

Pine Valley Middle School - A California Distinguished School



PUMA NEWS

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A publication of Pine Valley PTA

Jason Law, Principal

Collette Ricks, PTA President

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Inside this Issue:

- [President's Message](#)
- [Principal's Message](#)
- [PVEF Message](#)
- [Student of the Month Program](#)
- [Reflections Program](#)
- [Magazine Sale](#)
- [Staff Appreciation](#)
- [Thanks Registration Volunteers](#)
- [Impact of Nutrition on Body & Brain - Special Needs Program](#)
- [City of SR Programs for Teens](#)

Dates to Note:

Date	Event
Sept. 4	Back to School Night - gather in the new courtyard at 6:30pm, classroom visits begin at 7pm
Sept. 8	PTA Meeting, 7 pm in the school library
Sept. 9	Magazine Sale kick-off
Sept. 11	School Loop training for parents, 7 pm in the school library
Sept. 17	Magazine Sale Turn-in Date #1 Pine Valley Ed. Fund meeting, 7 pm in the school library
Sept. 19	Magazine Sale Turn-in Date #2
Sept. 22	Impact of Nutrition on the Body & Brain Functioning, PTA Special Needs Program, 7-9 pm at Iron Horse MS
Sept. 24	Dedication Ceremony, 6:30 pm
Sept. 25	Magazine Sale Turn-in Date #3

President's Message - by Collette Ricks & Lani Bari

On behalf of the new 2008-2009 Pine Valley Middle School PTA board, we would like to introduce ourselves. As your President (Collette Ricks) and Executive Vice President (Lani Bari), we welcome you to not only the new school year, but our new school! We want you to know that there are many ways for you to be involved at Pine Valley. For example, included in this newsletter you will find some volunteer opportunities that you may be interested in. A quick email to collettericks@comcast.net is all you need to get involved. The majority of the positions on our 2008-2009 PTA board have been filled. However, we are still looking to fill the following positions on the PTA board:

- Dance Coordinator
- Yearbook Liaison
- Registration Chairperson - 2009

Our school benefits greatly from any small difference you can make by volunteering some time. The time you volunteer can be as much or as little as you have to give. Please keep in mind that you can grab a friend and take on a position together. You will always have support from the PTA board; you won't be left to go it alone.

Volunteers have already been hard at work helping to kick off the new school year smoothly. We would like to thank our many volunteers that helped with registration packet pick-up & walk through registration. Special thanks to Laurel Fagenson for all of her time & hard work she spent while overseeing registration activities. Thanks also to Teresa DeHope and her helpers for organizing the "Welcome Back Breakfast" for the Pine Valley staff, which took place the Friday before school started.

Thanks to all of you that joined PTA during registration. If you would still like to join, you can do so at the office (single membership - \$10, family membership - \$15). Our first general PTA meeting will take place on Monday, September 8th at 7:00pm in the school library. These meetings are open to everyone. We welcome you to come and find out what is going on at your child(ren)'s school. Come hear the latest from our principal, Jason Law, in addition to updates on other school events.

PTA's major fundraiser of the year is coming up. Please look for magazine sales information that will be sent home with your child on Tuesday, September 9. Money raised from the sale supports programs such as: technology upgrades, classroom grants, and student enrichment assemblies. These programs are counting on your support. If you would like to volunteer assisting with this fundraiser, please contact Elaina Jurecki at ejurecki@att.net or Dawn McQuiston at dawnmcq@sbcglobal.net.

Lastly, please plan to attend Pine Valley's back-to-school night. It will be held on Thursday, September 4th starting at 6:30pm in the new courtyard around the outdoor stage. If you have any questions, feel free to contact either one of us. We can also give you more details on job descriptions of our open positions.

Thank you,

Collette Ricks

collettericks@comcast.net

Lani Bari

lanibari@comcast.net

Principal's Message - by Jason Law

Our two worlds have merged... We have been dealing with construction all summer and now the students are finally back. What a beautiful sight! Though we have a few construction items left to finish, I am pleased to say that the campus looks phenomenal and is a safe place to come to school. Sixth, seventh, and eighth graders alike... not to mention the teachers, were all in the same boat the first week. All had their heads down and campus maps out as they familiarized themselves with the new campus. I have to be honest... I too don't leave my office without checking my map first. Daily, I find new routes to my destinations.

Though students are eating daily in the MPR (Multi-Purpose Room), it is still being worked on by construction crews during non-school hours. The most visible construction project is at the front of the school, where crews are still working on our formal entry. I have been told, though they hesitate to promise, that construction will be concluded by our **Dedication Ceremony on September 24 at 6:30 p.m.** Please plan to join us for the ceremony, refreshments, and tours. It will be our opportunity to thank and formally show off our new and improved Pine Valley Middle School campus to the community, responsible for building us such a great place to educate students.

The first few days of school have been extremely fulfilling. The positive energy and attitudes from students and staff make this new environment an optimal place for learning. The teachers should be applauded for all of the amazing work they did to get their classes above and beyond ready. As we get into "the grind" of our regular days, we need to remember and appreciate these first days. We are starting something very special here at Pine Valley and have to remind ourselves that a school year is more of a marathon than a hundred yard dash. Families, staff, students... the entire Puma community will need to support each other along the way.

Please join us at Back to School Night Thursday, September 4. I know it's early this year, but it serves a purpose by allowing parents and teachers to put faces to names and discuss expectations for the year. We will gather at 6:30 in the new courtyard around the new outdoor stage. As you can imagine, School Loop will be a tremendous communication tool for all. For those of you not familiar with it, we will be having a training session for it in the library on Thursday, September 11 at 7:00 p.m.

On Tuesday, September 2, administrators and counselors spoke with students in our annual "Class Meeting" address. A presentation was made that outlined the Pine Valley rules and regulations and our expectations of student behavior. The meeting also allowed us to address the support systems in place here at Pine Valley to help students succeed. If you have not already done so, with your student, please take the time to go over their student handbook. It is a resource for the school rules and expectations to which students will be held accountable. Please highlight the section on cyber-bullying and harassment. With the social computer networks of MySpace and FaceBook so prevalent, responsible behavior needs to be discussed with your student.

Again, the first few days have been amazing! Talking to parents and students has been so rewarding. Everyone has been so warm and welcoming, and I look forward to meeting more of you. I also want to take this opportunity to thank all of you in supporting our Spirit T-Shirt recall. It was an insensitive mistake on our part, and we will use this example as a "teaching moment" to talk about the power of symbols. The new shirts have been ordered and will be here soon.

I have seen preliminary numbers of our STAR scores (standardized tests) from the Spring. You will be very proud of our progress. We are seeing substantial growth. More on that next month when our new API number is released.

Always feel free to share your thoughts and concerns. I am proud to be your principal.

Pine Valley Education Fund Message - by Terry Monday

The Pine Valley Education Fund wants to say thanks to all the generous parents who responded to our Spring Early Donation Drive and Fall Registration Drive. A special congratulations goes to the family of 8th grader Steven Trinh, who won the laptop computer awarded during our spring donation drive; and to Gabriela Dragomir, who won the basket of Clorox products given away at Fall Registration!

They are among the more than 400 Pine Valley families that have donated something to the PVEF at this point. Because every student in the school benefits from the reduced class size and full-time technology aide provided by the fund, we assume all parents want to contribute to the cause in some way. For those who are financially able to help, we now offer the convenience of a secure donation website <http://pvef.revtrak.net> so your tax-deductible donations can be made at any time! Checks can be mailed to PVEF at 9110-B Alcosta Blvd. #210, San Ramon, CA 94583. To meet our goal for the year, we need to hear from the rest of you who told us at Registration that you were planning to donate "later" or "on-line."

For all Pine Valley families and especially those struggling financially, there are lots of ways to help PVEF that don't cost any additional money. One of the most productive is to register with the eScrip program by going to www.escrip.com. eScrip gives PVEF a rebate for money you spend at Safeway with your Safeway club card, or on your Macy's card and other credit cards and debit cards that you register with eScrip. It also has rebates on other local businesses (such as Big Five, PayLess, and Baja Fresh), and a long list of on-line merchants that provide rebates.

Even if you don't shop at Safeway, it pays to register at eScrip. In the twelve months from April 2007 to March 2008, eScrip earned our group about \$6000. With participation by ALL Pine Valley families, we could easily

increase that amount by tenfold or more. It only takes one visit a year to the eScrip website, costs you nothing, and yields big benefits for the school.

Other grocery stores offer their own rebate programs. You can request a Shares Card if you shop at Lucky's or a Quality of Life Card if you shop at Nob Hill or Raley's by dropping an email to our grocery program coordinator, Julie Graham at Julie@CruisePlannersCA.com. Please include your name and address. As a simple rule of thumb, don't buy groceries without using one of the store cards on which you have designated Pine Valley as the recipient of the rebate.

Beyond your financial help, we need people to join the PVEF Board. Because students are only in our school for three years, we have frequent turnover on key positions and we need new members to carry on our business. Our first meeting is Wednesday, September 17 at Pine Valley. Come to the meeting or contact Terry Monday at terrymonday@comcast.net if you are interested.

Student of the Month – by Shannon Maser & Wendy Pomeroy

The Pine Valley Student of the Month program honors students who exemplify the Life Skill being focused on each month. Pine Valley staff members may select one of their students from among all their classes each month. The selected students are rewarded with a professional photograph and an ice cream sundae during their lunch break on a pre-determined day of the month and recognized in the next newsletter. This program is sponsored and supported by the PTA. The focused life skill for each month is as follows:

September	Cooperation	January	Friendship
October	Organization	March	Effort
November	Respect	April	Sense of Humor
December	Responsibility	May	Perseverance

Magazine Sale Begins Sept. 9 – by Elaina Jurecki & Dawn McQuiston

The magazine sale is the only fundraiser to support Pine Valley's PTA, so we really count on everyone's participation. Funds raised from the sale supports programs that benefit all our students, such as technology upgrades, classroom grants, and student enrichment assemblies. Orders can be made on the paper forms or online which make it easy for friends and family to renew their subscriptions on behalf of Pine Valley. So encourage them to renew favorites and perhaps try some new ones. Students may turn-in their order forms or online receipts for prizes on any or all of the turn-in dates: Sept. 17, 19, or 25, before school. More volunteers to help with collection and tallying would be greatly appreciated! Please contact either of the chairmen at ejurecki@att.net or dawnmcq@sbcglobal.net, if you'd like to help.

Reflections Fine Arts Program – by Yukiko Egawa

The Reflections Program Theme is "Wow!" Each student may enter in any of the six art areas: Literature, Musical Composition, Photography, Visual Arts, Dance Choreography and Video/Film Production. For more information, go to www.capta.org/sections/programs/reflections.cfm. The deadline to submit art work will be in mid October. If you have any questions, please e-mail me at eyukikosr@hotmail.com.

Staff Appreciation Breakfast – by Teresa DeHope

To help start the new school year off on an even more positive note, the PV PTA hosted a breakfast on Friday, August 22 for all teachers and staff on their work day. I coordinated the event, but I want to thank the various women who helped make the breakfast such a success by bringing and making food, setting up, serving, and cleaning up. Thank you Barbara Goodson, Laura Haworth, Kristen Holbrook, Christine Kramer, Shannon Maser,

Collette Ricks, Tara Schenk, Vicki Sigl, and Laura Stange. A special thanks is extended to Annamarie Day who doesn't even have a student currently at Pine Valley! (One of her children attended last year and her youngest will arrive next year.) I would also be remiss if I didn't thank three eighth grade boys who lent their muscles to helping cart waters, ice, and other heavy items to the site: Lewis DeHope, Blake Guardino, and Shane Haley.

Everyone who attended was so appreciative of our efforts. We're already starting to plan the next event (a luncheon in mid-October) and could use more willing helpers!! Please contact me if you'd like to be included: tdehope@gmail.com

Thank you Registration Volunteers!

Thank you to the following volunteers for helping with packet pick-up and/or walk-through registration! We could not do it without you. We had several students helping us out, too! If you helped out, and we somehow forgot to list your name, we apologize in advance. Thankfully, we have so many volunteers; it's not easy to keep track of all of you. Thank you again for all of your help.

Marcy Abrahams	Rebecca Esperza	Melody Kelly	Cynthia Pontrelli
Dana Abrams	Amanda Fagenson	Tama Klaif	Anjali Rawat
Krysti Adams-Hart	Laurel Fagenson	Christine Kramer	Isabella Reyburn
Mena Anderson	Lisa Gibson	Soraya Kriston	Collette Ricks
Vidhya Balaji	Sharon Gilbreth	Cindy Krutilla	Madison Ricks
Lani Bari	Devon Haley	Diana Lance James	Kim Rinne
Barbara Barner	Ally Hansen	Jason Law	Sharon Rowenhorst
Beth Beadle	Kent Hansen	Jeanne Lowe	Surekha Schimberg
Christie Bru	Renee Hansen	Mindy Maciey	Mary Shiffer
Lori Cade	Elizabeth Harris	Sheila Madrieres	Joyce Smith
Lynda Canales	Laura Haworth	Stacey Marchuk	Ira Soeherman
Jennifer Chan	Lynn Heinz	Michelle McQuiston	Raji Subash
Debbie Counts	Kristen Holbrook	Dawn McQuiston	Vicki Suoja
Janelle Counts	Amanda Jensen	Libby Pacheco	Alexandra Tran
Kailey Counts	Judy Jensen	Jigisha Patel	Thu Tran
Mary Cummings	Chris Johnson	Nicole Peters	Liza Vivar
Darcy D'Amore	Debbie Johnson	Cathy Pettinicchi	Betsy Weber
Austin Downum	Hannah Johnson	Olivia Pomeroy	Denise Zierott
Glenda Downum	Sandy Jow	Wendy Pomeroy	Madison Zierott

Impact of Nutrition on Body and Brain Functioning - by PTA Special Needs Committee

Wednesday, September 24, 2008 from 7-9 PM at Iron Horse Middle School.

Have you ever wondered if your child's behavior is affected by what (s)he eats? Pam McDonald, board certified Nurse Practitioner, will discuss nutrition and how it may impact your child's behavior and well-being. Topics covered include food coloring, artificial preservatives and additives, and the gluten-free/casein-free (GF/CF) diet. To view the flyer, [click here](#). To register to attend, [click here](#).

Programs for Teens - by Adam Chow, City of San Ramon

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 to introduce new 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. We are very excited to offer this new program. For more information on registration, fees and policies please visit www.SRTeen.org or call Adam Chow at 973-3362. Registration is now open!

Programs & Classes

Middle School Team Tennis - Thursdays starting September 25

The first two meetings of the session are drills and strategy to prepare the team for competition. The remaining meetings of the course are competition. The Iron Horse team will compete against a combined Pine Valley/Windemere Ranch/Gale Ranch Team! The program is for all levels as participants will be grouped by skill levels. ACT#56083 and 56084

Public Speaking & Speech - Mondays starting September 29

Success in school, business and life many times depends upon the ability to express oneself with confidence and clarity. Students will have the opportunity to improve and enhance their communication skills in a friendly, individual atmosphere. Students will learn the fundamentals of public speaking through a variety of speech activities designed to build confidence and self-esteem. Open to grades 6th-9th. ACT#56085

Jazz/Hip Hop Dance - Wednesdays starting October 3

In the Jazz/Hip-Hop class, students will learn the basics of Jazz and Hip-Hop styles of dance. The class will include a warm-up, stretching and strengthening exercises, along with traveling across the floor. As the students' vocabulary increases, they will learn combinations incorporating the movements learned in class. In addition, the student will learn the latest moves of the most popular street dance today, hip-hop. ACT#56080

Cartoon Drawing - Thursdays starting October 2

Ever wonder how artist create cartoon characters? We'll take a closer look and break down how to tell a story with gestures, character development and conceptual design through the wonderful world of cartoons. Supply list will be provided. ACT#56031

Upcoming Events

Middle School Halloween Dance (October 24)

The Halloween Dance will be on October 24th from 6:00-9:00 p.m. at the San Ramon Community Center. Tickets will be sold during lunch in October. Tickets will be \$6 if bought in advance or \$7 at the door (if available). A permission form is required to be signed by parents for students to attend. Visit www.SRTeen.org for more information.

Overnight Lock-In (December 5-6)

We will be having an Overnight Lock-in from December 5-6 from 8:00pm-8:00am at the San Ramon Community Center. This new event will feature tons of activities, contests, movies, sports, crafts, food and more. More information and tickets will be available in November.