President's Message

Gifts to Remember

by Maureen Christensen

Happy Holidays! I can’t believe it is time for another Orange Leaves issue already. Time is flying by so quickly. I can’t believe that it is almost 2014. I love to receive Christmas cards from all of my friends and family from across the world. I love to catch up with them and feel a part of their lives.

This is the time of year when we give and receive gifts. Some of my favorite gifts are those that didn’t cost anything. They just took a little time and love. One of my favorite gifts was from my children and husband. It was a small box, and in it they had each written several favorite memories of our family. I love to open that box and see what my children and husband remember about our family. It helps me stay connected to my memories. It is like having a small picture of our lives in a small box.

Another gift that I will always remember was from my father. I was probably a young adult and he made me a coupon book full of things that I would need. One coupon was for a free car wash, another was for taking my turn at dish duty. But the one I remember the most was a coupon for a free long distance phone call with him while I was away at college. Some of you don’t remember long distance phone calls. They “cost a fortune.” So I wasn’t allowed to call home very often and the call always had to be quick. That free long distance call, when I needed a listening ear, was a very special gift for a young girl away from home.

What have been some of your favorite gifts? The gift of time is something that PTA volunteers are good at giving. We sacrifice so much so that our children, and all children, can have a better world than the one we grew up in. Someone asked me why I am doing this job at Fourth District PTA. She said, “You aren’t paid…you spend 20 hours a week at the office, for what?” And I thought, “Because I want to give back something to this world that has given me so much.”

During this holiday season remember to give yourself a gift. Take a few minutes to sit back and relax. Also send a holiday wish to someone who needs a lift! Remember, not only during the holidays but always, that we can “Sweeten the world one drop at a time.”

We can work together to make this world a better place by just doing small acts of service. Because when we work together we can make things better!

Happy Holidays!

Maureen

Inside this Issue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committees</th>
<th>2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Membership Award</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Ribbon Banner Winners</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary; Sacramento Safari</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents’ Guides from Natl PTA</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant Writing Training; Keys to Success</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PTA and the Media</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasons People Volunteer</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artículos en español pagina 10 y 11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Committee Development and Guidelines

Committees are formed to plan, promote, and implement the activities of the PTA. The quorum for a committee is a simple majority of the members serving on that committee. A standing committee is established to perform a continuing function and remains in existence permanently for the life of the assembly that established it. A special committee should have a definite purpose and is subject to the directives of the membership. It remains in existence until the duty assigned to it is accomplished, unless discharged sooner, and it ceases to exist as soon as the association receives its final report.

Committee Creation

The responsibilities and goals of the committee must be clearly defined. The committee members should know if funds have been allocated for the committee’s use and what records or resources are available to them. A timeline must be established for scheduled meetings, the completion of specific tasks, and the presentation of the final report to the president and executive board.

Committee members must understand that:
- Committees do not function as separate groups but are part of the association and must operate within the framework of PTA bylaws, policies, and procedures;
- Committees make recommendations, not decisions;
- All projects and activities must have the approval of the executive board and the association in advance; and
- All money raised or derived from the activities of a committee is deposited in the unit treasury and shall not be expended by any chairman or committee without the approval of the executive board and association.

During Committee Meetings

Since committee meetings are usually conducted in an informal manner, the rules of parliamentary procedure for motions, seconds, and voting, can be replaced by the use of general consent or consensus. A good working relationship is established when the leader acts as a facilitator and provides a relaxed and supportive atmosphere.

1. Begin on time. If the leader will be conducting business and the group is short of a quorum, wait to discuss action items until a quorum is present.
2. Briefly review the agenda and the purpose of the meeting.
3. When necessary, pause, reflect, and summarize, so everyone is aware of what is being accomplished.
4. Encourage each committee member to participate. Courteously discourage those who monopolize the floor and encourage the shy ones to speak. Reinforce the fact that the committee needs to hear from everyone in order to combine all good ideas and suggestions.
5. Before adjourning, sum up what decisions were made and what future assignments designated. Does everyone know who is to do what and by when? If practical, set the date of the next meeting; otherwise, assure members the leader will notify them later.
6. As chairman, set the tone by being optimistic and enthusiastic about the committee’s tasks. Members will share that excitement.
'TEACHERS MATTER... MEMBERS MATTER' MEMBERSHIP CHALLENGE
From www.capta.org

Here's how to receive one free registration to the 2014 California State PTA Convention in Los Angeles on May 7-10:

- 100 percent of your full-time, home-based credentialed teachers join your PTA;
- Your PTA increases membership above last year's membership total; and
- A completed application form is received in the California State PTA office no later than midnight, January 31, 2014.

To download the application, go to www.capta.org, click on the “Membership,” select “Incentives and Rewards” from the drop menu and click the link. Or go to http://downloads.capta.org/mem/MembershipAwardChallenge.pdf

What makes this membership challenge unique?

This challenge has two important focuses. California State PTA honors the support and loyalty of teachers—the "T" in PTA. We also continually strive for increased membership. Each qualifying unit that meets all criteria will receive one free convention registration.

How do I complete the application?

- Every full-time, home-based credentialed teacher at your school must have joined, with membership dues remitted through channels and received in the California State PTA office no later than midnight, January 31, 2014.
- A list of full-time credentialed teachers must be submitted as part of the application. Your principal's signature will verify that all full-time credentialed teachers based at your school site this school year have been listed.
- The signature of the PTA president will verify that per capita for every full-time credentialed teachers at your school site has been remitted through channels to California State PTA by midnight, January 31, 2014.

How do I submit the application?

There are 3 ways to send your completed application directly to California State PTA:

- Mail applications to the California State PTA office: 2327 L Street, Sacramento, CA 95816-5014.
- Scan applications and email to teachersmatter@capta.org.
- FAX applications to 916-440-1986.

DUE DATE: Received in the California State PTA office by midnight on January 31, 2014.

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FOURTH DISTRICT PTA CALENDAR

December

12 District Board Meeting
Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall, 600 Town Center Drive, Costa Mesa

19 Last day the office is open before Winter Break

December 20 - January 5
Office closed for Winter Break

January

6 Office Reopens

7 Grant Writing Workshop
9:30 am, Orange County Dept of Education, Bldg D; 200 Kalmus Drive, Costa Mesa

16 Council Presidents’ Roundtable
9:30 am Fourth District Office

20 Office Closed for Martin Luther King Day

23 Executive Committee Meeting
9:30 am Fourth District Office

24 Advocacy Roundtable: Learning with Technology
9:30 am—11:30 am; Fountain Valley School District Board Rm., 10055 Slater Ave, Fountain Valley

31 DUE DATE: Teachers Matter applications—directly to California State PTA

February

13 District Board Meeting
9:30 am Council Presidents
10:30 am District Board
Orange County Dept of Education, Bldg D; 200 Kalmus Drive, Costa Mesa

15 Reflections Gallery
1 pm; Orange County Dept of Education, Bldg A; 200 Kalmus Drive, Costa Mesa

17 Office closed-Presidents Day
PTA Founders Day
CONGRATULATIONS
To the
WINNERS!

From Rock ‘N Road OC, the Red Ribbon Week kick-off event, held on Oct 19th at Norman P. Murray Community Center in Mission Viejo

1st Place &
2014 OC Red Ribbon Theme:
McAuliffe Middle School
Los Alamitos

2nd Place
Project Access – Stratford Place
Westminster

3rd Place &
Popular Vote:
Magnolia High School
Friday Night Live
Anaheim

Information provided to Fourth District by Mary Pham
Orange County Health Care Agency
Alcohol & Drug Education Prevention Team (ADEPT)
Secretary:
Correcting Minutes
By Barb Shangraw, Fourth District PTA Secretary

Nobody is perfect. Sometimes even PTA secretaries make mistakes. But don’t worry. Mistakes in your minutes can be corrected. To do so, please use the following procedure.

Every meeting agenda should include approval of minutes from the preceding meeting. Minutes may only be approved by the group that had the meeting. The association approves the association minutes and the executive board approves the executive minutes.

Meeting participants should be given a few minutes to look over the minutes, especially the motions that were made. If there are no corrections, note in the current minutes that the minutes of the [date] meeting were approved as presented.

At a large meeting, minutes may be reviewed by an appointed committee of three members who were present at the previous meeting. The committee members must sign their names at the end of the master copy of the minutes to signify their approval.

If there is a correction, it must be stated openly at the meeting. Describe the correction in your current minutes and state that the minutes were approved as corrected.

The next step is to go to the previous minutes, which should be pasted in a Secretary’s Book (available at the Fourth District PTA office). Using a red ink pen, circle the incorrect words and write the correction in the margin. Date and initial the correction.

Sacramento Safari: A Valuable PTA Experience

This year’s Sacramento Safari, Fourth District’s annual two-day trip to the state Capitol, is scheduled for March 17 and 18.

Participants will hear from a variety of experts in public education policy and state government. Past speakers have included state legislators, the Legislative Analyst, representatives from the California Department of Education, and veteran Sacramento journalists. Small group visits to the Capitol offices of our local legislators are arranged for Safari attendees.

The cost for the trip is about $600, including hotel stay and travel expenses. This is a legitimate PTA expense, upon approval of the expenditure. Participants must be appointed by a vote of a PTA unit or council.

Registration is open at www.fourthdistrictpta.org under Advocacy. PTA members are encouraged to register early, as there is a limit of 90 participants. Flight arrangements must be made independently.

Mark your calendars & invite your principal and superintendent...

Fourth District PTA’s Administrators Dinner

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

5:30 Annual Meeting
6:15 Registration & Reception
6:45 Dinner
Details in February issue.

California State PTA Legislation Conference: Connecting Families and Schools Through Advocacy

January 27-28, 2014
Embassy Suites Hotel Sacramento

Information coming soon at www.capta.org
Parents’ Guides to Student Success Available from National PTA

The Parents’ Guide to Student Success (available in English and Spanish) was developed in response to the Common Core State Standards in English language arts and mathematics that more than 45 states, including California, have adopted.

Two-page and four-page guides for grades kindergarten through eighth grade as well as high school English and high school mathematics guides are available on the National PTA website: www.pta.org (Under “For Parents” choose “Parent Guides to Student Success.”) Pdf documents can be printed out for meetings or linked to your PTA website. Below is a sample page from the 5th grade guide.

Help Your Child Learn at Home

Learning does not end in the classroom. Children need help and support at home to succeed in their studies. Try to create a quiet place for your child to study, and carve out time every day when your child can concentrate on reading, writing, and math uninterrupted by friends, brothers or sisters, or other distractions.

You should also try and sit down with your child at least once a week for 15 to 30 minutes while he or she works on homework. This will keep you informed about what your child is working on, and it will help you be the first to know if your child needs help with specific topics. By taking these small steps, you will be helping your child become successful both in and outside the classroom.

Additionally, here are some activities you can do with your child to support learning at home:

**English Language Arts & Literacy**

- Invite your child to read his or her writing out loud to other family members. Ask questions about your child’s word choices and ideas.
- Discuss your family stories and history. Encourage your child to ask relatives questions about their lives. Put the information together in an album or brainstorm different ways to tell family tales, such as poems or short stories.
- Go to a play or musical with your child. Discuss the way the actors bring the words to life.

**Mathematics**

- Look for "word problems" in real life. Some 5th grade examples might include:
  - Doing arithmetic with decimals, for example when balancing a checkbook.
  - Multiplying with fractions — for example, if you used about ½ of a ¼ cup measure of vegetable stock, then how much stock did you use? About how much is left?
  - Using the length, width, and depth of a garden plot to determine how many bags of garden soil to buy.

For more information, the full standards are available at www.corestandards.org.
The Three Keys to all PTAs

By Erin Jenks, Fourth District PTA Parliamentarian

There are three key factors that form the framework of your PTA organization. They are bylaws, standing rules and procedures:

BYLAWS

Bylaws define the basic characteristics of the association and how it will function. All bylaws, whether unit, council or district, state the name, purpose, membership, required officers and their duties, meetings, committees and their functions, and amendment procedures of the organization.

Bylaws are so important that they cannot be changed without notice to the membership and an approval vote of 2/3 of the membership. Bylaws must also be approved by California State PTA before they can be presented to the membership for adoption. Bylaws cannot be suspended.

STANDING RULES

Standing rules provide details for your specific organization: meeting dates and times, committee chair responsibilities, etc. A standing rule cannot contain anything contrary to the bylaws.

PROCEDURES

Procedures provide direction for handling specific functions of the association. All officers and chairmen should maintain procedure books containing details and responsibilities of the office or committee. Procedure books should be updated annually. Procedures may be changed without membership approval, but cannot contain anything contrary to the bylaws.

When these three key elements are in updated and incorporated into the running of your PTA, your unit will function effectively and smoothly.
Are you ready for your close-up?

PTA and the Media

By Fourth District PTA Vice President for Communications Kathleen Fay

Working with the media has its risks and rewards. To help you maximize the benefits of media publicity for your PTA – and minimize the downside – the California State PTA Communications Commission has developed some tips for working with the press to get out the story that you want heard.

Before the interview:

Editors and writers are looking for interesting stories. Consider the “hook” that will draw them in; provide the insight that makes your story different and newsworthy.

What are your objectives for the interview? Write down brief, direct “sound bites” that you can use as answers.

Is there a metaphor or short story to demonstrate your point? If so, remember to keep it as simple, short, and straightforward as possible.

What is your most important point? Studies show that highest retention will be on your first point and your last point. If you have an important point to make, make it either right at the beginning or right at the end of the interview (or both).

What could a reporter say or do to fluster you? Brainstorm most likely topics/questions ahead of the interview and write down your responses. Anticipate negative questions and be prepared to turn them around. With advance planning, you can use negative questions as a bridge to your main points.

Good reporting takes time and preparation. Give media representatives enough lead time to schedule your event and read background materials you provide.

During the interview:

Choose your words carefully. You can easily be misquoted; consider offering written statements to ensure that what you say is what you intended to say. Slow down and don’t be rushed to make a statement hastily.

Stay “on message.” Know what you want to say and say it. Be prepared with strategies to redirect the interview back to your message if/when you are drawn off-course.

Stay calm. PTA advocates are, by nature, passionate about representing the needs of children and families. Showing your enthusiasm is great, but make sure your emotion doesn’t lead to make statements you wouldn’t want to see in print or on video.

Know the facts. If you do not know the facts, do not, under any circumstances, try to fake it. “I don’t know” is a reasonable answer; offering to find out or directing to an information resource is even better.

“No comment” is not a good response. It never makes anyone look good. A better response is, “I am not the right person to answer that question.”

Never speak “off the record.” There is no such thing. You may, however, choose to speak “on background,” providing factual information that explains the points you are making.

Controversies make stories more interesting. They also carry more risk for undesirable coverage. Don’t be caught off-guard by probing questions that seek to expose a conflict, a contradiction, an error, or ill-intent.

Reporters are not the enemy. Good, objective reporting requires curiosity and, to some extent, skepticism; it’s our job to be prepared to respond knowledgeably, respectfully and effectively.

Reprinted with permission from The Communicator, California State PTA, March 2009.)
REASONS PEOPLE VOLUNTEER

- Because someone they love benefits
- To set an example for children
- Because they were asked
- To meet people and because they enjoy working with people
- To gain skills/experience
- To use otherwise unused gifts or skills
- Because of tradition
- Out of concern (child abuse, teen pregnancy, etc.)
- To have a sense of purpose
- To test leadership skills
- To feel a sense of power and success

Volunteers are attracted to:
   A vision, not tasks
   Achievement, not problems
   Momentum, not maintenance

RECOGNIZE AND REWARD ACHIEVEMENT

This is the season to thank those who care so much to do so much on behalf of children and youth! It’s important to provide positive and sincere feedback to our wonderful volunteers. Effective leadership is about tapping the best instincts and motives of people. Take the time to acknowledge accomplishments. Most of all show you appreciate the efforts and contributions your volunteers are making regardless of how successful they have been.

There are various means at your disposal to reward individuals for their contributions, from small to major efforts:

- Saying “Thank you.”
- Sending “thank you” notes to them.
- Saying something positive about their personal qualities.
- Writing newsletter articles about their performance.
- Recognizing them publicly either with informal praise or an award.
- Writing them a letter of commendation.
- Celebrating major accomplishments.
- Putting them on important task forces.
- Giving them more responsibility.
- Giving them more training.

Adapted from the California State PTA Communicator- January 2005
¡Felices Fiestas! No puedo creer que sea tiempo de otra edición de Orange Leaves. El tiempo vuela muy rápido. No puedo creer que sea casi 2014. Me encanta recibir tarjetas navideñas de todos mis amigos y familiares de todo el mundo. Me encanta ponerme al día con ellos y sentirme parte de sus vidas.

Esta es la época del año en que damos y recibimos regalos. Algunos de mis regalos favoritos son aquellos regalos que no cuestan nada. Son aquellos regalos que toman de poco tiempo y amor. Uno de mis regalos favoritos fue de mis hijos y esposo. Fue una pequeña caja que contenía favoritos recuerdos y memorias escritas de nuestra familia. Me encanta abrir la caja y ver lo que mis hijos y esposo recuerdan referente a nuestra familia. Esto me ayuda a mantenerme en contacto con mis recuerdos. Es como tener una imagen pequeña de nuestras vidas en una pequeña caja.

Otro regalo que siempre recordaré fue el de mi padre. Yo era probablemente un adulto joven y me hizo un libro de cupones lleno de cosas que iba a necesitar. Un cupón fue para un lavado de auto (carro) gratis, otro fue para que alguien tomara mi lugar para lavar los platos. Pero el que más recuerdo fue un cupón para una llamada de teléfono de larga distancia gratuita para hablar con él cuando yo estaba en la universidad. Algunos de ustedes no recordarán las llamadas telefónicas de larga distancia. Las llamadas “costaban una fortuna. ” Por lo tanto, no me permitían llamar a casa muy seguido y la llamada siempre tenía que ser muy rápida. Así que esa llamada de larga distancia gratuita, cuando necesitaba un oído que me escuchara, fue un regalo muy especial para una joven que se encontraba lejos de su casa.

¿Cuáles han sido algunos de sus regalos favoritos? El regalo del tiempo es algo que los voluntarios de PTA son generosos para dar. Nos sacrificamos tanto para que nuestros hijos y todos los niños, puedan tener un mundo mejor del cual nosotras crecimos. Alguien me preguntó por qué estoy haciendo este trabajo en el cuarto distrito de PTA. Ella dijo: "No recibes ningún pago .... pasas 20 horas a la semana en la oficina, ¿para qué? " Y yo pensé: " Porque quiero devolverle algo a este mundo de lo mucho que me ha dado."

Durante esta temporada de fiestas recuerde darse un regalo. Tómese unos minutos para sentarse y relajarse. Envíen también un deseo de fraternidad a alguien que lo necesite! Recuerde, no sólo durante las celebraciones pero siempre podemos "Endulzar a el mundo de una gota a la vez." Podemos trabajar conjuntamente para hacer de este mundo un lugar mejor con sólo hacer actos pequeños de servicio. ¡Porque cuando trabajamos en equipo podemos hacer las cosas mejor!

¡Felices Fiestas!

Maureen

Las Tres Claves para todos los Comités de PTA

Por Erin Jenks, Parlamentaria del 4o Distrito de PTA

Hay tres factores principales que forman la estructura de la organización de PTA. Ellos son los estatutos, reglas y procedimientos.

Los estatutos definen las características básicas de la asociación y cómo funcionarán. Todos los estatutos, ya sea unidad, consejo/concilio o distrito de todo el estado el nombre, el propósito, los miembros, los oficiales requeridos y sus funciones, reuniones, comités y sus funciones, y los procedimientos de enmienda. Los estatutos son muy importantes que no pueden ser modificados sin previo aviso de los miembros y el voto su de aprobación de 2/3 partes de los miembros. Los estatutos deben ser aprobados por el estado antes de que puedan ser presentados a los miembros para su aprobación. Los estatutos no pueden ser suspendidos.

Las reglas proporcionan detalles para su organización en específico, las fechas de cada reunión y horario, las responsabilidades del presidente del comité, etc. Una regla no puede contener nada contrario a los estatutos.

Los procedimientos proporcionan una orientación para el manejo de las funciones específicas de la asociación. Todos los oficiales y presidentes deben mantener libros de procedimientos que contienen en detalle y las responsabilidades de la oficina o del comité. Los libros de procedimiento deben ser actualizados anualmente. Los procedimientos pueden ser modificados sin aprobación de los miembros, pero no pueden contener nada contrario a los estatutos.

Cuando estos tres elementos se actualizan y se incorporan en el funcionamiento de su PTA, la unidad funcionará con eficacia y sin problemas.
RAZONES POR LO CUAL LAS PERSONAS SON VOLUNTARIAS

- Porque alguien a quie ellos aman se benefician
- Para ser un ejemplo para los niños
- Porque fueron requeridos
- Para conocer personas y porque les gusta trabajar con otras personas
- Para obtener habilidades / experiencia
- Para usar dones o habilidades no utilizadas
- Debido a la tradición
- Por una preocupación (el abuso infantil, el embarazo en adolescentes, etc.)
- Para tener un sentido de propósito
- Para poner a prueba las habilidades de liderazgo
- Para tener una sensación de poder y éxito

Los voluntarios se sienten atraídos por:
- Una visión, no tareas
- Logro, no problemas
- Momentum, no mantenimiento

RECONOCER Y PREMIAR LOS LOGROS

Esta es la temporada de dar las gracias a aquellos que se preocupan mucho por hacer tanto en nombre de los niños y jóvenes! Es importante proporcionar retroalimentación positiva y sincera a nuestros maravillosos voluntarios. El liderazgo efectivo tiene por objeto explotar los mejores instintos y motivaciones de las personas. Tómese el tiempo para reconocer sus logros. La mayoría de ellos muestran su apreciación de los esfuerzos y contribuciones de lo que sus voluntarios están haciendo sin importar el éxito que hayan obtenido.

Hay varios medios a su disposición para recompensar a las personas por sus contribuciones, desde pequeños a grandes esfuerzos:

- Decir "Gracias".
- Envío de notas de agradecimiento.
- Decir algo positivo acerca de sus cualidades personales.
- Escribir artículos en un boletín sobre su desempeño.
- Reconocerle públicamente ya sea informalmente o con un premio.
- Redactando una carta de recomendación.
- Celebración de los principales logros.
- Ponerlos en grupos de trabajo importantes.
- Darles más responsabilidades.
- Proveerles con más formación o capacitación.

Adaptado de California State PTA Communicator- enero de 2005.

Aviso de Publicación

Un importante sobre con información fue enviada recientemente a todos los presidentes de PTA.

El contenido de ese correo, incluyendo la Guía de Seguros y Prevencción de Pérdidas 2014 de California State PTA, están disponibles en español.

Por favor contacte a la oficina de California State PTA en 916-440-1985 ext 105 para solicitar la versión en español de esta publicación.
JANUARY HOT TOPIC!
LEARNING WITH TECHNOLOGY:
iPADS TO ONLINE CLASSES

Friday, January 24
9:30 to 11:30 am
Fountain Valley School District
10055 Slater Ave, Fountain Valley

All PTA members are invited to attend Fourth District PTA’s Advocacy Roundtables. Please share this information with your members.

PLEASE SAVE THE DATE for the Last Advocacy Roundtable of the year:
Friday, April 4, 9:30 to 11:30 am
Orange County Department of Education