

Pine Valley Middle School - A California Distinguished School



PUMA NEWS

April 2009

A publication of Pine Valley PTA

Jason Law, Principal

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Dates to Note:

Date	Event
April 1-3	Turn in Cookie Dough Orders
April 2	Promotion Party Planning Meeting, 7:00 in the Library
April 6-10	Spring Break Recess
April 11	Boy Scout Troop 874 Electronic Recycling Drive
April 13	PTA Meeting, 7:00pm in the Library
April 22	Panel Discussion on Eating Disorders parent education program at PV, 7:00 pm
April 24	Honorary Service Awards due
April 29	"Planning for High School, College, and Beyond" 8 th Grade Parent Night at PV, 7:00 pm
April 30	Musical instrument (Girl Scout Project) drive ends
May 1	Last dance of the year, 7-9 pm. 6 th , 7 th , and 8 th graders welcome, dancing, socializing and guitar hero
May 4-12	STAR Testing

President's Message - by Collette Ricks & Lani Bari

Please watch for your mail-in only Measure C ballot. Measure C is SRVUSD's local school funding renewal measure. The current parcel tax expires at the end of this school year. Renewing these locally managed funds is crucial for continuing the award winning educational programs and qualified staff we have at our school and throughout the school district. We strongly urge you to inform yourself about this measure.

Thanks go out to many PTA volunteers this month. First of all, to all of you who participated in the annual cookie dough fundraiser for your child's grade-level fund. A special thank you goes to Kathy Ramsey, Theodora Pappas, and all of the other helpers who volunteered their time. Distribution is scheduled for April 28th. Thanks also to Teresa DeHope and her helpers for putting on another great staff appreciation luncheon, this one with a St.

Patrick's Day theme. Finally, thanks to Chris Brady and Amy White for organizing treats and chaperones for the dance held in March, along with the numerous parents that donated refreshments or chaperoned the dance.

Thank you to LaShonda Taylor from the Contra Costa Crisis Center for speaking at a well-attended and informative Parent Education evening. We have two more Parent Education opportunities in April. On April 22nd at 7pm, Pine Valley is hosting a panel on "It's not what you're eating; it's what's eating you." On April 29th parents of 8th graders will want to attend a parent education night intended just for them, entitled "Planning for your future: High School, College and Beyond." This Parent Ed evening will be held in our multi-use room.

The week of April 6th-10th is spring break. School resumes on Monday, April 13th. Our next PTA meeting will be held on that Monday, April 13th at 7pm in the library. As always, feel free to contact us with your questions and concerns.

Collette Ricks
collettericks@comcast.net

Lani Bari
lanibari@comcast.net

Principal's Message - by Jason Law

The events of the last month have been well chronicled... so let's just acknowledge that it has been quite the emotional month at Pine Valley. Now that we have had some time to gain some perspective and heal, I just wanted to again give my condolences to the Vicars' family and say thank you to the community for all the support they have given to each other. We get so caught up in teaching state standards and curriculum, sometimes we forget that the true lessons of life come from how well we overcome adversity in the face of tragedy. I hope the parent education night on March 30 was worth your time. Raising young people is a constant challenge and the lessons are continual. Please continue to have the difficult conversations with your adolescent. Remember, they will have questions about life's temptations and have conversations regardless, so it is up to you to give them a safe place to discuss their thoughts and feelings.

On a much more positive note, I want to congratulate science teachers, Jason Miller and Larissa Myers, but especially the Pine Valley students who competed in this year's Tri-Valley Science Fair in Livermore. I am proud to announce that Pine Valley students received more awards than any other middle school in the competition. Congratulations go to Eleanor Adachi, Trevor Cai, Stella Chua, Jessica Clouse, Tessa DeVilbiss, Raphael Egawa, Nate Gilbreth, Jacquelyn He, Eric Hu, Brandon Lee, Jenna McNaughton, Mina Nayeri, Frank Nguyen, Maureen O'Neill, Karishma Pareek, Michael Peng, Maddy Schenk, Diana Shanahan, Thomas Tobin, Sarah Walsh, Phillip Zhou. Thank you Mr. Miller and Ms. Myers for supporting your students and giving them this opportunity. From the look I saw on the faces of the winners, all your extra hours after school, helping your students, was well worth it.

As the calendar turns to spring, I just want to remind all of our parents about helping to keep your child focused academically for the fourth quarter. Spring Break and the warmer weather are the enemies as we hit the home stretch. Use the break next week to help your children relax and recharge their batteries. When they return, standardized state testing will be just around the corner (May 4-12). Parent conferences last month showed how dangerous complacency can be. As the year progresses, so too do the challenges the teachers give their students. I am sure that you and your children have noticed that the same effort they were giving earlier in the year is not reaping the same rewards.

Finally, it was great seeing many of you at the Measure C rally on March 28. Please continue to monitor the budget situation as it relates to education here in the San Ramon Valley Unified School District. We want to continue to give your students the education they deserve, but with limited resources, the education you have come to expect may not be possible. Have a great Spring Break...

Local School Funding Update – Kristen Holbrook & Laie Nelson

Parents and community members throughout the San Ramon Valley are busy working to support a local funding measure, Measure C, which will appear on an April mail-in only ballot. For more information about Measure C, please visit the website for the San Ramon Valley Council of PTAs and click on the links on the right side of the homepage. The San Ramon Valley Council of PTAs and the Pine Valley PTA have voted to endorse Measure C.

Legislatively Speaking... by Nancy Vandell

State Budget Severely Cuts Schools

Last month, a "two-year" budget was signed by the legislature that reflected a combination of cuts and revenue increases. About 65% of the cuts were to education; much of the rest to health and human services. For the San Ramon Valley Unified School District, the cuts equate to a combined budget deficit for 2008-09 and 2009-10 of nearly \$10 million (assuming that it receives 3.75 million from the federal stimulus package and that further deficits do not occur in the June revise).

The San Ramon Valley Unified School District recently presented a budget for this year and next that reflects the cuts from the state. This budget assumes no continuing income from a local funding source. You can view the budget and resulting cut list on the district website at www.srvusd.net (click on the red "budget" tab on the top left of the page). Many of the cuts will be mitigated if Measure C, the local school parcel tax passes this spring. The state budget relies on five propositions placed on a special May 19 ballot. At this time, California State PTA has taken "SUPPORT" positions on Proposition 1B, which provides revenue increases to support education, and Proposition 1C, which changes the way the lottery is funded and transfers its education funding to the state's general fund. California State PTA will decide on positions on Propositions 1A, 1D and 1E in early April. We urge you to educate yourself on the issues and vote.

California State PTA Urges Lawmakers to Invest in Children

The California State PTA has announced the first steps in a campaign to increase funding for schools and children's services. "Cutting billions of dollars from education and children's services may balance a budget, but it does not even remotely meet the responsibility of California to educate and care for children," said Pam Brady, president of the California State PTA. "No one should be proud of a budget that drops funding for schools to dead last in the nation." For details on the PTA's campaign, please visit (<http://www.srvcouncilpta.org/Public/PortalHome.aspx>)

"The PTA believes the smartest economic recovery plan is to invest in children," Brady said. "All children should have arts, small class sizes, counselors, nurses, librarians, and yes, textbooks, and this budget forces communities to fight over crumbs."

Counselor's Corner – by Julie Damgen

Help Your Adolescent Cope with Stress & Depression

1. Check in with your own stress.
 - Are you taking care of your physical and emotional needs?
2. Minimize environmental stressors.
 - Noise
 - Music
 - Video Games
 - TV
 - Cell phones & Text messaging.
3. Set realistic expectations.
 - Realize that your child is balancing many things in his/her life.

4. Be sensitive to your child's needs.
 - Even though a child's worries seem trivial to us, remember they are significant to him/her
5. Be observant of changes in your own and your child's behavior.
 - Eating
 - Sleeping
 - Temperament
 - Trust your intuition—Listen to your child
6. Recognize the value of spending time with your child.
7. Teach your child the value of a positive outlook.
 - Teach your child to be optimistic.
 - Shut down negative thoughts-STOP.
 - Tell them you love them or are proud of them daily.
8. Establish your priorities.
9. Help your child make their own decisions and choices.
 - Help them think through their choices and consider consequences.
 - Divide big responsibilities into small chunks.
10. Teach good health habits.
 - Take time to breath and relax.
 - Designate a time to establish a routine of talking about feelings, happenings, and problem-solving.

Panel Discussion on Eating Disorders – Donna Dao Willins

Join us for a Panel Discussion and Question/Answer Session, including parents, students, nutritionists, physicians and therapists. This evening is dedicated to providing information and an opportunity for adults and young people to talk open and honestly.

Wednesday, April 22, 2009

7:00 to 9:00pm

Pine Valley Middle School

Please RSVP to Nancy Clarkson at 925-829-5554 or lablimo@pacbell.net

The overall term "Eating Disorder" refers to a variety of disorders, including Anorexia Nervosa, Bulimia Nervosa and Binge Eating Disorder. The common feature of all the disorders is abnormal eating behavior, often accompanied by a distorted body image.

Parent Program: High School/College/Career Paths – Donna Dao-Willins

It's time to prepare for your child(ren)'s future. Spend just 60 minutes of your time, and you will leave more knowledgeable about High School/College/Career paths facing the children of today. This presentation is intended as a follow-up to information 8th graders will receive in their CORE class throughout the week of April 27th. This informative evening will be hosted by our school counselor, Julie Damgen. You won't want to miss this. [View the flyer.](#)

8th Grade Parent Night

Wednesday, April 29th, 2009

7:00-8:00pm

Pine Valley's Multipurpose Room

RSVP to ddwillins@aol.com

8th Grade Promotion Update - Promotion Committee

Attention all 8th grade parents! The Promotion Party is June 11th, 7 to 10 pm!!!

We are creating a memorable CD gift for all the 8th grade students that will be shown throughout the night. We would like every 8th grade family to email **1-3 digital pictures** of their 8th grader! Your digital pictures can be from 6, 7, & 8th grade, with their friends, during PV sports or activities at school. All pictures must be digitally emailed by MAY 1st to: pvmspromopics@gmail.com.

It will take a lot of help to make the promotion a BIG success. We have a great group so far!

Decoration Committee:

- Mary Cummings - mary220c@pacbell.net
- Lori Cade - ibelorbo@hotmail.com
- Vicki Suoja - vspink@sbcglobal.net
- Virginia Holmes - gini.holmes@gmail.com
- Cheryl Rodgers - cdcdrogers@sbcglobal.net
- Angela Watts - angelar@covad.com

Food Committee:

- Kelly Otis - kpccotis@comcast.net
- Marcela Kamp - mmkamp@comcast.net

Donation Committee:

- Vicki Suoja - vspink@sbcglobal.net

If you are interested in helping with any of the above committees, please contact Lori, Mary or Vicki. Thank you in advance for all your help and support. Please watch for further updates through the Lyris emails.

Brief general planning meeting this Thursday, April 2, at 7pm in the PV library. All are welcome!

- One of the decoration committees desperately needs your help! Please contact Angela Watts at angelar@covad.com.
- We also need volunteers to help set up and clean up for the party. Please contact either Lori Cade at ibelorbo@hotmail.com or Mary Cummings at mary220c@pacbell.net.
- If you are able to donate a case of water, please contact Marcella Kamp at mmkamp@comcast.net.
- If you have a food donation contact, please email Kelly Otis at kpccotis@comcast.net.
- Vicki Suoja is still in need of donations, i.e. \$5 or \$10 gift cards for movie tickets, itunes, restaurants, etc. Contact her at vspink@sbcglobal.net

We REALLY need your help to make this a big success for the kids!

Attention 6th & 7th Grade Parents - Laura Stang

Your help is needed too! The 8th Grade Promotion Dance Committee is looking for 6th and 7th grade parents to help chaperone Pine Valley's 8th Grade Promotion Dance. Why volunteer?

1. It is a long honored tradition that the 6th and 7th grade parents chaperone the dance so the 8th graders can enjoy their last dance at Pine Valley without their OWN parents as chaperones.
2. It gives you a peek into what to expect when your child attends his/her 8th grade Promotion Dance.
3. It is a fun night!!!!

No prior meeting to attend. Just shoot me an e-mail (LSTA@comcast.net) to get your name on the list and then show up at Pine Valley on June 11th at 7:00. Thanks in advance for volunteering,

Emergency Preparation – by Lisa Webster

We are fortunate at Pine Valley to have a great safety plan in place. We are constantly looking for ways to improve. After last month's Earthquake Drill, we are looking to add the following items to our emergency supplies:

- Blankets
- Plastic bins, tubs, and storage boxes with lids, in many sizes ranging from 12 qt. size up to 80 qt. size, and all sizes in between! (such as Rubbermaid and Sterilite)
- Used/secondhand wheelchairs
- Used backpacks, small (elementary) size preferred
- 2' to 4' crow bars and straight bars

If you would like to donate any of these items, please bring them to the Pine Valley office during regular school hours. Thank you for your help.

Teacher/Staff Appreciation – by Teresa DeHope

On behalf of the PTA's Staff Appreciation Committee, I would like to thank the following women for making the St. Patrick's Day luncheon a huge success. These people helped by supplying ingredients, food dishes, decorating and setting up, taking down, and cleaning up:

Lani Bari	Mary Cummings	Nina Hsing	Teri Ryan
Beth Beadle	Donna Dao-Willens	Phyllis Looney	Vicki Sigl
Lori Cade	Annamarie Day	Sheila Madrieres	Leslie Will
Kim Carlson	Chitra Furtado	Shannon Maser	
Jennifer Chan	Kathy Harkins	Sherry Massimino	

With the help of these moms, the teachers and staff were treated to a wonderful Irish luncheon which included lots of green foods and lucky decorations!!! It was a terrific pick-me-up at a time when everyone needed it the most.

There will be one more luncheon provided during the beginning of May to honor our staff and show them our sincere appreciation for all they do for us and our children. If anyone would like one more chance to help out this year, please feel free to let me know (tdehope@gmail.com).

PV Honorary Service Awards – by Cindy Fischer

Do you know of a volunteer or organization that deserves to be recognized? The Pine Valley PTA is accepting nominations for individuals or organizations in the PTA, school or community that has provided outstanding service to children and youth.

The Honorary Service Awards Program includes the Honorary Service Award, Continuing Service Award, Golden Oak Service Award, and Very Special Person Award. Please forward your name, the nominee's name and a brief summary of why you think they should be honored to Cindy Fischer at jcfischer@comcast.net by Friday, April 24.

Box Tops for Education – by Melinna Gershik

Once again, I wanted to take the time to remind each of our Pine Valley families to keep their eyes open for Box Tops on the products that we all use at home. Hopefully you have been collecting Box Tops and sending them in with your students. To see a current list of products that have Box Tops go to <http://www.boxtops4education.com/AboutBoxTops/Products.aspx>.



In addition to clipping Box Tops, our school can also earn money through the Box Tops for

Education Marketplace website portal, <http://www.boxtops4education.com/Marketplace/Default.aspx>. There are many websites -- perhaps ones that you already shop at -- that will make contributions to our school if you use the Marketplace portal.

If you have any questions about the Box Tops for Education program at Pine Valley, please email Melinna Gershik at pinevalleyboxtops@yahoo.com or call 828-9290. Thank you for your support!

Musical Instruments Drive

Musical instruments are needed for students at Grant Elementary School in Richmond. Instruments are being collected for a Girl Scout Gold Award Project. ALL new or used instruments are accepted! ALL DONATIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE. Please contact SRVHS student Lindsey Garnick for information on donation pick up at 925-831-8699. The deadline is April 30th. [View the flyer](#).

Electronics Recycling Project

BSA Troop 874 will be holding an electronics recycling project on Saturday April 11, 2009, from 9:00AM to 4:00PM. This event will be held at the Grace United Methodist Church, 19901 San Ramon Valley Blvd., San Ramon (at the intersection with Pine Valley). Drop off your old, broken, or unused electronics. TV's, monitors, laptops, flat screens, cell phones are free. There is a small fee for any other electronic items. Support your local Boy Scouts. For additional information please contact Michael Carter at 925-858-6008.

Are you an RN ... or a LVN?

The San Ramon Valley Unified School district is currently seeking licensed nurses to fill some on-call, part-time positions. This work involves one-on-one medical care for students. Our nurses need to be independent thinkers with strong assessment skills. Good interpersonal communication skills are a must. To qualify, you must possess a current CA license as an RN or LVN and have a current CPR certificate. To explore this opportunity, contact Kirby Hoy, Student Services at (925) 552-5052.

San Ramon Library Programs - by Nancy Kreiser

Spotlight on Poetry - Celebrate National Poetry Month @ the Library

Teen Poetry Contest.

Attention teen poets! Here's an opportunity to share your work with the entire community. Submit up to 5 original poems to our library poetry contest. Works will be selected for publication on the library's website, posting in the library, and for a public reading on Saturday April 18 at the Poetry Brunch. Poems accepted Saturday, March 14 through Wednesday, April 8 at both libraries. Students in middle school and high school can participate.

Spotlight on Poetry Brunch - Saturday April 18 at 11:00am in the San Ramon Library Teen Area

Everyone is invited to join us as we celebrate the work of our teen poets. Hear poems read by their authors, view poetry displays, and enjoy some brunch snacks. Poetry events hosted by San Ramon Library's Teen Advisory Group and San Ramon Library Foundation.

Teen Mystery Night: The Pharaoh's Curse - Friday, May 8 at 6:30 pm in the San Ramon Library

Something has gone terribly wrong at the prom! Amara was Queen of the Nile and Princess of the Prom, until the accident...or was it attempted murder? Join your fellow detectives at the library in solving this mystery.

Detectives and prom goers in middle and high school are invited to attend. Feel free to be "formal" and dress up in recycled or reusable prom wear. Snacks provided.

Teen Volunteers Needed for Summer Reading Program - Dougherty Station Library and SR Library

San Ramon Libraries need your help! Teen volunteers work directly with the public and make a real contribution to the success of this important program. Teens entering 8th grade and above in fall '09 are invited to apply for volunteer positions. Pick-up your volunteer application at one of the libraries today!

City of SR Programs for Teens - by Adam Chow

The City of San Ramon Parks & Community Services Department offers a variety of programs and classes. Visit www.SRTeen.org for a complete listing of what's going on for teens in San Ramon. To register for classes or other programs stop by the San Ramon or Dougherty Station Community Centers or you can register online at www.SanRamonRecGuide.com. If you have questions or need more information please call 973-3200.

Teen Centers

The City of San Ramon is pleased at the success of the Teen Centers for students at Pine Valley, Gale Ranch, and Windemere Ranch. The Teen Centers provide supervised and structured academic and recreational activities from after school until 6:00 p.m. every school day. For more information on registration, fees and policies please visit www.SRTeen.org or call Adam Chow at 973-3362.

Upcoming Events

Middle School Dance (Friday, April 17)

Put on your favorite Hawaiian shirt and shorts for this island themed middle school dance on Friday, April 17th from 6-9 pm at the San Ramon Community Center. All 6th, 7th, and 8th graders with a valid school ID are invited to attend this fun event. Tickets will be sold for \$6 at all middle schools the week of April 13th. Tickets will also be available at our middle school Teen Centers, and San Ramon Community Center beginning March 30th. The last dance sold out so get your tickets early! Dress code will be strictly enforced. A parental permission form is required and can be downloaded at www.SRTeen.org.

Teen Hiking Trips

The Teens Outside Project has received a grant from the National Recreation and Park Association to take teens on outdoor education trips. We are offering a variety of trips that are free of charge to get teens to experience the outdoors. There is a small \$10 deposit that is required for registration that will be refunded after the teen attends the trip. Deposits will not be refunded if the student does not attend. Space is limited, so register early.

April 18 - Hiking Trip to Cataract Falls, Marin County

9:00 am - 3:00 pm

ACT#61802

May 30 - Hiking Trip to Uvas Canyon County Park, Santa Clara County

9:00 am - 3:00 pm

ACT#61804

Dodgeball Tournament (Friday, May 1)

The infamous Dodgeball Tournament is back! Test those hard earned skills from back in the day. We will cover the rules and then teams will play round robin matches to determine your ranking for the playoffs. Captains get your team together and sign up your team of 6. Cost is \$60 per team. Prizes will be awarded to the champions! Pre-registration recommended (ACT#57533). This event will take place from 7:00-11:00 p.m. at the Iron Horse Gym.

Visit SRTeen.org

Go to San Ramon's Teen website, www.SRTeen.org, to get information on teen events, programs, classes, and other programs. Click on the Survey tab and complete our online surveys to be eligible for free prizes such as gift cards to Jamba Juice or Regal Cinema. Check out www.SRTeen.org to get the 411 on teen programs.

Student of the Month – by Shannon Maser & Wendy Pomeroy

Each month Pine Valley Middle School focuses on a life skill, such as caring, organization, effort, and respect. The Student-of-the-Month program recognizes students who exemplify the particular month's life skill. Teachers nominate one student from any of their classes. The students are rewarded with an ice cream sundae or other special treat during their lunch period on the last Friday of the month. A professional photographer takes their pictures, which are sent home in a keepsake folder.

Congratulations to the March Students of the Month who are recognized for exhibiting the life skill of **Effort**. The featured life skill for April is Sense of Humor.

<u>Student</u>	<u>(Selected by)</u>	<u>Student</u>	<u>(Selected by)</u>
Hayden Adoff	(Mrs. Fleshman)	Michael Kendroud	(Mr. Law)
Delfina Ambriz	(Miss Damgen)	Maiar Khattab	(Mrs. White)
Arielle Aslinger	(Miss Gault)	LaValle Lenoir	(Mrs. Marohn)
Kenneth Batto Pham	(Mrs. Knudson)	Michelle Meng	(Mr. Liebow)
Matt Bender	(Miss Clarkson)	Thomas Monteforte	(Mr. Vespi)
Sara Bilich	(Mr. Erbez)	Trang Nguyen	(Mr. Cooley)
Arianna Butler	(Mrs. Schluntz)	Brittany Norris	(Mrs. Svoboda/Gross)
Madisen Carrier	(Ms. Mirando)	Kylie Ortega	(Miss Myers)
Jessica Catson	(Mr. Cepeda)	Collin Oslund	(Ms. Phillips)
Laura Chow	(Mrs Barks)	Kimberly Pagano	(Ms. Charles)
Billy Colston	(Mrs. Nair)	John Pricco	(Mr. Bellomo)
Cameron Coy	(Mr. Reeves)	Cassidy Quilalang	(Mrs. Irvin)
Stefano DeNardi	(Mr. Munson)	Camden Reynolds	(Miss Martin)
Amanda Emery	(Mrs. Hegarty)	Madison Ricks	(Mrs. Marchese)
Bella Erhard	(Miss Ciriaco)	Brandi Rinne	(Mrs. Shivitz)
Harry Fiebelman	(Mrs. Rowland)	Devin Rocha	(Mrs. Kontilis)
Katherine Flom	(Mrs. James)	Makaala Santos	(Miss Meredith)
Jake Furrer	(Ms. Huff)	Alexander Scocci	(Mrs. Locke)
Elara Gillum	(Mrs. Rosenberg)	Haley Shade	(Mrs. Johnston)
Alexander Guesnon	(Mrs. Moore)	Brooke Slanec	(Miss deSilva)
Christy Hong	(Mrs. Loughery)	Sabrina van Raalte	(Miss Pappas)
Justin Hughs	(Miss Krummes)	Victor Wu	(Mr. Boyd)