

Pine Valley Middle School - A California Distinguished School



PUMA NEWS

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2009

A publication of Pine Valley PTA

Jason Law, Principal

Kristen Holbrook, PTA President

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Dates to Note:

Date	Event
Sept. 3	Back to School Night - begins in the courtyard at 6:40pm sharp. (Parents: bring your Homework!)
Sept. 8	PVEF donations/commitments needed by this date
Sept. 14	PTA Meeting, 6:30pm in the school library
Sept. 15	Magazine Sale kick-off
Sept. 18	Deadline to submit advertising in PV directory
Sept. 23	Magazine Sale Turn-in Date #1
Sept. 25	Magazine Sale Turn-in Date #2
Sept. 23	<i>All Kids are Our Kids</i> community-wide event, 7pm at SRVHS Performing Arts Center/Commons
Sept. 30	Magazine Sale Turn-in Date #3 <i>Welcome to Special Education, Special Needs Program</i> , 7pm at Iron Horse MS

President's Message - by Kristen Holbrook & Lani Bari

Hello! On behalf of our new 2009-2010 Pine Valley Middle School PTA board, we would like to introduce ourselves! As your president, (Kristen Holbrook) and Executive Vice President (Lani Bari), we welcome you to a new school year! There are so many ways to be involved at Pine Valley, and we welcome anyone who would like to help! From dances to fundraisers, we can always use a willing volunteer! Please contact Kristen Holbrook at k10holbrook@hotmail.com to get involved! No amount of help is too small. We need you!!

Many volunteers have already been hard at work, helping the new school year start off smoothly. Thank you to the many volunteers who helped with registration packet pick up and walk through registration. I would especially like to thank Lani Bari, who spent countless hours organizing and overseeing registration. Thank you also to Soraya Kriston and her helpers for organizing the "Welcome Back Breakfast" for the staff. We are off to a great start!

Thanks to all of you who joined PTA during registration. It's not too late to join! Membership is \$10 for a single membership, or \$15 per family. Our first general PTA meeting will take place on Monday, Sept. 14th at 6:30 pm in the school library. These meetings are open to everyone, and we invite you to attend!

PTA's major fundraiser of the year is coming up. Please look for magazine sales information that will be sent home with your child soon! Money raised from the magazine sales supports programs such as: technology upgrades, classroom grants, and student enrichment assemblies. We need your support to make these programs successful!

I am so happy to have a child at Pine Valley, and to be part of such a wonderful community. Thank you all for helping make our school such an amazing place for our children!

Thank you,

Kristen Holbrook

K10holbrook@hotmail.com

Lani Bari

lanibari@comcast.net

Principal's Message – by Jason Law

I greeted you in August with a Lyris message welcoming everybody to what I hope will be an amazing new school year. Already having the first week to reflect upon, I am filled with optimism as I have seen students and staff excited to return. Scheduling issues have been settled and for the most part, we have received most of the student support materials.

Like I mentioned in August, I have been especially interested in watching the transition of our new sixth graders into middle school. They are slowly figuring out their routines and adjusting to their new- more complicated system of school. After visiting many of their Core classes and visiting them at lunch, they are going to be an excellent addition to the Puma Community. I cannot express to you how excited I am. They really are a special group of young people. As promised, I spoke to the sixth grade teachers to remind them of the extra "TLC" required with our new Pumas. I was greeted with many nodding heads from nurturing individuals who are grateful to teach this special level of student. Please email me with concerns your child may be having. I really want them to get off to a great start!

I would be remiss if I did not bring up the topic of TRAFFIX. First, let me thank all of you for your patience as the program has made its debut. I know the first few days were troublesome, but I am extremely happy at how well the program has handled the difficult issues that have developed for a program just beginning. As the program gains momentum and continues to relieve traffic around our campus, I ask for your continued patience. Ridership is growing as students see that their friends are participating. Preliminary reports have 25-30% of our students participating! Remarkable! Contact RideTRAFFIX.com for more information.

As we patiently wait for the TRAFFIX program to get up to speed, I do want to once again remind parents of our newly implemented drop-off and pick-up procedures. For safety reasons, we want to avoid cars and busses dropping students off and/or picking them up at the same time and in the same place. Since busses will always be picking up and dropping students off in the front driveway of Pine Valley, whenever at all possible, we are asking parents to drop-off and pick-up students in the back parking lot (off Broadmoor). The front driveway (off Pine Valley Road) will not be open for morning drop-off until all busses have come and gone. Please take note that there will be no student pick-up in the front driveway when school lets out at 2:30. The 10 busses will all be staged in the front driveway waiting for school to let out and we do not want students walking in front of busses to get to cars. If you plan on picking up your student, please make arrangements to do so in the back parking lot. Again, all of these new procedures may not be permanent as we figure things out, but please know that they are initiated with student safety in mind. This summer, the configuration of the back parking lot was slightly changed to give students a safer path onto/off campus and out of the way of traffic. With more students on

busses and fewer parents dropping students off, as well as fewer kids walking unsafely across the back parking lot, we hope to streamline everybody's morning and afternoon. Thank you for your help.

By now, parents should have received their student's STAR scores in the mail. I have seen scores, as well. Like me, you will be astonished with the accomplishments of our students and our staff. Scores were up across the board. I will provide some specific statistics next month when we receive the school's official Academic Performance Index (API) score, but I am anticipating another substantial jump. In short, you send your kids to a pretty incredible school!

I look forward to seeing you at Back to School Night on Thursday, September 3. It will begin sharply at 6:40 pm in the Courtyard. Late last week you were emailed a blank copy of a student schedule and a school map. Make sure you download them and sit with your child to get an accurate list of teachers, classes, and room numbers to bring with you. In other words, *"Don't forget your homework!"*

As always, please feel free to call or email with questions, comments, or concerns. I always appreciate the input. Please continue to check www.PumaPride.org for the latest Pine Valley information. I look forward to a wonderful year!

Pine Valley Ed Fund Call to Action - by PVEF Board

Attention Parents: The Pine Valley Education Fund is in a serious position this year, which could have consequences on your child's class schedule. Each spring, the Ed Fund commits to fund classes in addition to what the district funds. Spreading the student body among more classes allows each class to have fewer students. PVEF's funding commitment is based on our experience in previous years and expectations about parent contributions. Last spring, based on previous experience, we committed to funding 10 sections at approximately \$14,000 per section.

Unfortunately, the donations that have come in so far are well below our expectation and are not sufficient for the Ed Fund to support all the additional sections as promised. This shortfall is mostly due to lack of participation, with only 39% of our families contributing any amount. This is well below the historical level of participation. The master schedule was built based on the assumption that these sections would be funded by parent donations. **If we do not receive more parent support, it is likely that classes will need to be collapsed, resulting in larger CORE classes and schedule changes for some students.** Not funding these sections will force the administration to make very difficult decisions regarding class placements.

We can avoid causing upheaval in the school if each family participates. If you have not yet donated to the fund, please return your donation form within the next week. While \$275 is the suggested donation, any amount will help. Payments can be mailed to PVEF at the school address (3000 Pine Valley Road) or turned in at the office. We will also be collecting at Back-to-School Night, and payments can be made on-line through our website, <http://pvef.revtrak.net>. If you want to pledge to have installment payments made on your Visa or Mastercard, please email Colleen Mazza at colleenmaz@hotmail.com.

Thank you to the 39% of parents who have already donated to the Ed Fund. We need to hear from the rest of you by Tuesday, September 8 with your pledge or your donation or we will be forced to make some hard choices that will affect your child.

Counselor's Corner - by Julie Damgen

Welcome back Puma Families! I am so excited to return for another year as your counselor for the 2009-10 school year. This year is already off to a quick start, and I would like to inform you of the counseling services we have available here at Pine Valley. Please contact me at jdampen@srvusd.net if you are interested in any of the following services, or if you would like more information about them.

- Counseling through the Discovery Center's SCIP program
- Individual and group counseling services
- TAG (Teen Activities Group) SR Parks & Community Services, Tuesdays @ PV
- [Creating Lasting Connections Group](#) by the Discovery Counseling Center, Thursdays after school @ PV

Advertising Opportunities in PV Directory – by Jeanne Lowe

Here's a great chance to have your business featured in the upcoming Pine Valley 2009-2010 School Directory! Hurry! The deadline for accepting advertisements is September 18, 2009.

Advertisement Rates (black & white only):

Business card (3 ½ w x 2" h)	\$50
Half Page (5 ½ "w x 4 ¼" h)	\$75
Full Page (5 ½" w x 8 ½" h)	\$150

Please email your advertising information to Jeanne Lowe at jhlowe@comcast.net. Alternatively turn in your business card or a hard copy of your information, along with your payment, to the school office or mail it to Pine Valley Middle School PTA, 3000 Pine Valley Rd., San Ramon, CA 94583, Attn: Jeanne Lowe. Make checks payable to *Pine Valley PTA*. Questions? Contact Jeanne Lowe at jhlowe@comcast.net or call (925) 803-1290.

Magazine Sale Begins Sept. 15 – by Dawn McQuiston

PTA's only fundraiser of the year is just around the corner!! Start saving your renewals and any discount coupons for subscription purchases!! We will also be looking for volunteers to help hand out prizes and tally orders. Please contact Dawn McQuiston, dawnmcq@sbcglobal.net or Nancy Steiger, cheezaz@yahoo.com, if you are interested in volunteering! More information with dates, etc. will be coming soon!

There's Still Time to Join the PV PTA – by Jeanne Lowe

Be a partner with the Pine Valley School teacher and parent community and join the PTA. Family memberships are \$15, and single memberships are \$10. Your membership includes the Pine Valley School Directory. Contact the school office or Jeanne Lowe at jhlowe@comcast.net for more information.

Students of the Month Program – by Wendy Pomeroy

The Pine Valley Students 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	Responsibility	February	Integrity
October	Sense of Humor	March	Respect
November/December	Organization	April	Cooperation
January	Effort	May	Friendship

Box Tops for Education- Melinna Gershik

Welcome back to school! For those who are new, welcome to Pine Valley where you have another opportunity to collect Box Tops for Education; this program is for all schools, not just elementary schools! Last year we raised nearly \$500 for Pine Valley through this program and our goal this year is to double that. The Box Tops for

Education Clip program is another easy way to earn cash for Pine Valley every time you buy groceries. The Clip program has three easy steps:

Clip Box Tops Coupons from Participating Products

Save Box Tops coupons from hundreds of General Mills products throughout the grocery store. You'll find Box Tops on many of your favorite brands that you use every day. For example, Box Tops can be found on Ziploc bags, General Mills cereals, Cottonelle toilet paper, and many, many more products. The entire list can be found here:

<http://www.boxtops4education.com/AllAboutBoxTops/products.aspx>

Send Your Box Tops Coupons to School

Turn in your Box Tops coupons to the box in the library. Our school will collect submitted Box Tops and send them to General Mills.

Our School Gets a Check

General Mills will send our school a check worth 10¢ for each Box Tops coupon redeemed—each school can earn a maximum of \$20,000 annually.

If you have any questions, please email me at pinevalleyboxtops@yahoo.com.

Register for eScrip - by Monste Barr

There are additional ways to help PVEF that don't cost any additional money. One of the most productive is to register with the eScrip program. It's as easy as 1, 2, 3:

1. Log on to www.escrip.com
2. Register your cards
3. Swipe at participating locations and let the change roll in.

Every dollar counts, and the more families we have registered, the more funds we raise.

Thank you Registration Volunteers! - by Lani Bari

Thank you to everyone who helped with walk-through registration and packet pick-up! We couldn't do it without you!

Qrysti Adams-Hart	Barbara Gray	Phyllis Looney	Wendy Pomeroy
Kathy Alexander	Elizabeth Harris	Jeanne Lowe	Cathy Pontrelli
Vidhya Balaji	Kristin Holbrook	Sheila Madreires	Deanna Quilalang
Beth Beadle	Denise Huey	Stacy Marchuk	Kathy Ramsey
Cristina Boa	Jenny Jensen	Barbara Martin	Anjali Rawat
Chris Brady	Judy Jensen	Suzy McCreary	Collette Ricks
Marta Castañeda	Linda Joe	Dawn McQuiston	Surekha Schimberg
Belinda Castillo	Sandy Jow	Jaclyn McQuiston	Suzie Shepard
Jessica Correa	Melody Kelly	Antoinette Mendence	Vicki Sigl
Glenda Downum	Tama Kleif	Nicole Peters	Julie Sorce
Yukiko Egawa	Soraya Kriston	Cathy Pettinicchi	Vicki Suoja
Kathy Fong	Kelly Larsen	Anne Phillips	Phyllis Trieu-Ko
Melinna Gershik	Jason Law	Kim Piechalski	Sarah Tully
Sharon Gilbreth	Anaite Letona	Raji Pingali	Betsy Weber

Staff Appreciation Breakfast - by Soraya Kriston

I hope everyone had a great first week at school. Thanks to our terrific volunteers and PTA, I'm happy to report we had a wonderful breakfast for our Teachers/Staff on Monday August 24. Our teachers, staff, and

administrators were very thankful and appreciative of everything. A big thank you goes to the following ladies for donating delicious food:

Michelle Chilson
Beth Beadle
Nicole Peters
Lori Ferreyra

Laura Haworth
Lynn Heinz
Kathy Gyulai
Suzie Shepard

Staci Evans
Brenda Seeto

I also would like to thank all the volunteers that signed up to help out this year with future Teacher/Staff appreciation events. Your help and support is very much needed and valued. I will be contacting you for your help with future appreciation events.

Congrats to Service Awards Honorees – by Cindy Fischer

Congratulations to the recipients of the PTA Honorary Service Awards for the 2008/2009 school year:

Tracy Schluntz - Very Special Person Award
Lori Cade - Honorary Service Award
Lani Bari - Honorary Service Award
Collette Ricks - Continuing Service Award

Pine Valley PTA values the work of our numerous volunteers and staff members. Each year we honor 3-5 individuals at our final meeting of the year by participating in the CAPTA Honorary Service Awards program. I will be seeking nominations in the February/March timeframes - please watch for the announcement in the monthly newsletter.

All Kids are Our Kids Community-wide Events –

submitted by Collette Ricks

"*All Kids are Our Kids*" is an initiative organized by the San Ramon Valley Coalition for Youth Safety and Development and San Ramon Valley High School and California High School EPIC Healthy Choices Programs. Our kick-off events with Dr. Peter Benson, President and CEO, The Search Institute, will share our vision for the "*All Kids...*" community. Dr. Benson will present insights on how business and community leaders, teachers, parents and others, can partner in parenting, mentoring, employing, coaching and teaching our young people, helping each student reach his and her full potential, using the *40 Developmental Assets* framework.

Two initial community presentations are planned: the **Community Presentation** on Wednesday, September 23 at 7pm is designed for parents and students, and the **Community Partnership Symposium** for business and community leaders, school district and site staff, youth/family focused non-profits and faith-based leaders, etc. is on Thursday, September 24 at 7:30am. Each event is designed to **share the vision** for partnership, offer ideas for implementation, and provide time for questions and discussion. For more information about the community presentation, [please follow this link](#).

Welcome to Special Education- by PTA Special Needs Committee

Wednesday, September 30, 2009 from 7-9 PM in the Iron Horse Middle School Multipurpose Room

Have you ever wondered what the roles of the different special education groups are in the SRVUSD? What steps you can take if you're concerned about your child's educational progress? How a student becomes eligible for special education?

The answers to these questions and more will be answered at this event, so you won't want to miss it! After an overview by special education groups that offer education and support for special needs students in our community, we will break into smaller groups by school age so you can get all your questions answered.

[View the flyer](#) for this event. To register, [click here](#). Registration ensures enough handouts. For more information, please contact Kristin Chen (kecnorway@comcast.net).

San Ramon Library Programs – by Nancy Kreiser

Stan Lee Superhero Party

Friday, September 25, 6:00 pm at the San Ramon Library

What do Iron Man, Spiderman, the X-Men, Daredevil, the Incredible Hulk, and the Fantastic Four have in common? They were all created by Stan Lee! The San Ramon Library is inviting all teens to come help us celebrate National Comic Book Day, September 25, when we will be honoring this Father of Modern Comics! There will be a comic book exchange (bring something to trade), trivia games, superhero activities, and snacks! We will also be showing a film based on Stan Lee's characters. "Excelsior!"

Contra Costa County Library presents 3 good reasons to be online after school:

[HelpNow](#) online free homework help in:

Math: Pre-Algebra, Algebra I & II, Geometry, Trigonometry, and Calculus

Science: Biology, chemistry, physics, and earth science

Social Studies: US and World History

Foreign languages: Fluent foreign language tutors

English/Language Arts: live writing help and 24-hour feedback on written assignments

[Library Databases](#) = A+ papers!

Student Resource Center... Opposing Viewpoints... Biography Resource Center... History Resource Center: US & World... Science Resource Center... Virtual Reference Library: Encyclopedias on subjects such as the Arts, Biography, Business, Education, History, Medicine, Multicultural Studies, Religion and Philosophy, Science and Social Science.

[Downloadable Media](#)

Free audiobooks for your iPod, free ebooks to download to Mac and PC. Hook up at ccclib.org.

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

The City of San Ramon Parks & Community Services Department offers a variety of programs, classes and events. Visit our teen website, 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.

Upcoming Programs

Babysitting for Beginners

The class you have been looking for to develop all the skills needed to be a trusted and responsible babysitter. Learn about child development, bedtime strategies, discipline, how to get jobs, and ways to make babysitting fun for you and the kids. Basic first aid, general safety, and what to do in an emergency will also be covered.

Grades 6 - 8, 4 Classes \$60(R)/\$75(N), Wed 10/14 - 11/4, 2:45 - 4:15pm, Act# 63236

Hip Hop Dance

Come get your groove on! The class will include a warm-up, stretching and strengthening exercises and the latest moves of the most popular street dance today, hip-hop. Popular, age-appropriate music will be used. Please wear comfortable/stretchy clothing and tennis shoes, no jeans.

Grades 6 - 8, 5 Classes \$45(R)/\$56(N), Wed 9/23 - 10/21, 2:40 - 3:25pm, Act# 64192

Upcoming Events

Middle School Halloween Dance

Put on your Halloween costume and come have a howling good time at the Halloween Middle School Dance. All 6th, 7th, and 8th graders with a valid school ID are invited to attend this fun event. Tickets will be sold for \$7 at our middle school Teen Centers and San Ramon Community Center beginning October 19. Tickets will only be sold at the door if available for \$10. The last dance sold-out so get your tickets early! Visit www.SRTeen.org for dress code and parental permission form.

Grades 6 - 8, \$7 in advance/\$10 at the door, Community Center at Central Park, Fri 10/30, 6:00 - 9:00pm

Visit [SRTeen.org](http://www.SRTeen.org)

Visit San Ramon's all new website, www.SRTeen.org, to get information on teen events, concert information, classes, and other programs. At [SRTeen.org](http://www.SRTeen.org) you can sign up for email updates and participate in contests that can make teens eligible for free prizes and discounts on programs and events. Check out www.SRTeen.org to get the 411 on teen programs.

Join "Quest" at Pine Valley Middle School!

Quest is part of the Youth Resource Program, which promotes viable life skills among young people in our community through recreation activities, community service opportunities, counseling programs, and skill development at San Ramon middle schools. The City of San Ramon partners with the San Ramon Valley Unified School District and the San Ramon Police Department to provide a positive, safe environment for students. Each session meets once a week for a four-week curriculum after school. Various subjects are introduced to promote positive choices. The following "Quest" courses will be offered at Pine Valley this quarter. Each session cost \$35. For more information [view the flyer](#) or call Delores Pita at 925-973-3373. To sign up, call 973-2300. Space is limited.

- **Organizing, Planning and Developing Effective Study Habits**

Learn organizational and planning methods that can be used at home, work, and in school.

Tues 9/15 - 10/6, 2:45 - 4:45 pm in Room P2, Act# 63446

- **Managing Stress and Pressure**

Discover how to evaluate your different levels of stress, and how positive stress management skills can be utilized with the pressures of school, home, and everyday life.

Tues 11/17 - 12/15, 2:45 - 4:45 pm in Room P2, (no class on Tuesday, Nov. 24th) Act# 63450