

# Saddleback Valley PTA Council News

## President's Message

By Julie Schwarz,  
SVPTA President  
svpresident@svpta.org

I am writing this article on the first day of school, and yes, my house is quiet. It is the time of new beginnings – new teacher(s), new friends, new PTA Boards, possibly new schools. The great part of new beginnings is that we get to start over – and now is the time to set the tone for the new school year.

I encourage you to work with your Executive Board to get off to a good start – to set the tone for the new academic year. Most likely, you will have many new faces at your first meeting – will the meeting be welcoming, positive, interesting, and informative? Will your meeting start on time? Will you work to keep committee reports brief and informative? Will you make sure new members are greeted and thanked for attending? We certainly were trying to accomplish these things at our first Council meeting.

One thing that I believe we all learned from last year is the value of Advocacy. We all worked hard to communicate to our members the state budget situation and the impact various budget cuts would/will have on our district budget. We had an opportunity to educate our members on ways they could get their voices heard. We wrote letters, visited Legislators, participated in a district-wide rally, made phone calls and worked untiringly until we thought our voice had been heard. We were “every child, one voice”. I believe we made an impact.

However, as I write this article, our work is not over. Although the last revision of the state budget included fewer cutbacks in education, a final state budget has not been passed.

(Continued on Page 2)

### Inside this issue:

The Write Stuff	2
Membership and OMDR	3
Legislation Notes	4
Reflections Update	4
Parliamentarian Workshop	5
Special Education Committee	6
2009 PTA Convention	6
Newsletter Recognition Program	7
Council Calendar	8

### Upcoming Events:

#### September:

- 18th—Council Meeting– 7PM @ SVUSD Board Room  
     President's Roundtable– 6:15PM@  
     District Board Room  
     Topic: Recruiting, Managing and Keeping  
     Volunteers
- 25th—Elementary School Back to School Night—Time TBD by individual school
- 29th-Bylaws Workshop-7PM@SVUSD Board Room

#### October:

- 2nd—Intermediate School—Back to School Night—Time TBD by individual school
- 14th— School Board Meeting—6:15 PM @ SVUSD Board Room
- 15th—Superintendents Forum—9:30 AM @ SVUSD Board Conf Room
- 16th—High School—Back to School Night—TBD by individual school
- 23rd—Council Meeting—7:00 PM @ SVUSD Board Room

### Items to bring to Sept. meeting:

- ✓ A copy of your 2008-2009 budget, as adopted by your association
- ✓ A copy of the Audit for the period ended 6/30/08, as adopted by your association (**worth 2 incentive points**)
- ✓ A check with a unit remittance form for your first remittance of membership dues
- ✓ A copy of the minutes from your most recent association meeting
- ✓ A copy of your most recent Treasurer's Report
- ✓ A copy of your first newsletter, if you've published one (**worth 1 incentive point**)
- ✓ The name and email address of your Legislative Chairman (**worth 2 incentive points**)
- ✓ Membership dues remittance with a Unit Remittance Form (**worth 2 incentive points if paying for 50 or more members**)

(President's Message continued from Page 1)

Therefore, the school district is operating without knowing exactly what funds will be available for the 2008-2009 school year. Additionally, without a state budget, the school district is not receiving all the funding it is due and is being forced to borrow funds to maintain services. Of course, this borrowing comes with an additional cost.

When you read this article, if a state budget has not been passed, please encourage your members to contact their legislators to implore them to pass a budget. (You already have received an email from our council Advocacy Chairperson, Molly O'Grady, that provides instructions on how to contact your legislators.) As you can probably tell by my wording, the state budget situation is fluid and we are hoping for a final budget soon.

In regards to Advocacy, I encourage you to appoint a Legislative Representative. This representative is one of the most important positions on your Board. This coming school year promises to be another year in which we will busy working to get the voice of every child heard. If you are struggling with this, please contact Molly O'Grady or me. We would love to help you find a Legislative Representative.

And lastly, I encourage you to reach out to your *whole community*. Our PTAs typically have the "same" parents who participate and help out with our activities. You may want to ask your membership chairperson (or you may want to appoint an Outreach Chairperson) to help with this effort. It may require a whole new way of approaching things. You may need to try different strategies – different meeting times, different types of activities, and/or different communication vehicles. By embracing all aspects of your community, you will have a stronger PTA.

## THE WRITE STUFF

By Ann Shaver

SVPTA Secretary

svsecretary@svpta.org



Grab your pens, pencils and notebooks - it's time to get to work. Whether you've had your first meeting already or it's coming up sooner than you think, here are some helpful hints to get you through!

First of all, remember to always have a notebook and pens, motion forms (if used by your association), the minutes from the last meeting and a copy of your bylaws. You will also need to get a list of current members from your membership chairman and have a sign-in sheet so that you can document all the people in attendance.

Secondly, remember that when you take your notes, your focus is on what has been decided, not what has been said. Make sure you note the name of the person making each motion, a description of the motion, and the results of the vote. You do not need to list who seconded the motion or any lengthy conversations which occur when discussing the motions. A change from previous years is to say 'motion adopted' rather than 'motion passed' so try to keep this in mind when writing your minutes out.

Thirdly, make sure to get a copy of each printed report that is presented in the meeting. The Treasurer's report is the most common printed report, but you'll also have an Auditor's report twice a year as well as other committee or legislative reports throughout the year. These documents should be referred to in your minutes and become part of your unit's official records.

Lastly, you should type your minutes as soon as practical after the conclusion of the meeting. The notes you make for yourself today may not be as clear if you wait a couple of weeks. Be sure to give your president an opportunity to edit the minutes as well. After editing, print a final copy of your minutes, paste them into your permanent minute book (along with sign-in sheets, Treasurer's reports, etc.) and be prepared to present copies at your next meeting.

Please contact me with any questions – I am happy to help!!!

## Membership and OMDR

By Andrea Padian

SVPTA Membership Chairman

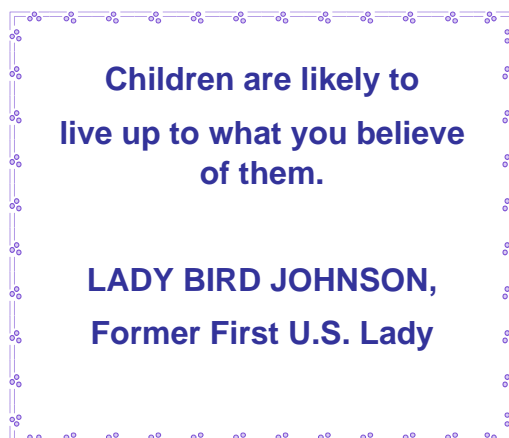
svmembership@pta.org

I want to update everyone about the status of the **OMDR** (Online Membership Data Reporting) program this year. Basically, the National PTA is still addressing some of the concerns associated with the program, as well as working on enhancements to it. Until they are ready to go, Fourth District is discouraging units from using it. The program was originally developed to comply with laws requiring all nonprofit organizations to maintain a full list of its members. With that said, you can be sure PTA is working hard to get the program perfected as soon as possible. I predict that in the next year or two, the district will once again require all units to participate in the program. For now, this is up to you. Some units like to print their membership cards or e-mail their members using the program.

Please be sure to bring in a check at the September council meeting for at least 15 members to receive the **PTA Early Bird Award**. To qualify for the **Chairman's Club Award** (50 or more members), you will need to bring in a check for a minimum of 50 members, or you can mail your check directly to Dennis Walsh, our Treasurer, by October 10<sup>th</sup>. All of our units received both these awards last year and it is my hope that we will do it again. I also want to remind everyone that turning in all your dues each month is very important. Like you, it is money that we must forward through the proper channels. Council forwards the dues to the District, they in turn forward them to the State and the State finally forwards the remaining dues to National PTA. While some units do fundraising, the Council, District, State and National PTAs *do not* and they depend entirely upon membership dues to function. So *please* forward the dues owed beyond your unit membership dues as soon as possible. Thank you!

Also, make sure you have looked carefully through your summer mailings for membership packets that include posters and brochures to help with your membership campaigns. The various PTA websites also have many resources you can use as well. Our goal this year to increase our membership by 5%. We need everyone united - on board the same train - to face the educational budget battles we are dealing with now.

If you have any questions regarding dues, membership, or OMDR, please feel free to contact me.



## Legislation Notes

By Molly O'Grady  
SVPTA Advocacy Chairman  
svlegislative@svpta.org

With the upcoming election, I would like to remind you of what PTAs can and cannot do. Advocacy positions ("Vote YES on Proposition XX!") may be handed out at meetings, distributed on the sidewalk out of the school, or mailed at home. It must NOT be sent home with children. PTAs cannot endorse candidates for public offices, and may not make any campaign contributions. I handed out a flyer at the August 28<sup>th</sup> Council meeting with more information. If you need a copy of it, please let me know.

The most important thing that you CAN do is to conduct parents to vote! Amazingly, parents of children are one of the smallest voters group! At Back to School Night, plan to hand out voter registration forms. I will bring some to the September Council meeting.

Information can be distributed as listed above, and also sent home with kids. Information can be reported without being advocacy ("The California State PTA has taken a position approving Proposition XX). Please remember anything that is being sent home with children must be approved by your principal.

Finally, the first Orange County Fourth District PTA Advocacy Roundtable will be on Friday, October 3 at 9:00AM. Legislation Chairmen, Presidents, and other interested parents are invited. Mark your calendar. Please contact me if you have any questions.

## Reflections Update

By Colleen Logomasini  
SVPTA Reflections Chairman  
svreflections@svpta.org



Thank you to all the Reflections Chairpersons and Presidents for responding to my August e-mails. I appreciate it. There is a Reflections Chairman at almost all of our units throughout the Saddleback Valley Unified District.

The deadline date for entries at Saddleback Valley PTA Council level will be:

Monday, November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2008

My Home: 25692 Skybird Lane, Lake Forest

**The sign-up sheet for scheduled drop-offs of entries will be e-mailed by the end of September. Please remember that the student as well as the parent MUST sign the entry form. Last year several units "Merit of Excellence" entries were disqualified due to lack of signature by the student.**

Celebrate all entries by displaying them at your school. Make every participant feel like a winner! If you have any questions, be sure to contact me at svreflections@svpta.org or 949-859-3294.



# BYLAWS "Your PTA's Best Kept Secret" WORKSHOP

- WHEN:** Monday, September 29, 2008
- TIME:** 7:00 P.M.
- PLACE:** Saddleback Valley District Board Room  
25361 Peter A. Hartman Way, Mission Viejo
- INVITEES:** Unit Parliamentarians *and Presidents*
- PURPOSE:** To train Parliamentarians and Presidents on how to update, interpret, and guide their units with one simple document..... The Unit Bylaws.
- WHY:** To ensure that each PTA in Saddleback Council updates and fully **understands the current 2008 version and changes** of the legal document that defines and guides their own PTA.
- RSVP TO:** Dolores Winchell, Council Parliamentarian at [svparliamentarian@svpta.org](mailto:svparliamentarian@svpta.org) **by Wednesday, September 24, 2008**
-

## SPECIAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

### Advocacy and Inclusion

By Caroline Paltin, Ph.D.  
SVPTA Special Education Chairman  
[svspeialed@svpta.org](mailto:svspeialed@svpta.org)

The Special Education Committee works to support schools to create a community of inclusion and acceptance for all children. Every school in our district is home to children with a variety of learning differences, and children with special needs are entitled to a free and appropriate public education under the Federally mandated Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). When Congress passed IDEA in 1975, it pledged to provide states and local districts with 40 percent of the funding needed to support the mandate. Despite this pledge, federal funding of IDEA has not exceeded 19 of the needed funding. Subsequently state and local school districts are left to pick up the 80 percent of funds necessary to provide for special education needs.

Both state and National PTA support bipartisan legislation to require full funding of IDEA. This benefits all students, because fully funding these programs would free up the funds currently being used to meet IDEA requirements, and allow for use of these revenues to address other educational needs. As you communicate with legislators regarding general budget issues, include your concerns regarding the need for fully funding IDEA. By ensuring funding for Special Education, we increase our ability to provide diverse programs for *all children*. I encourage unit chairmen to discuss this important advocacy issue as we work together this year to provide inclusive communities and increase understanding and acceptance of children with differences.

Now is the time to introduce the Special Education committee to your unit via your PTA newsletter. Chairmen can support teachers and parents with resources, such as those found at the CAC (Community Advisory Committee) and the Family Resource Center. Watch for alerts regarding speakers activities, videos and reading material in the area of Special education. Feel free to contact me with any questions or ideas for the 2008-09 school year.

**Do you have a new Chairman? If so, please forward the contact information to me ASAP so that I may contact them and include them in the Committee Directory.**

## 2009 California State PTA Convention



ATTENTION ALL UNITS! This year the 110<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention will be held in San Jose from April 30 – May 3, 2009. Please remember to set aside monies to send delegates from your school to convention. Plan to set aside approximately \$800 per person. This is the best opportunity to train, energize, and promote future PTA leadership. If you want your PTA to continue to strive to be a healthy organization, you must invest in your leadership! Watch for more registration information to be coming out in early 2009. Any questions, please contact Brenda Tettermer, SVPTA Convention Chairman, at [svconvention@svpta.org](mailto:svconvention@svpta.org).

# Newsletter Recognition Program

By Tina Dunn  
SVPTA Newsletter Editor  
svnewsletter@svpta.org

One of your most important tools of communicating is through a newsletter. Each year, our Council acknowledges the efforts of every school that publishes a newsletter with a Newsletter Recognition Program. Another purpose for this program is to encourage schools to create a newsletter that communicates information between home, school and community in the most effective way possible.

Participation in this Program is very easy. Each unit should submit two newsletters for consideration—one each for the months of September and January. These two months also follow Suzann's Incentive Awards program so you will earn points for turning them in as well.

Please note that anything received in a PTA publication (print or electronic) can be reprinted, this includes publications from others units, councils, districts/regions, your state or national PTA. You are encouraged to use any material in these publications as long as you reference the name of the publication (or the web page address, if from the web), the author (if stated) and the month/year of issue. The following are some great resources:

"Council News" - published by the Saddleback Valley PTA Council—[www.svpta.org/newsletters/](http://www.svpta.org/newsletters/)

"Orange Leaves" - published by Fourth District PTA and mailed to all unit presidents (also check their website for electronic version)

[www.capta.org](http://www.capta.org) - see "Communications" - "PTA in California", "The Communicator", "PTA in the News", legislative alerts, etc.

[www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org) - "Annual Resources", "Our Children" magazine, "National PTA Weekly", "Local Leader News, etc.

The criteria for the Newsletter Recognition Program is as follows:

## I. CONTENTS - possible 50 points

- |   |         |
|---|---------|
| 1. Unit meeting notice with program details (indicate if no meeting is scheduled)   | 12 pts. |
| 2. PTA president's message and/or principal's message, featured committee reports, special PTA projects and events  | 12 pts. |
| 3. Council, district, state, national, community PTA projects and/or news   | 12 pts. |
| 4. Calendar of events (date, time, place of PTA projects, school activities, council and district projects/activities, school district projects, community projects/activities, all school holidays/days off) | 14 pts. |

## II. MECHANICS - possible 30 points

- |  |         |
|--|---------|
| 1. No errors: grammatical, spelling, typographical, punctuation                          | 10 pts. |
| 2. Eye appeal: heading design, artwork (avoid copyrighted material); general readability | 10 pts. |
| 3. Format: article layout, use of artwork, use of white space, etc                       | 10 pts. |

## III. PTA POLICY - possible 5 points

- |  |        |
|--|--------|
| 1. Noncommercial (does not endorse a business/commercial entity) | 3 pts. |
| 2. Nonsectarian (does not promote a religious denomination)      | 1 pt.  |
| 3. Nonpartisan (does not promote a political party)              | 1 pt.  |

## IV. HEADING / MASTHEAD - possible 15 points

- |   |         |
|---|---------|
| 1. Name of newsletter; name of PTA (no periods in PTA); school name and address with ZIP code; date (month and year); council and district; volume and/or number, name of editor, PTA president and principal | 10 pts. |
| 2. Proper use of PTA logo and tagline based on "How to Use the PTA Logo and Tagline"  | 5 pts.  |

**Thank you and good luck to everyone!!**

# 2008—2009 SVPTA CALENDAR

## September 2008

18th Council Meeting 7:00 PM @ SVUSD Board Room  
(Executive Board Meeting 6 PM)

24th Fourth District Training Location, Time TBD

25th Elementary School Back to School Night Time TBD by individual school

## October 2008

2nd Intermediate School Back to School Night Time TBD by individual school

3rd Fourth District Roundtable TBD

14th School Board Meeting 6:15 PM @ SVUSD Board Room

15th Superintendent's Forum 9:30 AM @ SVUSD Board Conf Room

16th High School Back to School Night Time TBD by individual school

23rd Council Meeting—Membership Due 7:00 PM @ SVUSD Board Room  
(Executive Board Meeting 6 PM)

## November 2008

18th School Board Meeting 6:15 PM @ SVUSD Board Room

20th Council Meeting 7:00 PM @ SVUSD Board Room  
(Executive Board Meeting 6 PM)

## January 2009

14th Superintendent's Forum 9:30 AM @ SVUSD Board Conf Room

22nd Council Meeting 7:00 PM @ SVUSD Board Room  
(Executive Board Meeting 6 PM)

30th Fourth District Roundtable TBD

## February 2009

26th Council Meeting 7:00 PM @ SVUSD Board Room  
(Executive Board Meeting 6 PM)

## March 2009

19th Council Meeting 7:00 PM @ SVUSD Board Room  
(Executive Board Meeting 6 PM)

26th Fourth District Administrators Dinner TBA

Mar 31st-

Apr 1 Sacramento Safari

## April 2009

15th Superintendent's Forum 9:30 AM @ SVUSD Board Conf Room

16th High School Open House Time TBD by individual school

23rd Council Meeting 7:30 PM @ SVUSD Board Room  
(Executive Board Meeting 6:30 PM)

23rd Intermediate School Open House Time TBD by individual school

Apr 30-

May 3 CA PTA Convention San Jose, CA

## May 2009

21st Council Meeting - Workshops 6:00 PM @ SVUSD Board Room

28th Fourth District Training  
Elementary School Open House Time TBD by individual school

29th Fourth District Roundtable TBD

## June 2009

11th SVPTA Council Dinner Time/Date TBD