

# The Contra Coaster

32nd District PTA

A publication of the 32nd District PTA,  
serving Contra Costa County

**PTA**<sup>®</sup>

*everychild. one voice.*

Sue Woodworth-Bennett, President

Maureen Chang, Editor

Volume 50, Issue 5

June 2008

## From Our President

We did it! We made it through another year! Yes, summer is just around the corner. It's time to break out the shorts, tank tops and sunscreen. It's time to make vacation plans, fire up the barbeque, and somehow still keep our kids focused on these last few days of school. And of course, as PTA volunteers, we need to keep focused as well, as we continue to plan for the coming year.

I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to all of our hardworking volunteers at every unit, council and especially those at 32<sup>nd</sup> District. Together we are making a difference for all children across Contra Costa County.

32<sup>nd</sup> District will be hosting our Leadership Academy on Saturday, June 28 at Willow Creek Center

located at 1026 Mohr Lane in Concord. We are offering workshops for presidents, treasurers, secretaries, parliamentarians, and much more.

This year, several leaders from California State PTA will be hosting these workshops, including President-elect, Jo Loss. More information is available on our website: [www.32ndpta.org](http://www.32ndpta.org). Don't miss this opportunity for you and your board to learn about all PTA positions, which will make your jobs a lot easier next year. See you there!

Sincerely,

Sue Woodworth-Bennett  
President, 32<sup>nd</sup> District PTA  
[bennettela@aol.com](mailto:bennettela@aol.com)  
925-964-0491

Inside this issue:

District Board Contact Info	2
Contact Info	2
A Message from Dr. Ovick	3
Membership	4
Leadership Academy	5
Convention	6
Secretary Tips	6
Legislation	7
Parent Involvement	8
Parent Involvement	9
Kidsdata.org	10
Common Sense Media	10
Walk to School Pedometer Project	11



### 2008-2009 Reflections Theme

**"Wow...."**



The Reflections Program is a cultural arts program of the National PTA. It provides students with the opportunity to use their critical thinking and problem-solving skills, as well as their creative talents as they interpret a theme.

For more information contact Wanda Waltman, 925-685-3483, [wandawalt@astound.net](mailto:wandawalt@astound.net)

*"Success seems to be connected with action. Successful people keep moving. They make mistakes, but they don't quit."*

— Conrad Hilton

## 2007-2009 32nd District PTA Board Contact Information

President	Sue Woodworth-Bennett	925-964-0491	bennettela@aol.com
1st VP Leadership	Charley Cowens	510-524-5097	charley@cowens.net
2nd VP Convention	Mitzi Reagan	925-813-2457	32ndconvention@comcast.net.
3rd VP Communications	Maureen Chang	925-743-0464	chnggng@aol.com
4th VP Membership	Chris Low	925-778-0446	poochcfl@aol.com
5th VP Parent Concerns	Rachel Hurd	925-833-9455	rmshurd@sbcglobal.net
Secretary	Nancy Vandell	925-829-2355	nmvandell@comcast.net
Treasurer	Will Sanford	925-244-1237	willsanf@aol.com
Auditor	Arnetta Jones	925-676-8356	njones@onemain.com
Historian	Kim Lonie	925-828-9463	kmouse@att.net
Parliamentarian	Annette Lewis	925-625-2915	annetteL@ecis.com
Legislative Director	Janet Abelson	510-525-7709	abeljanet@aol.com
Reflections	Wanda Waltman	925-685-3483	wandawalt@astound.net
Honorary Service	Katie Pena	925-932-4965	kmpena@aol.com
Founder's Day	Kathy Coppersmith	925-930-8289	fivecops@aol.com
Immediate Past President	Kathy Rabun	925-798-5331	rrabun@lanset.com
<b>Council Presidents:</b>			
Bayside Council	Robert Studdiford	510-527-9704	robert@twofish.biz
Delta Council	Maria Myers	925-766-7780	mandjmyers@comcast.net
Las Trampas Council	Carolyn Boord	925-944-9688	csboord@aol.com
Martinez Council t	Diane Beck	925-372-8782	thebeckhome@sbcglobal.net
Mt. Diablo Council	Mona Ricard	925-687-3921	ricard@silcon.com
San Ramon Valley Council	Denise Jennison	925-648-1141	cmjenn@pacbell.net

## 2008-2009 Elected Officer Contact Information Missing Information Due ASAP!!!!!!

*The California Corporations Code and PTA bylaws require unit Presidents to submit the names and address of executive board members to their Council and/or District. It is essential that PTA have accurate contact information for the people who are functioning as its officers.*

*This means that the **home** address and phone must be submitted for the three required officers ..... President, Treasurer, and Secretary. **USING THE SCHOOL'S ADDRESS AND PHONE NUMBER IS NOT ACCEPTABLE!***

*If, for some reason, an officer does not want their home address or phone number included in the directory please let us know. We can use the school's address for the directory. **Officers' home addresses do not need to go in the directory but they must be given to the Council and District.***

*If you have any questions please contact Maureen Chang, VP Communications, 925-743-0464, chnggng@aol.com.*

# A Message from Our County Superintendent of Schools

It's difficult to believe that the 2007-2008 school year is about to end. As we head into summer, I would like to extend to parents, teachers, administrators, and the community at large my gratitude for your collective support for public education in Contra Costa County.

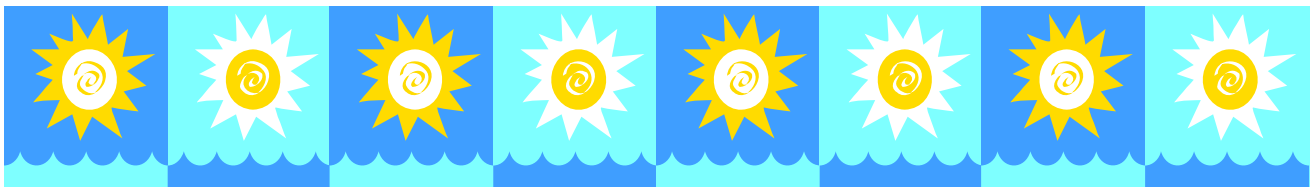
I would like to compliment the PTA for its advocacy to “flunk” the state budget and to continually work with the governor and the Legislature so that our children do not have to bear the burden of the state budget. Parents have done a wonderful job, also—to date, it's my understanding that Senator Tom Torlakson alone has received over 30,000 letters advocating for more money for our children by fully funding public education. This is an effort that needs to continue through the summer until we have a budget that truly reflects the educational needs of our children so that they can be successful today and in the future.

With the advent of summer so near, students are undoubtedly looking forward to some down time. I would suggest that, when we consider the academic rigor and expectations that we have for our children, it may be appropriate to provide some supervised, unstructured time for children to reflect, to think, to play, and to imagine.

Of course, as an educator, I would be remiss not to encourage parents to continually have daily conversations with their children about various issues which impact their lives as responsible citizens within our community in addition to providing some fun opportunities for kids and families to enjoy the company of one another during the long, warm summer months.

Have fun, enjoy some time reading, go to a good movie, and seek an adventure!

Joseph A. Ovick, Ed.D.,  
Superintendent of Schools, Contra Costa County



## Membership – Time To plan for Next Year



Now is the perfect time to plan your membership campaign for 2008 – 2009. Everyone is enthusiastic, full of energy, and new ideas to promote your PTA. The following handy-dandy ideas will help you design effective membership strategies for next year.

- Meet with last year's membership chair, and find out what worked, what didn't and why.
- Ask him/her to give you the procedure book. If there isn't one, make life easier on your successor, and put one together.
- Meet with the incoming PTA President, Principal, and Membership Committee. Set goals for the following year.
- Pick a theme (This is the fun part). Plan on involving as many students as possible.
- Unearth your unit's bylaws to find out the correct amount of dues you need to collect from each member, and the National ID number.
- Check with the incoming PTA president and treasurer regarding your budget amount. Prepare a budget plan. Be realistic.
- Present your membership campaign, complete with budget, to the Executive Board for approval.

Contact your Council/District membership chair to order envelopes (If necessary). There is a nominal Charge for envelopes (\$2.00 per 100), the cards are free.

An information packet will be available for PTA council and unit membership chairpersons early this summer. The packet will contain cards, envelopes (if ordered) and tips on making your membership campaign successful. Please call me or email me if you have any questions.

*Chris Low*

*4th VP Membership, 32nd District*

*(925) 778-0446 Poochcfl@aol.com*

## Compare the Cost of Your PTA Membership "Per Capita"

- **For the cost of a Large Soy Mocha at your local coffee house (about \$4.00) you can join your child's school PTA as an awake and alert voting member on programs for the students and families, educational enhancement materials, or work on other projects for your school's students.**
- **For about the cost of an energy bar (about \$1.00), you can lift and pull your council or district PTA together toward meeting the needs of your community and area children and youth.**
- **For about the cost of a quart of water (\$1.25), you can rejuvenate and restore the many programs and projects, advocacy, networking, training and learning opportunities offered by the California State PTA.**
- **For the price of a movie ticket and the "chance to see a good movie" (the entire cost of membership), you get PTA representation and advocacy on a national level, and your children and ALL children have a better chance to be the award winners in their education, health and well being.**



# 32nd District PTA Leadership Academy

## Training for PTA Leaders

All are welcome!

Please forward this information to your board.

**Saturday, June 28 8:30am-1:00pm**

### Session I

1. Advanced Leadership Tools for Presidents
2. Basic Financial and Insurance Information Part I
3. PTA Basics– Everything You Need to Know About PTA (*this class will also be offered in Session II*)
4. Secretary– Secrets of Success

### Session II

1. Parent/Program Involvement– A Roundtable Discussion
2. Basic Financial and Insurance Information Part II
3. PTA Basics– Everything You Need to Know About PTA (*repeat of class in Session II*)

Make checks payable to 32nd District PTA.

Mail this form by June 23rd, 2008 to:

Maureen Chang

501 Ferncroft Ct., Danville, CA 94526

April 1– June 27 \$10.00

On-Site Registration \$15.00

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Position held/Unit/Council: \_\_\_\_\_

Session I Class Choice: \_\_\_\_\_

Session II Class Choice: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Paid: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Check No. \_\_\_\_\_

Yes, I will stay for lunch

Si usted necesita los folletos en español, indica aquí.

**Questions? Contact Maureen Chang  
925-743-0464 / chngng@aol.com**

**Or visit our website at  
www.32ndpta.org**

### **Schedule of the day**

**8:30-9:00: Registration**

**(a Light Breakfast will be served)**

**9:00-10:30 Session I**

**10:30-11:00 Networking/Drawing  
(Snack will be served)**

**11:00-12:30 Session II**



## Convention 2008

The 2008 California PTA State Convention was held in the Long Beach Convention Center on May 1-4. 32<sup>nd</sup> District was well represented by over 65 delegates from 5 councils. We were also well recognized at Convention, our district received the highest award for (increasing) Membership!

There were also two resolutions presented which originated in our district. Resolution B advocated for the Megan's Law web site to include nonpublic schools serving students with special needs. This resolution was submitted by the Discovery Bay Elementary PTA in Delta Council. Resolution C was submitted by the San Ramon Valley Council of PTAs. This resolution called for lowering the current 2/3 vote requirement for local parcel taxes to 55%. Both resolutions passed quickly with (in my opinion) very little *serious* controversy.

As for Reflections, an Award of Excellence, Primary Division, for Film Production, was presented to Krista Cleary, a 2<sup>nd</sup> Grader from Vista Grande Elementary School in Danville. The title of her piece is "I made a difference by donating my hair...Locks of Love needs you!"

Next year's Convention will be held in San Jose on April 30- May 3, 2009. 32<sup>nd</sup> District will be one of the host districts, hope to see you there!

Mitzi Reagan

32nd District Convention Chair

### Council Secretary's Tips, Wanda Waltman

**The recording secretary is elected by the association and is one of the three required officers for a PTA. The secretarial responsibilities may be assigned to one person or divided between a recording secretary and a corresponding secretary, as specified in the bylaws. If there is no corresponding secretary, the duties of the corresponding secretary may be combined with the duties of the recording secretary, in accordance with the bylaws. In addition to the bylaws, the duties of a secretary are discussed in the *California State PTA Toolkit*, the *National PTA Quick-Reference Guide* (available from the PTA president) and *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*.**

#### **A Primary Responsibility:**

**Keep an accurate, concise, permanent record of the proceedings of all meetings of the association and of the executive board. These minutes are the legal record of the PTA/PTSA and the original copy of the minutes is known as the master copy.**



# May Revision of the Budget

On May 14, Governor Schwarzenegger released the May Revision of his state budget proposal. The State Legislature will consider this proposal as it works to create a final budget. Although the budget is supposed to be approved by July 1, those close to the process say it may not be passed until the fall or even possibly as late as November or December. This proposal contains \$4 billion in cuts to education and additional cuts to a number of services critical to children such as health care and other support services.

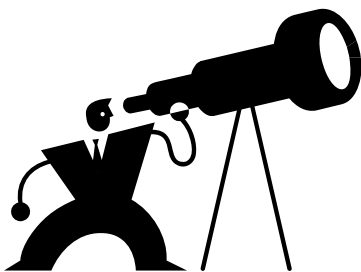
According to the State PTA Website, the key points are as follows:

- The May Revision continues to flunk the basic test of good government: It hurts our children.
  - The May Revision meets the minimum legal requirement for schools – but it still makes drastic cuts to many vital programs that help student achievement, like class size reduction, instructional materials and career technical education programs.
  - The May Revision makes severe cuts to children’s healthcare, foster care and other support services that will harm our most vulnerable citizens.
  - The Legislature and Governor must agree on a balanced budget solution that does not jeopardize our children’s future and, in turn, the long term health of our state’s economy.
  - We must focus the conversation on how much we need to invest in our children, not how much we can afford to cut.
  - Only by adequately investing in our children today, can we ensure that California has a viable economy in the future.
- A responsible budget doesn’t make people choose between the health of children and their education – both are essential.



Since this budget is unacceptable, we need to continue the push with our advocacy. If you want to get involved or stay involved, contact Janet Abelson, 32<sup>nd</sup> District Legislative Director, at [Abeljanet@aol.com](mailto:Abeljanet@aol.com). Our children need your help.

## Look What We’ve Done!



Thank you, members of the 32<sup>nd</sup> District PTA Board, Councils and Units. Together, we have shown everyone that the state should **Flunk the Budget, Not Our Children**. We have done it often, all over the county and in Sacramento. We have held rallies and panel discussions, attended town halls, joined our allies in their activities, and met with legislators locally and in Sacramento. We attended Advocacy Day in Sacramento, and held rallies in Walnut Creek, Lafayette, and Danville, with attendance in record numbers. We wrote tens of thousands of letters and postcards and made phone calls and signs. We have had activities in every part of Contra Costa County! We have shown everyone that we stand united for every child with one voice. That’s what PTA is all about.

Thank you for making a difference for all children!

# Parent Involvement is Key to a Child's Success

Research shows that parent and family involvement\* is key to helping children succeed in school. This idea is basic to PTA's philosophy and action since its beginning in 1897.

Families have changed in recent years. Practices must permit parents in all families to be involved with their children's schools. Successful parent involvement programs share several fundamental beliefs about parents:

- Parents want what is best for their children.
- Parents, regardless of their background or circumstances, can be key resources in their children's education.
- All children can learn, and the focus of educators' efforts needs to be on children's success.
- Together, educators, families, and communities can succeed in educating children and preparing them to lead healthy, happy, and productive lives.
- Parents must be involved in all aspects of their children's education including its governance and decision-making.



To reflect recent research, National PTA has updated its parent involvement standards, now called the National Standards for Family-School Partnerships. These standards focus on what parents, schools, and communities can do together to support student success. The topics addressed by these standards are:

**Welcoming all families into the school community** – Families are active participants in the life of the school, and feel welcomed, valued, and connected to each other, to school staff, and to what students are learning and doing in class.

**Communicating effectively** – Families and school staff engage in regular, meaningful communication about student learning.

**Supporting student success** – Families and school staff continuously collaborate to support students' learning and healthy development both at home and at school, and have regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills to do so effectively.

**Speaking up for every child** – Families are empowered to be advocates for their own and other children, to ensure that students are treated fairly and have access to learning opportunities that will support their success.

**Sharing power** – Families and school staff are equal partners in decisions that affect children and families and together inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs.

**Collaborating with community** – Families and school staff collaborate with community members to connect students, families, and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.

*\* The word "parent" is used here to refer to those individuals who are involved in a child's education, recognizing that other adults may also carry the primary responsibility for a child's education and development. Therefore, all references to parents should be interpreted as including any adults who play an important role in a child's development and well-being.*

Reprinted with permission from the California State PTA Communicator.

## Teen Years – Parents Should Be There

Parents often think they are not wanted when their children reach the adolescent years. Wrong! Parents are still needed—and wanted—but in a very different way. In place of the need for the openly demonstrative and caring parent-child relationships of childhood are the demands for freedom and privacy and, ironically, the need for even more support and caring. However, support, love, and caring should be offered in a very private manner, never in public. To say that teenagers seem to send mixed messages is one of the greatest understatements of all time.

Parents have to be sensitive to their teenager's need to be more independent and accept this as part of the teen's being a normal, healthy adolescent. If parents want their teenager to be self-sufficient and able to make his/her own decisions eventually, they need to give their support where it has always been given, but in ways that are non-threatening.

- Family rules and limits must be set, even as the teenager pushes against these limits, and new limits need to be negotiated along with the ability to accept new responsibilities.
- Parents need to work at keeping lines of communication open and understand that discussions may take place more easily if the topics center on the immediate interests of the teenager.
- Parental support should still be given at school functions or other activities in which the teenager is involved, even though parents and teenagers will most likely go their own separate ways at the event.

*~ California State PTA Parents Empowering Parents (PEP) Guide*

### Using Numbers for Summer Fun

- Add the numbers on each license plate, and see who can find the one adding up to the largest number
- Before you travel, ask the family to draw up a list of items you might see on your trip. To develop both math and observation skills, see who can spot the greatest number of these items. Examples might be a woman wearing a hat, a man on crutches, someone walking more than one dog, a fire engine, a bridge, etc
- Have the tallest family member lie on wet sand at the beach and draw his or her outline. Have smaller members do the same inside the first outline or next to it. Estimate height (about 11 sand shovels tall, for example).
- In wet sand, compare the depth of big and small footprints due to weight differences
- On a pad of paper, keep a record of the number of cars you see of one color or made by a single manufacturer.
- Ask your children questions that require them to do simple addition or subtraction in their head. "What's 2 less than 17? Eighteen is twice as big as what number?" Play math "Jeopardy" (give a child a number and have the child find a question for which the number is the answer).

*Reprinted with permission from the California State PTA Communicator.*

## Kidsdata.org: We've Got Your Numbers

Kidsdata.org, a program of the Lucile Packard Foundation for Children's Health, is a data website that offers more than 250 indicators on the health and well being of children in the Bay Area.



Data are regularly updated and, depending on the source, available for cities, school districts, and counties, along with statewide comparison. You can customize data by year, locale, ethnicity, age, and more, and view the results as tables, maps, or bar, trend and pie graphs. The site also offers links to related news and research.

Visit [kidsdata.org](http://kidsdata.org) to find data and information about Contra Costa County children.

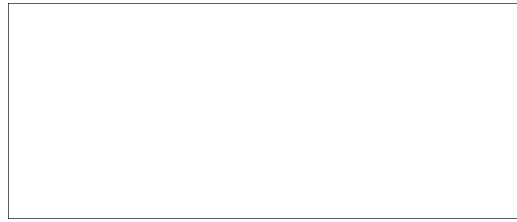
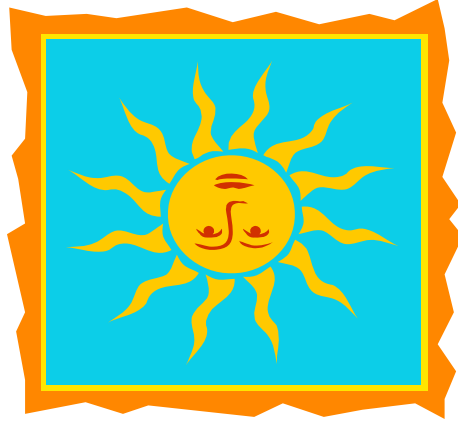
## Six Ways to Be a Media-Savvy Parent This Year

By Liz Perle, Commonsense Media

1. Visit an online social networking site. If you have young kids, check out Club Penguin. See what the fuss is all about. Embrace their enthusiasm, but educate yourself about what goes on. For your older kids, visit Facebook or MySpace. Ask them to show you their pages.
2. Play a video game with your kid. Not one of the really gross ones -- try one of the Guitar Hero games. Or play a sports game on the Wii, or pass a football with Madden. The best way to keep kids away from violent games is to help them enjoy time with you without having to maim a living soul.
3. Download something your kids will like. Pick a song they've never heard. Then ask them to play something for you that you've never heard. Put in your two cents afterward.
4. Check out YouTube. Your kids have -- probably when they were looking for something funny. So go to the comedy section, find something you like, and surprise them.
5. Invest in a digital video recorder (DVR). All cable systems now have them, and TiVo is always a great option. But whatever method you use, take control of the TV this year. Record what you like, create your own channels (like TiVo's KidZone), fast forward through the ads, and skip the shows that really make you wonder about the fate of humankind.
6. Learn how to manage your kids' online lives. Check site histories, set appropriate age filters, and check out the parental controls on your browser. Teach your kids the basics of safe searching (Google has a safe-search setting), and give them a digital code of conduct. Don't let them figure it all out by themselves.

For more tips, check out our Internet Survival Guide at [www.commonsense.com/internet-safety-guide](http://www.commonsense.com/internet-safety-guide).

Put Pedometer Project flyer here.



Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. Postage Paid  
Concord  
Permit 464

We're on the Web!  
[www.32ndpta.org](http://www.32ndpta.org)

32nd District PTA  
**PTA**  
*everychild.onevoice.*  
Sue Woodworth-Bennett  
50 Diablo View Court  
Danville, CA 94506