

Public relations

Debbie Vincent

Public Relations (PR) is more than getting an interview in your local newspaper or with your TV, radio, or cable station. PR is about reputation—the result of what you do, what you say, and what others say about you. PR expedites two-way communication between your PTA and the public—it is a means to educate and establish credibility.

Your communications with parents at your school and members of the PTA are equally as important as working with members of the media. Good internal PR is often based on word of mouth

as well as easy-to-read handouts, such as fliers or newsletters. Successful internal PR efforts will help keep PTA members informed and involved.

Now is the time to look back over the last PTA year. What did you accomplish? Make a list, total your volunteer hours and let members know what a great job they have done. Are you collecting supplies for classrooms? Make a list of what you collect or donate. Letting just the members know is not enough, let the school district and the local newspaper know. This year, total the monetary value of your hours and

programs, take some pictures and send them with lists of programs and donations to your legislators. Follow up by also sending them to members of the California State PTA legislation team. During these hard budget times we can not hide the light we shine for children. We must let it shine brightly.



Sacramento Safari

This year nineteen delegates from Ninth District PTA attended Sacramento Safari.

Cajon Valley, Del Norte, Foothills, Mt. Helix, North Coastal, Palomar and San Diego Unified Councils were represented.

Search out an attendee from your council or Ninth District PTA and have them come and have them speak with your association about advocacy. Make attendance next year a priority by putting it in your budget.



Ninth District PTA advocates at Sacramento Safari

Salute
To
Excellence
May 21, 2009
Reservation form
Page 2

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Safety Online	P.4
Volunteer hours	P.5
PTA Board Elect	P.6
Term Checklist	P.6
Transition	P.7
Get the most from convention	P.7

Ninth District PTA Salute to Excellence

An Evening Honoring Award Winners

Reflections Gala Honoring Awards of Excellence, and Awards Presentation of Membership-Program Books-Directories-Websites to Follow

Light refreshments will be served.
Sponsored by Ninth District PTA

Thursday, May 21, 2009
Reflections Gala at 5 pm
Awards Event to follow at 7pm
Balboa Park Ballroom
2150 Pan America Rd West
San Diego, CA 92101
RSVP by May 15th

Name _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Council _____ Number Attending _____

Send RSVPs to Ninth District PTA
6401 Linda Vista Rd
San Diego, CA 92111



Celebrate PTA!

Sue King



Celebrate PTA!

It was most encouraging to find that during these difficult economic times, PTA leaders, teachers, prin-

cipals, superintendents and school board members found attendance at the Ninth District PTA's Annual Meeting and Founders Day Celebration a valuable use of time.

On February 11th, four hundred and ninety-two people gathered in Mission Valley to continue the business of the organization. We elected Ninth District PTA officers for the 2009-2011 term; we celebrated our San Diego County Teachers of the Year; and we reviewed the past year's accomplishments. Your generous contributions of \$1,835.66 will help ensure the future leadership training of our membership.

Dr. Randy Ward gave an inspiring speech regarding the successes and challenges facing our county. We

were pleased to have presented Dr. Ward with the Continuing Service Award. A donation in his name was made to the California State PTA Scholarship and Grant program.

As we look forward to Annual Meeting 2010, budget to send a representative from your association. It will be a worthwhile investment for your PTA.



Now More Than Ever

Cathy Roth

Now more than ever let your voice be heard about the importance of music education for every child.

Anticipated budget cuts for schools across the country are causing concerns about support for school music programs. More than half of the state and district-level music supervisors recently surveyed report that their schools are currently experiencing cutbacks now or expect them in the coming year, and more than half expect those cutbacks to impact the music programs specifically. You can make a difference as school budgets are reviewed, prepared and debated in the weeks ahead.

Consider these actions TODAY to assure that your child – and every child in your community – can participate in a school music program. Your help can make all the difference for their success in school and in life.

TODAY: Visit or phone the principal of your child's school and offer to help him/her assure that your school's music program continues to provide important educational opportunities for students.

TODAY: Encourage other parents of music students to speak with the principal and school administration and offer help to keep music part of the core curriculum.

TODAY: Gather a small group of concerned parents and visit your school superintendent and other school district officials. Express a concern that the school's music programs be funded at levels to support participation for all students; do this **NOW**.

TODAY: Keep messages positive and focused on student success and achievement in music and in school. Celebrate students' musical activities and accomplishments. Circulate pictures to local press, school newsletters and community e-newsletters. Shine a light on your student's success through music education, making sure that everyone experiences first-hand the program's impact.

Organize student performances at every local, district or state event; allow school administrators to conduct or to sit in with the group.

Need help with a press release?

See samples at:

<http://www.supportmusic.com/kit/cont>

[ents/6.MediaCommunicationsTemp.doc](#)

TODAY: Form a steering committee and schedule attendance at all school board meetings, starting now. Monitor school budget preparations, schedule student musical presentations, participate in all board and public budget discussion meetings. Express parents' shared concerns that all students receive music as part of the core curriculum.

TODAY: Participate in the national advocacy network for music education. Visit **SupportMusic.com** and download tools and information to help keep your music program strong.

Source:

California State PTA Online Newsletter-SMARTS, January 2009 and supportmusic.com



Safety for Adolescents' Online Social Networking

Carmen Myers

Remember your first teenage crush? That special person captured your attention somewhere in school—in the hallway, science lab, or cafeteria or at a basketball game. Soon you could think of nothing else but getting to know this person, going on a date, and maybe even "going steady."

You used all the tools in your arsenal: dropping a book at his feet, hoping he would pick it up; accidentally bumping into her in the hallway after carefully planning how you would apologize. Or maybe you actually built up enough courage to sit at her table during lunch, or to talk to him after a basketball game.

Some things have not changed for our children. Young adolescents in middle school and teens in high school still have romantic daydreams focused on someone who remains agonizingly out of reach. These days, however, our sons and daughters have at their disposal a powerful new tool that can help them turn their dreams into reality—the Internet.

A Typical Example ...

Cyberspace adds a new dimension to youthful romance. Young adolescents and teens embrace all types of new technology with enthusiasm, so it's not surprising that they would find ways to use the Internet, as well as cell phones, digital cameras, and video cameras, to hasten the dating game.

The cyber approach to relationships has advantages. In a 2003 Parade magazine survey, 56 percent of boys and 79 percent of girls said that the first thing that catches the attention of the opposite sex is looks. Online, looks become secondary. ... young people have the opportunity to judge another person by what the person says, rather than by how he or she looks.

Yet parents are wary of their children's looking for love on the Web. "Who is my daughter or son talking to online? Is it really someone from

class, or a pedophile?"

Even if parents know to whom their children are talking to in cyberspace, they may still wonder whether courting online is positive. Many a romance blossoms in the electronic garden, but problems also spring up like unwanted weeds.

Any new invention is bound to meet with resistance, and the Internet is no exception. While youngsters have never known a world without the Internet, adults take a longer time to adjust. The wise parent, however, will put doubts on hold and instead become cyber-savvy.

Love, electronic style

How do adolescents connect using technology? Let us count the ways:

E-mails. That mechanical voice announcing "You've got mail!" is music to an adolescent's ears. These missives keep the social network buzzing with news of budding romances and wilting relationships.

Instant messages (IMs). These online communications allow kids to carry on conversations in real time. IMing is now more popular than the home phone as a way for teens to talk.

Web logs (blogs). As a teenager, you probably filled pages in your diary mooning over someone in your class. Adolescents still pour out their thoughts, but on a Web page rather than a paper page.

Websites. Online gathering sites like myspace.com and xanga.com attract young people who come to vent and meet others. While myspace.com specifies that users must be at least 14 years old and xanga.com sets that age at 13, there is no system set up to prevent younger children from posting.

Chat rooms. Chat rooms are electronic conference calls with many people talking at once. Adolescents often set up their own private chats, but some bolder souls enter chat rooms where dangerous strangers may lurk.

Cell phones. Whereas most parents buy

their kids cell phones for safety reasons, adolescents see this device as a lifeline to their social lives. Young people can call, text, or send photos to friends, thus reaching out to even more people.

Camcorders. No longer reserved for recording a baby's first steps or a special birthday, camcorders are used by adolescents to capture images of their friends, often in embarrassing situations.

Electronic networking

Because adolescents are so comfortable with new technology, they find creative ways to use the many devices that are at their disposal. For example, a teen having trouble finding the right words to e-mail or IM to impress that certain someone may enlist a loquacious friend to help out. One girl says, "With the Internet, you can have a friend on the phone and say, 'Here's what I want to say. How do I say it?' And she can help."

With the Internet and cell phones, young people who meet at camp or through mutual friends are able to keep the relationship going, even if mountains or oceans separate them. These two methods of communication have another advantage for privacy-hungry teens: no little brother or sister can listen in.

Despite all these positive aspects of meeting and greeting online, parents need to be aware that misuse can lead to broken hearts and bashed reputations. Consider these situations:

E-mails and IMs. Rumors can spread like wildfire on the Internet. Someone intent on damaging another student's reputation can easily send a message to hundreds of classmates by pushing one button. In a 2005 survey conducted by MindOH!, an education company that focuses on character education, nearly 80 percent of the 5,500 teens surveyed said that they had read or spread gossip

continued p.5

Safety for Adolescents' Online Social Networking continued from p.4

Carmen Myers

online. When that gossip has to do with a young girl's sexual reputation, the damage may be great indeed.

Websites. That same survey found that half of the teens surveyed had seen a website that made fun of their peers. In one situation, a boy dumped by his girlfriend went to her website and "morphed" her face into something ugly.

Camera phones. A picture taken at an improper time, showing the subject in a compromising position, can doom a reputation and hold a vulnerable teen up for ridicule. A child caught in a public display of affection (PDA) may find that photo uploaded to the Internet and posted on websites where millions may view it.

Camcorders. Celebrities' X-rated videos went around the world, but there have been similar occurrences starring far less famous girls. While their reputation suffered only a minor (and brief) blow, other girls may not be as fortunate.



The Parent Factor

Parents who are technophobic may blame the Internet when something bad happens, but this may backfire. Many adolescents who are teased or tormented in cyberspace withhold that information from their parents, fearing that they will be forbidden to go online. They reason that it's better to tolerate the teasing than to be cut off from their social world.

Here are some things to consider to encourage openness and proper use of technology:

Learn how your child is furthering romance on the Internet. Mention this article; then ask, "How are kids in your school using the Internet?"

Focus on the behavior, not the technology. The technology may have changed, but kindness and decency should still be at the top of everyone's list. If your son is going to break up with a girl, he shouldn't send her an e-mail to do so.

Talk about public versus private. A young girl may think it's okay to pour out her innermost thoughts on a public website. Point out how that information may be used against her to

fuel rumors.

Consider your child's age when buying a device. Does a 10-year-old really need a camera phone? Can you be sure your 11-year-old won't misuse that camcorder? If you decide to go ahead and buy, remember that these devices don't come with proper-use manuals. That message must come from you.

Talk about romance and relationships. Kids may have a lot to teach parents about new technology, but parents have more to teach their children about relationships and romance—on and off the electronic highway. If parents neglect to talk about the excitement and beauty of love, adolescents will get that information from peers, the media, and, yes, the Internet.

Adapted from an article by *Charlene C. Giannetti* and *Margaret Sagarese*

Entire article can be read at:
http://www.pta.org/topic_safety_for_adolescents_online_social_networking.asp

Are You Counting Your PTA's Volunteer Hours?

MaryAnne Tang

Please remember to keep track of your PTA's volunteer hours. These hours are used to help keep PTA's status as a nonprofit organization.

What types of activities should you keep track of?

Phone calls

Travel time

Meeting time:

- General Membership meetings
- Executive Board meetings
- Meetings with Teachers/Administration having to do with PTA
- Any other meetings attended for PTA purposes

Preparation time for:

- meetings
- events
- phone calls/e-mails

Set-up/Clean-up

Actual events

Shopping for event/activity

Thinking PTA

Promoting PTA to friends and acquaintances

Volunteering at school for PTA administered programs

Email conversations

Writing:

- agendas

- minutes
- treasurer's reports
- chairman/vice president's reports

Attending:

- California State PTA Convention
- National PTA Convention
- Council/District trainings
- Legislation activities/conferences

If PTA asks you to do it – count it toward your volunteer hours

Reports are due to your council/district in May.

Source:

California State PTA, *The Communicator*, March 2009

PTA Term Checklist

Karen Fleck

Each PTA board should evaluate the term's work and prepare recommendations for the next term. Some questions to ask include the following:

Projects and Programs:

- Did the PTA achieve the goals set at the beginning of the term? If not, what needs to be done?
- Did the officers and chairmen know what was expected of them?
- Were efforts made to include more members in planning and working toward achieving those goals?

Membership:

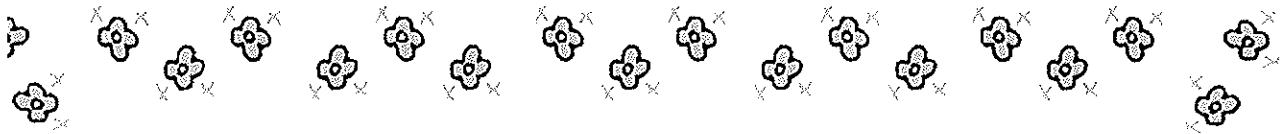
- Did the PTA membership increase this term?
- Was an effort made to include more new members?
- Were telephone calls from members answered promptly?
- Were the association meetings well-attended?
- Was the association included in the decision-making process of the organization?
- Was the membership kept informed of PTA events and programs?

Training:

- Were the officers and chairmen notified of training opportunities?
- Did officers and chairmen take advantage of training opportunities?
- Was the association represented at council/district PTA meetings and the California State PTA Convention?
- Were PTA resources and newsletters shared?

Source:

California State PTA, *The Communicator*, March 2009



"To those who see with loving eyes, life is beautiful. To those who speak with tender voices, life is peaceful. To those who help with gentle hands, life is full. And to those who care with compassionate hearts, life is good beyond all measure." - Author Unknown

PTA Board-Elect Activities

Judy Williams

PTA bylaws provide that following an election, the board-elect may meet to begin making plans for the next term.

The board-elect may:

- Plan to attend California State PTA Convention.
- Fill vacancies in office.
- Verify that council/district PTA has been provided with a roster of new board members.
- Determine PTA materials needed for officers/chairmen.
- Consider ordering extra subscriptions and publications.
- Distribute copies of bylaws and

job descriptions.

- Ratify appointments and begin goal-setting and planning.
- Set time to meet with site administrator.
- Set goals and plan activities to implement those goals.
- Prepare a master calendar for PTA events and programs. Be aware of school district calendar and special holidays.
- Ratify budget committee appointed by president-elect.
- Have proposed budget approved at last association meeting of the year.

- Set appointments to meet with current board members to review evaluations of current term activities.
- Assure that the year-end audit is scheduled to be conducted immediately following the end of the fiscal year.
- Schedule the installation of officers.
- Order membership envelopes.

Source:

California State PTA, *The Communicator*, March 2009

PTA Leadership Transition

Karen Fleck

Keys to a Smooth Transition

Finish the term.

- Do not stop fulfilling the duties and responsibilities of the position simply because a successor has been elected.

Complete any final responsibilities.

- Complete the Annual Unit Historian Report.
- Update your procedure book. Remove old, outdated materials.

- Send your successor's name to council/district PTA.

Meet with current board to evaluate the term.

- Review successes and include recommendations for next term.

Meet with your successor

- Review expectations, duties and responsibilities of the position.

- Review your procedure book.

Invite your successor to a current board meeting (if not already a mem-

ber) and to council and district PTA meetings.

Provide your successor with dates for the California State PTA Convention and other training opportunities.

Turn over all PTA materials that relate to the position.

Let go of the position gracefully.

Source:

California State PTA, *The Communicator*, March 2009

Getting the Most from Convention

Carolyn Johnson

BEFORE YOU DECIDE TO ATTEND

- Determine what you need and hope to gain from convention.
- Consider the value of convention – we only make progress if we accept the challenge of change – to learn and grow in knowledge, skills and experience.
- Ensure that your PTA includes a line item in the budget to send attendees to the State convention annually.

AFTER YOU'VE DECIDED TO ATTEND

- Write down your objectives for attending so you are clear about your purpose and what you want from convention.
- Plan how your time will be spent; design an itinerary that allows flexibility to pursue unexpected learning or networking opportunities.
- Be responsible about attending – your PTA is sending you to convention to participate fully – do not use the time away for a chance to play or shop on your PTA's money.
- Be positive about attending. If your reasons for going are not sound and do not stand on their own merits, reconsider.

WHEN YOU ARRIVE AT CONVENTION

- Review the program for changes and updates – revise your itinerary as appropriate.
- Participate in ALL general meetings and take notes.
- Voting delegates can participate in the business of the organization – vote on a legislative platform that will direct our advocacy efforts; establish the priorities to be addressed; participate in the election of future state PTA leaders.
- Celebrate the outstanding work of local unit, council and district PTAs.
- Participate in a variety of workshops where ideas and skills can be learned; hear from experts in fields of PTA concern.
- Develop leadership skills
- A workshop-handouts CD is available for purchase in the PTA Store – a chance for you to collect handouts from those workshops you aren't able to attend!
- Visit the exhibit hall and consider the potential of products and services to increase your PTA's ability to serve its parents and students effectively and efficiently.
- Meet state and national PTA leaders.

- Network! Exchange ideas and successes with others – learn from PTAs around the state.

- Create helpful lists of PTA contacts.

AFTER RETURNING HOME

- Report to your PTA on what you learned and how it can benefit you and your PTA.
- Demonstrate that your attendance was well worth the time and expense; show how the benefits outweigh the costs.
- Share your notes with others who can make the information work for them – adapt the information to benefit your PTA.
- Share the handout materials you collected.
- Share the handout CD you purchased in the PTA Store.
- Follow up with contacts you made and nurture the rapport you established – continue to share ideas and success with others.
- Apply the knowledge and skills you acquired immediately.
- Encourage your PTA to send more attendees to future conventions.

Source:

California State PTA, *The Communicator*, March 2009

Ninth District
 CA Congress of PTA, Inc.
 National PTA
 6401 Linda Vista Road, Annex A
 San Diego, California 92111-7399

Return Services Requested

Debbie Vincent President
 Judy Williams Editor

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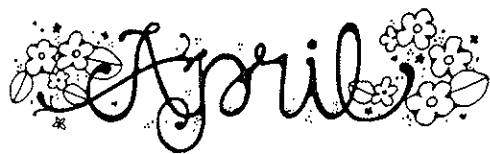


Spanish Observer Offer:
 For a **FREE** subscription to our Spanish **Observer** (one per PTA) call the Ninth District office: 858.268.8077

The Ninth District PTA does not control and cannot guarantee the relevance, timeliness, or accuracy of the material provided by other agencies or organizations, nor does the Ninth District PTA endorse other agencies or organizations, their views, products or services.

Important Numbers

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 Fax.....312-670-6783
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 Website.....www.pta.org



Calendar of Meetings

- April 6-10** **Ninth District PTA office closed.**
- April 21 District Board, 9:30 am, SDCOE, rm. 301
- April 22 Legislative Meeting, 7pm, San Diego County Office of Education, Room 508 boardroom

Due Dates

- May 19 2009-2010 officer rosters due to Ninth District PTA office.
 We will accept rosters as soon elections are held.

Save the Dates

- April 30-May 3 California State PTA Convention, San Jose
- May 21** **Salute to Excellence, Balboa Park Club**
- June 6** **Ninth District PTA Summer Leadership Conference, University of San Diego**
- June 26-29 National PTA Convention, Ft. Lauderdale, FL

Plan Ahead

- April Alcohol Awareness Month, Volunteer Appreciation Week
- May National Physical Fitness Month, Teacher Appreciation Week