

GRANT WEEKLY BULLETIN

APRIL 21-25

AN UNFORGETTABLE WEEK

On Friday, April 11, I joked during my staff meeting that I was taking a stress test later in the morning and hoped I would be able to get off the machine gracefully when it stopped. Little did I know that four days later I would be in serious condition with what my doctor described as a "pseudo aneurism" in my groin area. A week that began with a stress test that led to an angiogram and subsequent angioplasty – would result in a very serious set back. Well, I am happy to report that I am on the mend. For those who are didn't know, I was diagnosed with clogged arteries (70% in the circumflex artery) and narrowing in two others. I went in for what has become a routine procedure to have a stent placed in the artery and allow for blood to flow through the area and avoid a catastrophic heart attack at some future date. All of a sudden I was my father. I was put on so many pills I needed one of those pill organizers to keep everything straight. The idea that I was not healthy and needed to change my diet, lose 15 pounds and exercise was a bit mind-boggling. All that snacking or noshing needed to be cut out. And to think, I didn't even feel ill.

But then came Tuesday. I was discharged from the hospital and allowed to return to work on Wednesday. No big deal. Well, four hours later while getting up from napping, I sprung a leak in my femoral artery where the angiogram tube was inserted and started bleeding ... and bleeding ... and bleeding. In the time it took me to realize that I was in trouble, I grabbed a towel and pressed it to stop the bleeding, called 911, my wife, the doctor and waited for the ambulance. That was the longest ride of my life. In the emergency room a vascular surgeon did a special procedure to clot the blood and so the bleeding would stop. For the next two days I was in Intensive Care being observed for signs of more leakage or worse, rupture of the artery.

Today is Sunday – I am lying in bed, typing this GWB, watching the Dodgers and letting you know that I will be OK. In a week from hell – I am on the mend. In a week that made me question much, I couldn't count all the calls and emails, "get well" banners, homemade cards from students and staff, and thoughts and prayers for my healthy recovery. Your outpouring of concern and love humbled me.

Yet, life went on at Grant. The Jogathon was brilliant. Thanks to Jeff Finkelstein and guest MC's Robb Brown and Paul Meek, the event didn't miss a beat. When Becky Turk came by my home with the red "get well" banner signed by students and parents at the Jogathon it was the best medicine I was given all week. On Friday and Saturday our fifth graders performed in front of students, staff, families and friends the play, "American Heroes." From all accounts it was a smashing success. The parents who help direct, choreograph, write and guide the kids did an amazing job.

So now what? Well, I'll be visiting my three doctors this week to look at me and determine how it's going. My goal is to be able to stand up at the Awards Assembly this Thursday and present certificates, "Caught Being Good" prizes and bad jokes. I will take it easy and work in small bits until I can regain my strength.

Grant is a great school for many reasons. The one that doesn't get much notice is that because parents and teach have the ability to create and participate, the school can almost run itself. That's no small feat – but a critical one when the leader goes down with an injury. I love Grant because of all of you. As I said earlier, I am humbled by your support and love and I want you to know that the week changed my life in many ways – most importantly it made me realize how much you mean to me.

I look forward to seeing all of you very soon.

Al Friedenber

-NORMAL NEWS ON PAGE TWO-

CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR APRIL

Tuesday	April 22	Earth Day
Thursday	April 24	Awards Assembly: Upper – 9 AM, Primary – 10:30 AM, Kindergarten – 12:30 PM
Friday	April 25	Poetry in the Pocket Day
Wednesday	April 30	State Testing Begins (Grades 2-5)

SCHOOL NEWS

THE AFTER SCHOOL ENRICHMENT PROGRAM...With a record 30 classes being offered (including chorus), our third and final after school enrichment program will begin the week of April 28th. Some of the new classes include: Sewing, Yoga, Kinder Art Studio, Author's Corner, Kindergarten Healthy Me, Healthy You Art, Jewelry Making and Magic. The cost is \$50 per class and scholarships are available.

POETRY IN THE POCKET DAY-APRIL 25...April is poetry month. We are asking students to bring a poem in their pocket next Friday. If we catch you with a poem in your pocket during lunch that day, you will be asked to either read or recite your poem.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE ON EARTH DAY... In honor of Earth Month here are a few easy things you can do to help make a difference.

1. Cancel any magazine subscriptions you really don't need
2. Switch to a non-toxic & biodegradable household cleaner & laundry detergent.
3. Change some light bulbs to CFL's
4. Buy Organic & locally grown foods.
5. Use your "Green Gecko" reusable bags when out shopping. (Or any other bag you may have)
6. Remember to turn off all lights & appliances when leaving the house.

Heal the Bay has wonderful activities for the entire family. For more details go to www.healthebay.org. & see their "upcoming events calendar".

Thanks. The Green Geckos

A PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT FROM ROOM 74...The students of Ms. Ramsey's third grade class will participate in the second annual "Towels and Treats Collection," the week of May 12-16. They will be collecting clean towels, toys, high efficiency liquid detergent, sheets and assorted dog and cat treats for the Santa Monica and West Los Angeles animal shelters. Special collection boxes will be set up in Room 74 and the office. A representative from the animal shelter will come May 16 to pick up the donated items. Thank you for helping out.

ATTENTION FIFTH GRADE PARENTS...Mr. Avedian (current 6th grade JAMS science teacher) and Ms. Steinmetz (former 7th grade JAMS science teacher) have put together a unique opportunity for students grades 6-8 (including incoming 6th graders). Join us for four days of marine science fun this summer as well as help fundraise money for the Santa Monica Science Magnet program. 25%-33% (dependent upon enrollment numbers/cost of materials, permits, & insurance) of the enrollment fee will be donated to the SMSM scholarship fund. Our goal is to raise \$8,000 for the magnet program so that students in need of financial assistance can attend the great trips offered during the school year (Catalina Island Marine Science Institute, Yosemite Institute, and Astrocamp). Visit <http://santamonicasciencemagnet.org> for more information.

2008 TALENT SHOW!...Auditions are coming up on Thursday, May 1st, and Friday, May 2nd, from 3:00-5:30. Acts can run between one and two minutes, and each student can be in one solo act, and a maximum of two acts. Start rehearsing your performance, and look for sign-ups to be posted on Monday, April 21! Don't forget, the time that you audition is approximately the time that you will rehearse each week, so plan accordingly. We're looking forward to seeing you there! Questions? Email Alison Brady at alisonbrady@fastmail.fm.

DID YOU KNOW? ...SMMUSD high schools offer 31 different Advance Placement courses making them more academically rigorous than many private schools according to district officials. (Lookout News, 11/6/07)

