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Don't Forget!

[6th Annual World Neighborhood Gala](#)

[Hyatt, Monterey](#)

[Saturday, April 11, 2009](#)

[6:00PM: Reception & Silent Auction](#)

[7:30PM: Dinner, Live Auction & Dancing](#)

Please RSVP to:
Cimiles33@aol.com

Don't miss these informative upcoming meetings!

**Thursday, April 2, 6:30PM
Family Association Meeting**

Lisa Rohrer, from the Viva International Homestays Program will be in attendance to discuss hosting international students. This is an incredible opportunity for our families at ISM. Please come and hear about the program.

**Monday, April 6, 6:30PM
Budget Townhall Meeting**

Please come and find out how the State Budget Crisis has affected the ISM budget, what has been done to control costs and further steps that have been taken to solve the financial gap. This is your opportunity to understand the school budget first hand, ask questions and be a part of the solution.

As of today, we have reached 82% of families giving. We have 46 families left who have not made a contribution to the ISM Foundation. Please, if you are one of those families, consider giving whatever you are able today, and help us reach our goal of 100% participation!

If you are interested in joining the Foundation, we would love to have your participation. The Foundation meets the first Saturday of each month at 9:00AM. Please email foundation@ismonterey.org.

Sincerely,
The ISM Foundation Team

March Donor Profile

Every month we will feature comments from a family who has made contributing to the ISM Foundation a priority.

Greg and Sandra Wolfson - "Supporting ISM During Difficult Times"

Greg and Sandra Wolfson and their daughter Madeline have been part of the ISM community since 2004 when Madeline entered Kindergarten. Sandra is a fine arts instructor at MPC. Greg finances and develops solar energy projects. He is a member of the ISM foundation board.



Our family just said a sad good-bye to Amanda, a college student from Seoul, Korea who lived with us for a month while she took a month-long English intensive class at Monterey Institute of International Studies (MIIS).

Amanda was placed in our home by Lisa Rohrer of Viva International Homestays. Lisa coordinates home stays for MIIS students from overseas with local families in the area.

Amanda, a 22 year-old, majoring in English translation and business, integrated quickly into our family life and soon became like an older sister to Madeline.

We took her on family outings like the farmer's market in Monterey and a hike in Big Sur. She joined us for family meals sharing her Korean experiences, and played games with Madeline even helping her with homework. She played piano when we hosted the second grade singe-along pot luck. She was truly a joy to have in our home.

Sandra and I had always been intrigued with hosting an internal student at our home as a way of exposing Madeline to foreign cultures and languages. We have a guest room that we hardly use and thought we could put it to better use.

This arrangement with Homestays exposed all of us to a new culture, and it brought a little income to our family.

Host families provide a simply furnished room, daily breakfast and dinner, and plenty of conversation. In turn, the Homestays program compensates host families \$900 per month per student.

We are using the \$900 we were paid to host Amanda to contribute toward our ISM Family Share payment.

I am telling you about our experience with Homestays because you might be interested in doing this as well. It is a terrific educational experience that comes with a stipend!

Most of us have experienced the ill affects of the current economic downturn. The market chaos has cost some their jobs, reduced the value of our savings and home equity and created fear for our financial future. The expressions "hunkering down" and "tightening belts" reverberates across the media.

Yet at this time, ISM needs our financial support more than ever. With state funding being cut back, now is not the time for parents to pull back from their financial support of ISM. Now is the time for parents to get creative in thinking how to keep our school financially strong.

Our family found that hosting a student accomplishes two goals: expanding our links with the international world and helping us to pay our ISM Family Share that we consider to be a non-negotiable line item in the family budget.

Just a few years back I could never have foreseen these difficult times. After Madeline was born, we decided to move the family out of Silicon Valley and settle in the Monterey Peninsula where we had lived years before. We chose our neighborhood because it was served by Monte Vista elementary school, an excellent MPUSD school within walking distance from our home.

However, before Madeline became of school age, the Monterey Peninsula School District closed down Monte Vista.

That's when we stumbled upon ISM; a public school with an active and vested parent community. With great relief, we learned about ISM's enlightened international curriculum, exceptional teaching faculty and dedicated parents. Astonished by our good fortune with the lottery, we enthusiastically enrolled Madeline into Kindergarten.

With the benefit of almost 4 years at ISM, we know that we made the right decision. Madeline's educational experience at ISM is unrivaled among schools in our area. We are truly fortunate to be a part of the ISM community and appreciate the value of the additional resources that ISM brings to the classroom. We feel privileged to have the opportunity to contribute to Madeline's education through the family share donation.

Now, however, our fortune has changed, and like many ISM families we find ourselves in quite different financial circumstances than years past. Last year I had to close my sailing business. Finding employment comparable to my previous positions has proven to be challenging in this economy.

Sandra has found her calling teaching art at Monterey Peninsula College. Unfortunately, as a part time instructor, she has neither health benefits nor any job security beyond the current semester. In truth, our financial commitment to ISM is a great deal dearer than it was only a year ago.

Nonetheless we are committed to contributing financially to ISM through the family share program. We were troubled by the loss of teaching aids due to budget constraints last year and wish to see no further loss of ISM resources. Like many in our situation, we have tried to tighten our belts to cut our families expenses. And, like many other ISM parents, we are seeking ways to help pay the Family Share.

After our wonderful experience with Amanda, we suggest that ISM families with space in their homes and in their hearts consider serving as hosts for Homestays. You will learn a lot, you will have fun, and you will earn a little money!

Lisa Rohrer has agreed to provide a brief overview of her program and answer any questions that ISM families might have at the next Family Association meeting (tomorrow). If you are interested in hosting an international student, I encourage you to attend the next Family Association meeting this Thursday, April 2nd. In the interim, you can find out more information online at her website www.vivahomestays.com.

-Greg and Sandra Wolfson-

How To Give

The International School of Monterey is a 501(3)(c) non-profit organization. As such 100% of your financial contributions may be tax deductible. 501(3)(c) Tax ID# 74-3062542.

Please make checks payable to ISM Foundation, and mail to P.O. Box 711, Monterey, CA 93940. You may also leave contributions in the black box in the office at the school.

If you would prefer, we are now able to accept contributions online using Paypal at www.ismonterey.org. Make a one time payment, or if it's more convenient, you can now make a monthly contribution on your credit card.

Money orders and cash contributions are always welcome as well!

And don't forget, no amount is too small...or too big!

If you have any questions about the ISM Foundation or would like find out more about participating in the Foundation, please email foundation@ismonterey.org.