa Cruz and Soquel will be marked with "AFE" on brightly-colored paper to help those who have never been to Camp Loma find their way. Look for these signs on utility poles and road signs.

This campout is for families who have one or more students enrolled in AFE only. Students must have a responsible adult accompany them to attend. Parents are often willing to watch out for each other's children, but this must be arranged beforehand and Nancy must be notified ahead of time.

It's the best of camping and camp - flush toilets and showers, a full kitchen with fridges, space for outside games and nighttime board games, tables for meals, a pool, and an opportunity to connect with your community in a variety of ways.

ARRIVAL - beginning at 3:00pm on Friday and set up your tent. You are welcome to come up just for the day on Saturday.

DEPARTURE - Sunday morning plan to breakfast, pack up, and help us clean camp. Many hands make light work. Check-out is at noon on Sunday.

DINNER Friday & Saturday nights will be potluck style at 6:00pm. You can cook in the industrial-sized enclosed kitchen (all utensils, pots, pans and large bowls provided), so no need to bring your camp stove. Washable plates and silverware are provided with outdoor dishwashing facilities which everyone will be responsible for helping with. No alcohol, please! Bring your own breakfast and lunch, which can be stored in the walk-in fridge and freezer (no need for ice).

Firewood is provided for the CAMPFIRE for playing music (bring your instruments) & telling stories (bring makings for s'mores anyone?). FIRE DANGER HIGH SO WE WILL BE EXTRA MINDFUL OF THE FIRE! Don't forget your flashlights, telescopes, and binoculars because it is wonderfully dark up there!

ACTIVITIES: Relax, play volleyball, tetherball, and ping pong (equipment provided). A large open meadow adjacent to the recreation/ dining area lends itself well to all sorts of games. A covered open-sided dining area with picnic tables has lights, so you can play board games and cards at night. Do bring your favorite games! There are opportunities for hikes in the area too.

- ping pong table needs extra paddles and lots of ping pong balls
- volleyball court available, but please bring a volleyball labeled with your

name

BRING: camping gear, food, toilet paper and a bar of soap, dish, hand and bath towels, swim suits and pool toys, blanket, beach chairs, board games, telescopes and binoculars. (Not the kitchen sink!)

We may be able to open the unheated pool for a couple of hours on Saturday afternoon (still working on a lifeguard). If the pool gets used, some people find the pool's floor very abrasive to bare toes, so wear water shoes. Bring squirt guns and water cannons! Cellphones do not work at Camp Loma, but the telephone for emergencies (in kitchen) is 831-724- 8355 and NO long distance calls (831 numbers only).

We need to take away all our trash, recyclables and compost to avoid the \$250 dumpster fee.

COST is a bit more than last year - \$11.00/person/night. Check should be written to AFE Parent Club. Limited scholarships are available (ask Nancy) You must complete field trip forms and turn in to Dorothee in the RC by **Thursday, September 10th. Call Nancy Aylsworth for more information at 429-3898 x334.**

The Soquel Demonstration Forest is adjacent to Camp Loma, and the main entrance is about 1/2 mile away. There are some wonderful trails there for both hiking and mountain biking. Any parents want to organize a hike or bike ride? Talk to Nancy.

Drive for Schools—Annual Car Giveaway

Sponsored by The Capitola Auto Mall Dealer Group and the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk.

Grand Prize: New Toyota Prius, or New Subaru Outback, or \$25,000 cash!

There will also be TEN \$1000 cash prizes! Plus over 100 other prizes.

Tickets sales are from **September 16 - October 18, 2015**.

The drawing is 1pm on October 25, 2015 at the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk.

Tickets are only \$5/each or 6 for \$25. All of the proceeds from ticket sales goes directly to the AFE Parent Club!

Where do I get tickets to buy or sell? Tickets are available in the Resource Center. There are two envelopes on Dorothee's desk: one for buying, and one to pick-up tickets to sell. If you take tickets to sell you must return all money,



unsold tickets, and ticket stubs by Friday, October 18, 1pm.

I want to contribute to the parent club for my child's participation in theater (or other activities), can I buy or sell tickets instead of a donation? Yes! It doesn't matter if you buy the tickets yourself or sell them to others.

Can I sell them to people from out of town? Yes. You can use social media or other online venues to sell tickets to locals or non-locals alike. See the official rules (link below) to see who is eligible to purchase tickets.

Need more information? Contact Zan (zannaboo@ymail.com) or see the official rules:

<http://beachboardwalk.com/driveforschools/>

This fundraiser is a great way to help the AFE Parent Club. Please don't wait until the last minute and find out your friends and family bought tickets from someone else!

AFE Parent Club

What's the Parent Club?

The AFE Parent Club financially supports the AFE community. In the past, we have provided funds to enable or enhance programs, activities, and events. We also help with supplies and resources. Some of the things that have been supported by the AFE Parent Club in the past few years include: Theater for all ages, sports teams for grades 6-12, Clay Studio, Games Group, Economics class for high schoolers, Orff music for elementary students, family poetry workshops, field trips, staffing for the resource center. We also have donated supplies for Family Art Night; resources—books, games, audio CDs, DVDs—for the resource center; classroom supplies for teacher-led classes; art supplies for the Palazzo Studio; and lots more.

The Parent Club relies on donations and fundraising in order to offer support for all these things. Without fundraising, these programs, classes, activities, and resources will no longer be available at AFE. Please take the time to see how you can help by reading and following the Everyday Fundraising Checklist below that will help you help the Parent Club with as little hassle as possible.

Thank you for supporting the AFE Parent Club. We are a 501(c)3 nonprofit!

[Donate](#)



—The Parent Club Board

AFE's Everyday Fundraiser Checklist

Our ongoing fundraisers are all ways to make money for AFE doing the things you already do! We believe that if everyone at AFE participated in, and encouraged their friends and family to participate in these easy programs it will go a long way towards our fundraising needs.

- **eScrip and eScrip Online Shopping Mall:**
 - Register online so that a portion of your purchases is donated to AFE. *See details below.*
- **Staff of Life Scrip:**
 - Use Staff of Life Scrip whenever you shop there. *See details below.*
- **New Leaf eCard:**
 - Pre-purchase a New Leaf eCard. *See details below.*
 - Ask your friends and family to purchase Staff Scrip or eCards from AFE.
- **Whole Foods Gift Cards:**
 - Buy \$100 gift cards to pay for groceries

More information about these and other fundraisers is available on the [AFE Website's Fundraising page](#).

Escrip

Escrip is an easy way to donate to AFE. Follow these instructions to get registered:

- **eScrip:**
 - Register your credit, debit, and grocery cards so that a portion of your purchases is donated to AFE. Go to www.escrip.com to register your cards. The AFE Parent Club's group # is [500007112](#).
 - Ask your friends and family to register their cards for AFE.
- **eScrip Online Shopping Mall:**
 - [Sign up and go through the eScrip online portal whenever you shop online](#) and up to 16% of purchases will be donated to AFE. You can also sign up for Auto Earn so you don't have to go through the Mall every time.
 - Ask your friends and family to use the [Online Shopping Mall portal for AFE](#).

Staff of Life Scrip

Please contact Melisa Schwarm to buy Staff of Life Scrip: Use the contact info on the roster for Otto or [send email](#). I am happy to answer any questions and explain how you can contribute to AFE fundraising just by using scrip to buy anything from Staff. There is NO cost to you, the donation to AFE comes from Staff of Life when you use scrip for your purchases!

New Leaf eCards

Leaf Community Markets offers natural and organic foods and a convenient way to raise money for our school. Use your eCard when paying for groceries and feel good knowing you and New Leaf are supporting the education of our children. There are 3 New Leaf stores where your cards will work:

- 41st. Ave., Capitola
- Pacific Ave., downtown Santa Cruz
- Fair Ave., on the Westside

There are 3 NL locations your card will NOT work:

- Felton
- Halfmoon Bay
- Boulder Creek

This is how it works...

Purchase a New Leaf Gift Card (eCard) from me (with a check made out to the AFE parent club or cash) and a percentage of that amount goes directly back to AFE:

- 4% on \$50
- 5% on \$100,\$250,and \$500

You may also order \$150, \$200, or even \$1,000. The amount must be in increments of \$100's or \$50's.

I will place the order, deliver your card to the RC, and maintain the last 6 digits of your card number. When you use your card, select gift card as your method of payment. Once your card is empty *don't throw it away*. Your card may be refilled with those 6 digits.

Orders will be placed once a month. Please email or call when you are ready to



order or refill your card. Payment must be received ASAP. You can put a check or cash in the New Leaf envelope at Molly's desk in the resource center. Please make checks out to AFE PARENT CLUB.

This month's deadlines are: The order will be placed on **Tuesday, September 15th**. Payment must be in by **Friday, September 11th** no later than 3pm.

Thank you very much for participating, we can use every bit of support right now. Victoria Harder, vlharder@yahoo.com

Whole Foods Gift Cards

The Parent Club sells Whole Foods gift cards for \$100 each. The value on the card is \$100 so there is no additional cost to the buyer for supporting AFE. Use the card to pay for any of your purchases at any of their stores. Please keep the card and load more money onto it with a check or on-line transfer, up to \$400 at a time.

AFE gets 3% of the money our community members pay for gift cards and loading them. If you shop at Whole Foods this is a great way that you can contribute to AFE. [Contact Melisa](#).

[\[Return to Table of Contents\]](#)

Newsletter submissions

Parents, staff, and students are encouraged to submit content for our newsletter. The submission deadline is 1 week before the first day of each month. We especially need content for **AFE News, Homeschool Highlights, Homeschoolers Abroad,** and **Student Showcase**. If you would like to write a short piece on any homeschooling-related topic, please do! [Email Suki](#).

Copyright © 2015 Alternative Family Education, All rights reserved.

Want to change how you receive these emails? You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#). If you are not a current AFE family, please [unsubscribe](#).

MailChimp