

# Council News

Saddleback Valley Council PTA \* Fourth District PTA \* CCPTS  
25631 Peter Hartman Way \* Mission Viejo, CA 92691 \* www.svpta.org  
President: Julie Schwarz \* Newsletter Editor: Ann Shaver

## President's Message

By Julie Schwarz,  
SVPTA President  
[svpresident@svpta.org](mailto:svpresident@svpta.org)

Happy New Year! I hope each and every one of you had a restful holiday season with your families. I know that I did. It is hard to believe that my term is already half over. Now is a great time to evaluate the goals you set for yourself and your unit. Have you made any progress? Do you need to refocus your efforts or your unit's? It is not too late to accomplish everything you set out to do.

**February Elections:** Next month, on February 5<sup>th</sup>, elections will take place. We will have "Voter Guides" available for your units. Please encourage your members to participate in the election. Information on the PTA's Opinion on Proposition 92 is available on the California PTA website ([www.capta.org](http://www.capta.org))

**Nominating Committees:** Most units will nominate their nominating committee this month. This committee is the most critical committee that you will have all year and is crucial for the continued success of your unit. The parliamentarian is responsible for organizing this committee. The management of this committee and the member's ability to adhere to proper procedure and respect confidentiality are at the core of the future of your unit. Please take this process serious and emphasize the importance to your unit. If your parliamentarian has questions, please have them contact our Council Parliamentarian, Dennis Walsh.

**Superintendent's Forum:** Please attend the January Superintendent Forum this coming Wednesday. Dr. Fish will share his insight on a variety of topics including the state budget, the new district software, contract negotiations and ballot measures (that might impact education). Join us on Wednesday, January 16 at 9:30 in the SVUSD Board Conference room.

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### Upcoming Events:

#### January:

- 16th— Superintendent's Forum —9:30 AM @ SVUSD Board Room
  - 24th—Council Meeting—7:00 PM @ SVUSD Board Room
- No President's Roundtable this month

#### February:

- 21st—Council Meeting—7:00 PM @ SVUSD Board Room
- President's Roundtable— Teacher/Staff Involvement— 6:15PM@ District Board Room

### Items to bring to Jan. meeting:

- ✓ A copy of the Audit for the period ended 12/31/2007 if it has been completed and adopted (**worth 2 incentive points**)
- ✓ A copy of the tax return for the year ended 6/30/2007 (**worth 1 incentive point**)
- ✓ A copy of a December/January newsletter (**worth 1 incentive point**)
- ✓ Membership dues remittance (don't forget the Unit Remittance Form)
- ✓ A copy of the minutes from your most recent Association meeting
- ✓ A copy of your most recent Treasurer's Report
- ✓ Any items past due from prior meetings, such as your Workers' Compensation Annual Payroll Report Form.

(Presidents Message –continued from Page 1)

**Budgets and Audits:** It is time for your mid-year audit to take place. Please make sure that this audit is being completed. This is one of the best tools you have to ensure against money mismanagement.

January is also a great time to review your annual budget with your Board. Remember that your budget is just a roadmap. If your unit's finances have varied greatly from your working budget, now would be a great time to amend your budget. If you have further questions about your budget, please contact Molly O'Grady, our Council Treasurer.

Many thanks for the time you dedicate to your units. You are appreciated. Please contact me or any of the Board members if you have any questions or concerns.

## REFLECTION RESULTS

*By Ann Shimizu*  
*Council Reflections*  
[svreflections@svpta.org](mailto:svreflections@svpta.org)



Here are the winners from our Council, that also won at District. They will be recognized at the 4th District open house.

Saddleback Valley Council's official count is as follows:

3 - Award of Excellence

- Noah Ehler - Portola Hills (Music Composition)
- Romy Abboud - de Portola (Photography)
- Ryan Wallace - Robinson (Film/Video)

3 - Award of Merit

- Evan Powell - Valencia (Literature)
- Samantha De La O - Cielo Vista (Literature)
- Abbie Robbins - Portola Hills (Film/Video)

1 - Honorable Mention

- John Lindahl - Portola Hills (Music Composition)

Noah Ehler, Romy Abboud & Ryan Wallace will go on to the state level. Good luck to all of you!

Make sure you congratulate these talented students.

## Mid-Year Minutes Check



By Jennifer Bodenhofer  
Council Secretary  
[svsecretary@svpta.org](mailto:svsecretary@svpta.org)

Your unit's Auditor will be knocking on your door any day now, looking for the Minute Book so the audit can be prepared for the period ended December 31. If you've been keeping your Minute Book updated throughout the year, then you will be ready to hand it over with a smile when that knock comes at your door.

If you're a normal person, like me, your Minute Book may not be completely current. If so, then you **must** make it a priority to update the book right away. There are strict deadlines about when the audit must be completed, and you don't want something as simple as the Minute Book to be holding back the completion of the audit.

The audit is only one of the reasons why it's important to keep your records organized and up to date. As the official record of the actions and decisions of your unit, the minutes are a vital reference tool. You should always have your Minute Book with you at meetings, in case a question arises. Make an extra copy of your minutes each month and stash them in a special place, so you have these to refer to when your Auditor has the official book.

Remember that you have a very important job in your unit! You have made it to the halfway mark in the year and I am confident that you will continue to be a valuable resource to your PTA and your school. Feel free to get in touch with me if I can help you in any way.



## FINANCIAL NOTES

By Molly O'Grady  
Council Treasurer  
[svtreasurer@svpta.org](mailto:svtreasurer@svpta.org)



Since it's the middle of our school year, your Executive Board should review this year's budget. You may notice that your budget needs changes, such as a new program or a new fundraiser. You can amend the budget but it must be done at the General Association meeting. Here is a sample motion; "J. Smith moves to amend the 2007-2008 budget, to transfer \$300.00 from the Parent Ed line item to the Art Masters line item." If adjustments are needed, the budget amendment must be approved by a two-thirds vote of the General Association

Also, please remember that any new members that you have not paid dues for yet can be paid for at any time. You don't have to wait for a Council meeting! You can mail a check to me at my address on the unit remittance form or by inter-district mail. As always, I'll be happy to answer any questions you have.



# Ahoy Mateys! It be time for the 109th Annual CA State PTA Convention May 1 - 4, 2008 - Long Beach

**That's right Mateys, the California State PTA Convention is going to be right on the water, in Long Beach, where we be dockin. Here are the perticulers:**

**WHEN & WHERE:** May 1-4, 2008 @ The Long Beach Convention Center

**REGISTRATION:** Begins on February 4, 2008 @ 8:00 AM (Registration is transferable but not refundable)

**YOUR INFO:** Your packets should arrive by the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of January

**STATE DINNER:** Thursday, May 1<sup>st</sup> - 7:00 to 11:00 PM @ The Aquarium of the Pacific, includes Exploration of Aquarium, Dinner & Dancing

**DISTRICT DINNER:** Saturday, May 3<sup>rd</sup> @ Long Beach Convention Center – A Don't Miss Opportunity for Networking w/Orange County Mateys

**PLAN TO: MAKE YOUR MOTIONS ASAP TO RELEASE FUNDS TO REGISTER YOUR DELEGATES ON FEBRUARY 4<sup>TH</sup>**

## **IMPORTANT DATES:**

- ▶ **Jan. 24<sup>th</sup> – Convention Report with Important Details @ Council Presidents' Meeting**
- ▶ **Feb. 4<sup>th</sup> – April 17<sup>th</sup> - Register online/Fax or mail**
- ▶ **Feb. 4<sup>th</sup> – April 17<sup>th</sup> - Make Hotel Reservations via Visitors Bureau**
- ▶ **March 1<sup>st</sup> – Deadline for Hotel Reservation Refund**
- ▶ **April 1<sup>st</sup> – Convention Chronicle Mailed**
- ▶ **April 24<sup>th</sup> – Fourth District Delegate Orientation Open House, 10:00 am to 1:00 pm or 6:00 to 8:00 pm @ Fourth District Office**

## LEGISLATIVE UPDATE—ELECTIONS:

By Dorelle Kmetz  
Council Legislative Rep  
[svlegislative@svpta.org](mailto:svlegislative@svpta.org)

PTA can not endorse candidates, but it can and does encourage people to get out and vote. Sadly, voting statistics show fewer parents with children in school vote compared to other sectors of the general public.

California Will Have Three Statewide Elections This Year. New this year, the Primary Election has been split into two parts:

The Presidential Primary Election is on February 5, 2008.

The State Primary Election for other elected offices, such as those for Congress and the State Legislature, will be on June 3, 2008. The third statewide election will be the General Election on November 4, 2008.

I am hoping to have available to all PTA Unit Presidents at the next Council Meeting copies of the “Easy Voter Guide” booklets in both English and Spanish. However, if you wish to read this booklet in the meantime, you can find a copy at [www.easyvoter.org](http://www.easyvoter.org) If you have any questions, please feel free to email me at [svlegislative@svpta.org](mailto:svlegislative@svpta.org).

## SPECIAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE CONTINUES TO DEVELOP

Caroline Paltin, Ph.D.  
Special Education Chair,  
[svspealed@svpta.org](mailto:svspealed@svpta.org)

Last month’s meeting of the Special Education Chairpersons provided an opportunity to share ideas about articles for unit newsletters, and projects for enhancing understanding and acceptance and integration of special needs students. It was also a time to go over general guidelines of this committee and its function within the PTA and connections to the CAC.

If your Special Education Committee Chair has not yet attended a monthly meeting, please encourage them to take the time. We have valuable information to offer as well as helpful ideas and support. Special thanks to those who attended our last monthly meeting, and for all the wonderful work you are doing. As always, if there are questions regarding the functions of the Special Education Committee, please feel free to contact me.

The **January Committee Meeting** for Special Education Chairs is scheduled for **Tuesday, January 29, at 9 -11am** in the Board Room at the SVUSD Offices. We will be discussing district resources and project ideas for the spring months.

## Simple Steps to Build Your PTA Advocacy Program

By Celia Jaffe, Fourth District Vice President, Advocacy  
As published in *Orange Leaves*, December 2007/January 2008

PTA members who are in charge of advocacy or legislation for their unit or council sometimes feel overwhelmed. They don't know where to start, especially if their group has not had an advocacy program in the past. They worry that their reports about legislative issues and activities will be met with confusion, boredom, and apathy.

Don't be discouraged! Building an advocacy program takes patience and perseverance. A spark of excitement from one person can touch off the interest and involvement of other members in your group.

The key is to start with simple steps. Here are three examples:

1. Use the ready-to-copy flyers found in the Advocacy section of Fourth District PTA website ([www.fourthdistrictpta.org](http://www.fourthdistrictpta.org)) as handouts at meetings. Just one per meeting is plenty.
2. Make sure that "Legislation" or "Advocacy" is a part of every meeting agenda. Choose one topic per meeting and spend just a few minutes explaining it.
 

Here are some basic topics and resources:

  - Five simple things you can do to be an informed parent. ([www.fourthdistrictpta.org](http://www.fourthdistrictpta.org) under Advocacy)
  - How to be an effective advocate for your child. (*Orange Leaves* article, October 2007)
  - Local decision-makers: the school site council. Your school can provide a list of people on the site council and their budget for the year. You might ask a parent representative from the council to talk to your PTA about their work.
  - Local decision-makers: the school board. Provide a handout with the names of board members and their meeting dates, which should be available on your school district web site. Talk about some of the issues currently being considered by the board.
  - California public school funding overview ([www.fourthdistrictpta.org](http://www.fourthdistrictpta.org) under Advocacy)
3. Remind your members that they already participate in the efforts of California State PTA and National PTA to advocate for children. Delegates to the State PTA Convention debate and vote on the resolutions and the legislation platform that form the basis of PTA stances on issues of concern to parents, children and youth. The State and National portions of your membership dues cover the expenses of volunteers who research issues, determine PTA's position on legislative bills and ballot initiatives, and communicate PTA's priorities and concerns to elected officials and other policy-makers.

Remember that the Fourth District PTA Advocacy Committee (The A-Team) is available to provide resources and support. Our Speakers Bureau can give a brief advocacy pitch at your meeting. Contact Barb Shangraw at [speakers@fourthdistrictpta.org](mailto:speakers@fourthdistrictpta.org) to arrange for a presentation.

Check *Orange Leaves* for articles on advocacy and information on our upcoming Advocacy Roundtables, Feb. 1 and April 25.

If you have any questions, contact me at [advocacy@fourthdistrictpta.org](mailto:advocacy@fourthdistrictpta.org).

### Get the latest information on statewide education issues!

California State PTA Annual Legislation Conference

Jan. 27-29, 2008

Fourth District PTA's Sacramento Safari

April 1—2, 2008

Edsource Conference

April 17, 2008

## 2007—2008 SVPTA CALENDAR

### January 2008

- 16th Superintendent's Forum 9:30 AM @ SVUSD Board Conf Room  
24th Council Meeting 7:00 PM @ SVUSD Board Room  
(Executive Board Meeting 6PM in Facilities Conf Room)

### February 2008

- 21st Council Meeting 7:00 PM @ SVUSD Board Room  
(Executive Board Meeting 6PM in Facilities Conf Room)

### March 2008

- 12th 4th District Administrators Dinner TBA  
13th Council Meeting 7:00 PM @ SVUSD Board Room  
(Executive Board Meeting 6PM in Facilities Conf Room)

### April 2008

- 1-2 Sacramento Safari  
10th Council Meeting 7:00 PM @ SVUSD Board Room  
(Executive Board Meeting 6PM in Facilities Conf Room)  
16th Superintendent's Forum 9:30 AM @ SVUSD Board Conf Room  
17th High School Open House Time TBD by individual school  
24th Intermediate School Open House Time TBD by individual school

### May 2008

- 1—4 CA PTA Convention  
22nd Council Training - Workshops 6:00 PM @ SVUSD Board Room  
29 Elementary School Open House Time TBD by individual school

### June 2008

- 5th SVPTA Council Dinner Time/Date TBD