

the Cryer



San Jose Unified Council of PTAs

Lynne Wach, Council President, 781-0607

flekwach@aol.com

Christine Gray, Editor, 629-0989,

grayaspens@hotmail.com

San Jose Unified School District

San Jose, California

President's Message

Happy Fall to everyone~

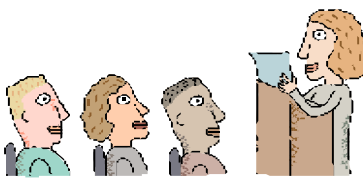
As we move into the fall and holiday seasons, we will be removing our PTA hats to spend some quality time with family and friends. **Before you do that though**, I encourage you to make sure you have the following completed and sent to Council so we can send it on to the 6th District:

- a) **Up to date remittance of your membership dues!**
- b) **Your \$190 Insurance Premium;**
- c) **An approved 08/09 budget and an end of 07/08 school year audit report;**
- d) **Plan to Update Bylaws (see p. 10/Andrea); and**
- e) **Tax return filed by Nov 15th (copy to us).**



If you need any help with any of the items on this list, please let us know!

I want to thank everyone who was able to make it to



the PTA State Training last month at **Allen at Steinbeck**. It was a really great and well attended day! A huge thank you to **Peggy**

Hertzberg (Allen PTA President) and **Joan Cooper** (past Council President) for being instrumental in making sure the location, rooms and food were organized so well! I know everyone went away

Continued on Page 2...

Council Meeting

Monday, November 3, 7 - 9 p.m.

(Executive Committee will be at 6:30)

Hosted by: **Muir PTSA**

John Muir Middle School Media Center

1260 Branham Lane (one block west of Almaden Expr)

Please join us!

If you cannot make it, please send a board member in your place.

We invite you to bring a great idea to share in small group discussions. Bring questions as well. We hope you will take away at least one helpful idea, or the answer to a question or concern!!

Membership

Our membership drive is going strong! Most every unit has qualified for Early Bird and Chairman's Club PTA Membership Awards! Special recognition to **Allen at Steinbeck** who is up 60% over last year! **Willow Glen Elementary** is up 25%, **Los Alamitos Elementary** is up 10%, **Castillero Middle** is up 5%!

CONGRATULATIONS! And Major Kudos to **Anne Darling** and **Bachrodt** who have tripled their membership so far this year!!

Membership is our voice!

San Jose Unified Council of PTAs had 4107 members last year. Our goal is 4200 and we are so close! **Bring your next**

remittance to our meeting on the 3rd! The dues we pay are returned to our units in training events and programs that benefit all children. There is still time to increase our voice with our principals, the school district, and the state and federal governments. Keep the membership drive alive with tables at your events. Continue to encourage your community to join PTA, when attending your programs and community events. ASK everyone if they would like the opportunity to add their voice to ours.



— **Lynne Wach**, Council President

& **Sandee Ruiz**, Council VP of Membership

This Issue

inside

Calendar and Reminders	2
Our Great Units!	2
Treasurers Reminders	2
Superintendent's Brown Bag	3
Cryer Newsletter Article Due Dates	3
2008-98 SJU Council Executive Committee	3
Spotlight on Hoover PTSA	4
Unit Updates	5-7
PTA State Convention - Save the Date!	7
Reflections	7
Grow Your Membership/Volunteers	7, 8
SJUSD Committee Seeks Volunteers	8
Great Ideas from State PTA Training Workshop	9-10
PTA Voting Recommendations	10

President's Message, continued...

with some terrific information (See "Good Ideas", pages 9 and 10). I went away with a renewed sense of purpose of how and what the Council can and should be doing to make sure our units are successful! I have always known that PTA offered anyone in need the help they ask for, but what I now have cemented in, is the knowledge that the resources offered to us all the way to the National rung of this PTA ladder are supreme!

Many of the people who are volunteering in the leadership roles all the way through to the National PTA have children who are grown. They are committed to us, and that leaves me with a great feeling.

I look forward to seeing you all at our **next meeting at John Muir on November 3rd at 7pm**. A roundtable discussion is on the agenda so that you can interact with your school level counterparts (Elem/Middle/High) and hopefully leave with a new idea, or the answer to something that isn't working for you.



To your success,
Lynne Wach, Council President

Treasurer's Reminders

Membership Dues are NOW due!

If you have not sent in your first installment, please do so. For those units that have already sent in membership dues, **THANK YOU!**

Please remember to continue to send in dues remittances monthly, as you receive them.

Also, your **unit insurance payment is due and is \$190.00.**

Make checks payable to San Jose Unified Council of PTAs and mail to the address below.

Tax returns need to be filed by November 15th. Please send Council a copy.

If you need assistance, please let me know!



Marie Boyle
Council Treasurer
mboyle@markpringle.com
4552 Sidlaw Court
San Jose CA 95136

Calendar and Reminders

San Jose Unified Council of PTAs

October

Tuesday 28 Superintendent's Brown Bag
855 Lenzen Ave, 12N - 1:30 P.M.

November

Saturday 1 **Workers' Comp forms & Insurance Due**
1 **OMDR Due (contact Sandee Ruiz for assistance)**

Monday 3 **Council Meeting, Muir Middle School**

3 **First required membership remittance — 15 memberships due to Council Treasurer**

Thurs 20 Superintendent's Brown Bag,
337 Lenzen, 12:00 - 1:30 p.m.

December

Thurs 11 Superintendent's Brown Bag,
337 Lenzen, 12:00 - 1:30 p.m.

January — Elect Unit Nominating Committee

— Unit Mid-Year Audit Due

— Unit Historian's Hours Due

Monday 12 **Council Meeting, Pioneer HS**



Our Great Units!

Allen at Steinbeck PTA
Almaden Elementary PTA
Autism Project PTA
Bachrodt Elementary PTA
Carson PTA
Anne Darling PTA
Empire Gardens PTA
Hammer/Galarza PTA
Los Alamitos PTA
Olinder PTA
Reed PTA
Simonds PTA
Terrell PTA

Williams PTA
Willow Glen Elem PTA
Burnett PTSA
Castillero PTSA
Hoover PTSA
Muir PTSA
Willow Glen Mid. PTA
Gunderson PTSA
Lincoln PTSA
Pioneer PTSA
San Jose High PTSA



SUPERINTENDENT'S BROWN BAG LUNCH

Tuesday, October 28
12:00-1:30 P.M.
855 Lenzen Av., Rm. 337

1. Budget Update
2. Recycling
3. Food Services
4. Comments and Concerns

Be sure you send a representative to report back to your unit!



Hello Unit Presidents and Boards!

We're looking forward to another year of Cryers full of good information, so much of which comes from YOU!

Sharing the good: **I'll be asking you for "Updates" for every Cryer issue to let everyone know one or two things your units are up to that you'd like everyone to know about.**

I'll also ask presidents to each send us a longer article once a year to give us the bigger picture at your school. Here are the due dates:



Issue	Articles Due	Cryer Email
January	December 19	January 5
March	February 27	March 9
May	May 5	May 13

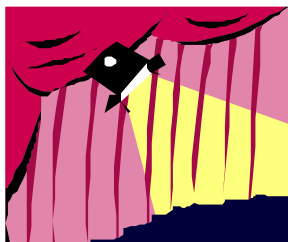
Articles and inquiries should be sent to:

Christine Gray, Council Cryer Editor
grayaspens@hotmail.com; 408-629-0989

San Jose Unified Council of PTAs 2008-2009 Executive Committee

President	Lynne Wach	781-0607	flekwach@aol.com
1st VP, Membership	Sandee Ruiz	265-8316	sruiz@iname.com
2nd VP, Cryer and Directory	Chris Gray	629-0989	grayaspens@hotmail.com
3rd VP, Yahoo Group	Irene Paquet	580-1700	ipaquet@pacbell.net
4th VP, Parent Education	Susan Gaydon	323-9058	sgaydon@pacbell.net
5th VP, Convention	Peggy Hertzberg	972-5968	peghertz@earthlink.net
Secretary	Brandy Varni	268-6355	varbunin@sbcglobal.net
Treasurer	Marie Boyle	978-2846	mboyle@markpringle.com
Auditor	Jill Grellman	227-6657	jdgrellman@comcast.net
Historian	Julie Herndon	323-9990	onedoctorjulie@pacbell.net
Parliamentarian	Andrea Wheeler	297-2515	awheeler@demoworks.com
Web site	Carol Pecora	323-1531	carolpecora2000@yahoo.com
Annual Luncheon	Susan Gaydon	323-9058	sgaydon@pacbell.net
Reflections	Open		
Legislation	Open		
Budget Advisory Committee Rep.	Open		
SJUSD Wellness Representative	Open		
SJUSD Board Liaison to Council	Pam Foley	371-8882	pam@effoley.com
SJTA Liaison to Council	Janice Allen	267-0411	SJTAPres@aol.com

If you would like information about an open office or chair position, please contact Lynne Wach.



Spotlight

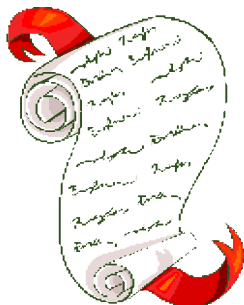
Hoover Middle PTSA

Hoover Middle PTSA has been extremely busy this year.

After the busy opening of school, our unit prioritized activities we wanted to accomplish by December, 2008. A top priority included **providing for the safety of our children** in the extreme case of a lock down situation during the school day. To accomplish this, the PTSA unit voted to use part of the money raised last year to purchase emergency items such as water, snacks, first aid kits, flashlights, paper towels, plastic bags, paper cups, and sheets/blankets to be stored in airtight plastic containers in each classroom of the school. Those are now being assembled and will be in the classrooms by the end of October.



A second activity we decided upon involves hospitality for **teacher and staff appreciation**. For monthly staff meetings, our volunteers bake and provide treats and drinks for the first all-staff meeting of each month. We are trying very hard to encourage and support our teachers, as we all try to make a positive impact on the school climate for students, teachers, and parents. This is a year of rapport building for Hoover. Our teachers are very appreciative and supportive of PTSA efforts to make Hoover the great school we believe it to be.



A third activity is also in progress to make sure all classes have the necessary supplies and special items (beyond a textbook) needed for each student to be successful beyond just using a textbook. We asked teachers for a **Classroom Needs Wish List**, and have allocated funds to purchase many items that are relevant to each classroom for both basic lessons and enrichment activities. This project was completed on October 23rd.

Finally, last Friday, October 24th, Hoover Hawks participated in our annual **Jog-a-thon**. Our new sports field is open this year and the students and parents were excited to use it for the Jog-a-thon course. Funds raised from the PTSA sponsored Jog-a-thon will be used for directly impacting on the students of Hoover for a variety of activities focusing on health, safety, motivation, leadership, and academic/scholarship accountability.



In November and December we will be working on our **bylaws** and **setting new goals and priorities** for the remainder of the school year.

Our membership has doubled from last year. We are trying to increase that number even more during the remainder of the year and keep the momentum going for next year.

Until next report, Hoover wishes all units great success for the remainder of 2008. Together we can make a difference in our schools!

*Linda Funk, President
Hoover Middle PTSA*



Unit Updates



Los Alamitos Elementary PTA

They say it takes a whole village to raise a child, and the Los Alamitos elementary school “village” has taken this saying to heart. We’ve started the school year off with a bang proudly announcing

that we have the highest PTA **membership** of any school (K-12) in the entire school district, almost 650 members strong! In addition, we had our annual PTA fundraising **Walk-A-Thon and Silent Auction** on October 4th. Parents, students, faculty and community members showed their support by walking strong on a rainy day and opening up their checkbooks helping us reach our goal!

With the leadership of our new PTA president, **Simone Nelson**, the members of our Los Alamitos “village” (parents, students, faculty and friends) continue to amaze us everyday with their generosity, school spirit, dedication to higher learning and love and devotion for our children. Our PTA slogan this year is “*Together We Can,*” and together we have!

— *Debbie Michels, Executive Vice President*

Reed Elementary PTA



Reed PTA just had its 2nd annual Fall Festival; it was a huge success. Reed families and the surrounding community enjoyed a Pumpkin Patch, Haunted House, lots of food, games, crafts and vendor sales. We had each class design and decorate a scarecrow that was

offered up through a drawing. Also distributed through a drawing were our wildly popular grade level baskets that were done by an amazingly creative team of parent volunteers. We are looking forward to our Halloween parade and the various parties that accompany the day!

— **Ronda Wilson, President**

Simonds Elementary PTA

The Simonds PTA has started the year with a lot of enthusiasm. Our membership drive is going strong thanks to our two excellent VPs of Membership. Highlights in the month of September were our **Kinder Welcome Picnic** and our **Cougar Spirit Day**, when all the grades mingle and eat watermelon on a Friday afternoon right before the end of the school day. A wonderful tradition!



During October we had another successful **Uniform Exchange** and **Red Ribbon Week**. Next up is our **Scholastic Book Fair** during the first week of November.

— *Irene Paquet, President*

Willow Glen Elementary PTA

TIGERS UNLEASHED AT PARADE

“It really was a celebration of spirit for the school community, as well as greater Willow Glen,” said **Bob Shelby**, mastermind behind Willow Glen Elementary’s awe-inspiring entry in the **Founder’s Day Parade** down Lincoln Avenue on September 27.

Tiger stripes were everywhere: Shelby estimated we had 400 marchers--by far the largest entry, and ten times the size of last year.

“We were so fortunate to have the help of a core group of parents who made up the Parade Committee,” said Shelby. Volunteers made fliers and posters, solicited donations from **Ace Hardware, Home Depot, and Safeway**, built floats, props and costumes - and brought donuts. Thank you to all who participated!

Bob said the best part for him was “looking out over that sea of happy shining faces of the kids...the group truly represented the rich diversity that is WGE.”

— *Leslie Chamberlain, President*



Unit Updates, continued

Castillero Middle PTSA

Castillero Middle PTSA has spent the past month doing the following:

- Acknowledging **all PTA members** with a personalized “I’m Staying in the Picture” name tag at **Back to School Night**;
- Providing the manpower for a student body **magazine drive** fundraiser;
- Offering some cheer to all **staff members** with a Halloween bag of homemade brownies and a note of appreciation;
- Working with our **Project Cornerstone** parent group to put on “Mix It Up Day” with music and a lunchtime craft and relay;
- Sponsoring (and raising funds from) our first **school dance** of the year, “Neon Nights;”
- Providing food and volunteers for **Back to School Night** and **Family Math Night**;
- Sponsoring a **Family Fun Night** at **Chevy’s** and **Barnes & Noble**;
- Working with **Project Cornerstone** to provide a 5-week **Monday night training** for “Taking Asset Building Personally” (with 25 enrolled parents); and
- Sending out **weekly e-mail blasts** through our **Yahoo group** to keep parents informed of school happenings.



Onward to November and beyond...

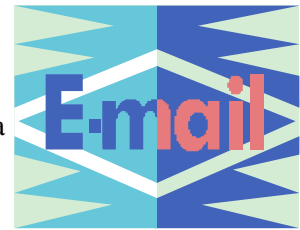
— *Shana Moore, President*



**Don't forget to Vote
November 3!!!!**

Muir Middle PTSA

We have found that **constant communication** with middle school parents is a key component in keeping them involved at the middle school level.



Weekly e-mail newsletters are sent to PTSA members, and PTSA events are posted and updated on the John Muir website.

Gloria Marchant, Principal, and her staff also corroborate with JMMS PTSA for various school and district activities. The result is a win-win situation for everyone: teachers, administration, parents, and most of all, students.

— *Scott and Dianne Conry, Co-Presidents*



Gunderson High PTSA

The Gunderson High PTSA brought the Booster Club into our organization as a committee, much like our Membership and Fundraising Committees. This allows PTSA to combine our commitment to supporting students in both academic endeavors and athletic accomplishments. It has also strengthened and expanded our membership during this school year.



Mary Pizzo-Maggio, President

Unit Updates, continued

Lincoln High PTSA



Lincoln High School PTSA got off to a great start with almost 300 new members for the 2008-2009 school year. The seniors are going to **Disneyland for Grad Night** once again, and we are hoping for a few busloads of happy grads in June. Our October **General Meeting** was well-attended and we have had quite a few **LHS students** this year attend and give reports.

We are working hard to put the "S" in to PTSA!

Plans for the upcoming months include a fundraiser during our annual Thanksgiving **Big Bone Game**, **faculty treats** for the holidays and **grant monies** for our teachers (grants are due at the end of December and given out in January).

We are all working hard to make LHS the best place it can be for our teachers, students and parents.

— *Rhonda Rodriguez, President*

PTA's "Reflections" Program

This Year's Theme:

"Wow!"



If your unit is participating this year, please find instructions and forms at the Sixth District website under "Checklists for PTA Leaders, Reflections".

www.capta6.org

If your unit **does not** participate in Reflections, you might want to Check It Out to see if would fit into your goals for next year! **"Reflections"** is National PTA's arts program that each year involves hundreds of thousands of kids, *and* is more fun than you can imagine! It invites K-12 students to participate in the areas of literature, music composition, visual arts, photography, dance choreography, or film/video production. Please read through the information available at: <http://www.capta.org/sections/programs/reflections.cfm>



**Grow Your Membership!
Grow Your Volunteer List!***

Every year, early September, the Simonds PTA and the Simonds Music and Technology Foundation host a **Picnic for the Kindergartens and their families**. Blankets and beach chairs are set-up on the grass around the Kindergarten playground and families enjoy hot dogs and watermelon. This event, traditionally organized by the 1st grade parents, is a great opportunity for the new Kinder families to get to know each

other as well as for the PTA and the Foundation to explain what they do at Simonds. It is stressed how important it is to become a member of the PTA and/or make a donation to the Foundation. It is also a perfect chance to get new volunteers to sign up!

— *Irene Paquet, Simonds President*

*Grow Your Membership! Grow Your Volunteer List!**

2008 MY PTA/PTSA AWARD OUTSTANDING UNIT

**Rio Norte Junior High PTSA
34th District, Santa Clarita Valley Council**



Rio Norte PTSA strives and encourages the junior high parents to stay involved or become involved with their child’s education. They encouraged PTA membership for both parents and students. The students were surprised and pleased to know that they could become members.

To help ease the transition into junior high school for both parents and students, they formed the WINGS (Welcoming In Newcomers and Giving Support) program. This program begins with **having current students and their parents make contact with every incoming family.** They made sure that every new family received (in their own language) **two personal phone calls, one to the parents from a parent and one to a student from a student. They work with their parents to become volunteers at the school.** They are trying to dispel the myth that kids don’t want their parents on campus.

The relationship between the (junior high) PTSA and the high school is truly a partnership. The PTSA attends leadership meetings with the staff and administrators to develop goals for the new school year. They work with their students to develop an effective Red Ribbon Week. They partner with the student community service group, Resourceful Riverhawks, to connect with the residents of Summerhill Retirement Community. As a result connections were made between the students and residents.

*Reprinted from the California State PTA Website
http://www.capta.org/sections/convention-2008/downloads/MyPTA_PTSA.pdf*

** “Grow Your Membership” and “Grow Your Volunteer List” is a continuing column in The Cryer. If you have terrific ideas for increasing membership and/or volunteers, please send them to Chris Gray: grayaspens@hotmail.com.*



Citizens Bond Oversight Committee (CBOC)

San Jose Unified School District

The Board of Education is now seeking applications for individuals who would like to serve on the Citizens Bond Oversight Committee (CBOC) for Measure F and Measure C bond funds. At the end of the two-year term, members are able to apply for an additional two-year term if they wish.

The purpose of the CBOC is to inform the public concerning the expenditure of bond revenues. Currently the committee meets four to eight times per year on Monday nights.

For an application, please call **Diane Duenas** at 535-6053 or email Diane at diane_duenas@sjusd.org. Applications will continue to be accepted until all positions are filled.

Good Ideas from the State PTA 9/27/08 Workshop

From Andrea Wheeler, SJU Council:

One good idea - **go to Convention in San Jose** in April/May! The training will be just as good and have lots more classes!

Another good idea - your friendly Council Parliamentarian (me!) is all trained on the new bylaws template, so call her to set up a **bylaws party** with your board. Every school needs to be on the 2008 template. It only takes about 2 hours and is actually pretty fun.



Diane Straetker, 6th District Historian:

I learned so much from the day long training, but the one idea that was a 'wow' for me was to start a **yahoo group** for volunteers at your school. Who, what, when and help! can be so easy with this.



Note from Suman Ganapathy, 6th District VP:

Starting a Yahoo Group is not difficult at all! Just google yahoogroups...and follow instructions. I would recommend that you approve every member who would like to join (it's one of the options, and a good precaution), request that the site not be used for solicitations. Members have the option of receiving all e-mails, get a daily digest, or else they can choose to go directly to the website on their own. You can post files and pictures too, if you want.

There are directions and how-to's every step of the way.

And Suman's own favorites:

I heard a lot of terrific ideas that have already been around, but was good for everyone to hear again (**ask class teachers for the names of top volunteers, to tap into the leadership pool - worked so well at Garden Gate four years back; "every one mentor one"** - practically the CFSCouncilPTA buzzword at the units and council level)...



However, the best thing I heard was (from **Jo Loss**, State PTA President-Elect, if I am not

mistaken): that the Family School Partnership Act of the CA Labor Code 230.8 states that **an employee who is a parent or guardian of a K-12 student is allowed to take off up to 40 hours per year (not exceeding 8 hours in any calendar month) to participate in school activities, without fear of being reprimanded by his/her employer.** Knowing this might encourage more working parents to volunteer!



I also came across **the law that "an employer cannot discriminate against an employee who is the parent or guardian of a pupil for taking time off to appear in the pupil's school at the request of the pupil's teacher.** Labor Code Section 230.7 and Education Code Section 48900.1 " Exciting news too. How many people know that?



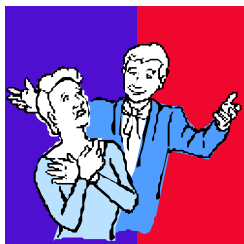
From Sally Minor, President, Milpitas Council of PTAs:

I am going to use the "**old trophy**" idea, and place one of my kid's old trophies in front of someone at my next council meeting who is first to turn in something due. So let's say one of my units was the first to submit its audit, they get to sit all night with the trophy placed right in front of them. At the end of the meeting, I'll take it back and use it again at the next meeting.

From Barbara Emerich, 6th District, Community Concerns:

Cory Sanfilippo, State PTA VP for Health, held a casual and good informational meeting discussing mostly health issues. She did touch on the Community Concerns items also. What most people don't realize is that Community Concerns includes gun safety, car seats, pedestrian and bike safety. She discussed what is going on with being prepared for a **pandemic flu epidemic.** There is a real need for parents to be aware that if and when there is a pandemic flu epidemic, schools and stores will be closed for several weeks, and transportation will come to a standstill.





From Marcie Brown, Sixth District PTA:

Some of the State PTA board members put on a amusing skit during lunch time showing a PTA business meeting, then asked us to name all the things they did

wrong - a lot of **parliamentary procedure** issues. It was great for showing what not to do – a light-hearted way to get the message across.

From Anna Strauss, President, Santa Clara Unified PTA Council

There were so many bits of information that were introduced. I hope to implement a few of them:

- At Council PTA meetings, have **Council board members sit at different tables;**
- Encourage the **sharing of items between PTAs;**
- Have **translator** at

Council PTA meetings and School Board Meetings to promote attendance; and,
- People follow a leader who knows where she's/he's going -- **make a plan for the year to know where you're going.**



From Chris Gray, Cryer Editor:
Council Ideas:

Hold a **Principal/President Breakfast** at the beginning of the school year. Invite the H&S Club presidents to also attend with their principals.

Councils advise; they do not dictate!



To know which units need a reminders to turn in **membership remittances**, compare their budgets' line item for membership income with the dues received.

At each council meeting, take a few minutes to **model an idea** from the PEP Manual, parliamentary procedure, or other procedure, so unit presidents can take it back to their meetings.

Ideas for All:

Fremont Council PTA.org has a lot of PTA literature **translated into five or six different languages** for all to use.

#1 attribute of a good leaders: **Be a good listener!**
Be a reflective listener: Repeat your understanding of

what someone has told you and then say, "And what you'd like me to do is ..."

Is PTA crowding family time? **Set hours for PTA business** and let your units/board members know.

Presidents should distribute the pages of **The Communicator** to the appropriate officers to use in their reminders and newsletter articles.



PTA elections should be held no later than early April so the incoming board can attend State PTA Convention.

Reminder: **You do not vote on Minutes or Treasurer's Reports.** Minutes: "The minutes will be accepted as printed/corrected." Treasurer's

Reports: "If there are no additional questions, the Treasurer's Report will be filed for audit."

From State PTA President Pam Brady:

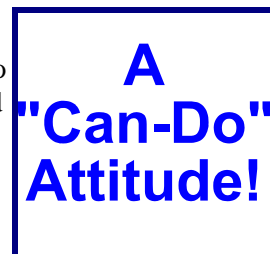
To be a good leader you have to make people want to follow you. But first you need to know where you are going! And to know where you are going, bring your team together.

Members and Community: **Tell them what you are doing for children at your school.**

Don't tell people what they can't do; tell them what they can do. A **"Can-Do" Attitude!**

To further quote Pam,

"There's no better thing to do then spending the time working for children; they are our future."



State of California PTA Recommends:

YES on Prop 3 (Children's Hospitals)
www.capta.org/sections/advocacy/downloads/Prop3-PTAnalysis.pdf

NO on Prop 6 (Criminal Penalties)
www.capta.org/sections/advocacy/downloads/Proposition-6-Analysis.pdf

Sixth District PTA Recommends:

YES on Measure A (Valley Medical Ctr.)
<http://www.vcmatters.org>