

Pine Valley Middle School - A California Distinguished School



PUMA NEWS

October

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A publication of Pine Valley PTA

Jason Law, Principal

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Dates to Note:

Date	Event
Oct. 1	CA 15 th Assembly District Candidates' Forum, 7-8:30 pm at Iron Horse M.S. MPR, sponsored by SRV Council PTA and League of Women Voters
Oct. 3	Staff Development Day - No school for students
Oct. 6-10	Conference Week - students dismissed at 11:35.
Oct. 6	PTA Meeting, 7 pm in the Library
Oct. 7	Your Child's Learning Styles, Parent/Community Education Program, 7-9 pm at Iron Horse M.S. MPR
Oct. 14	Fine Forgiveness Read-Ins at the Dougherty Station Library (see article for details)
Oct. 17	Deadline to turn in Reflections entries
Oct. 18	Fine Forgiveness Read-In at San Ramon Library
Oct. 18	Adina's Deck, Cyber Bullying awareness event for parents & students (gr. 6-12) 3 pm at SR Library
Oct. 19	Primo's Run for Education
Oct. 20-25	Red Ribbon Week at Pine Valley
Oct. 22	Welcome to Special Education, PTA Special Needs Program, 7-9 pm at Iron Horse MPR
Oct. 24	7 th & 8 th grade dance, 7-9pm in the MPR/courtyard. Tickets (\$6) will be on sale Tues.-Fri. that week at the Student Store, during lunch and 2:45-3:00pm. Refreshments are included in the ticket price.
Oct. 27-31	Book Fair - all week in the Library
Nov. 1-2	Community Ski Swap at SRVHS

President's Message - by Collette Ricks & Lani Bari

We must begin by thanking the many volunteers that helped to make Pine Valley's official September 24th re-dedication so incredible. In addition to 40 wonderful PTA volunteer bakers, and Dreyer's (thanks to Chris James), we had numerous donations arranged by Denise Huey, too. All in all, it was a tremendous celebration of our school, and the community coming together to help make the party truly grand. Thank you to all who pitched in and helped in any way.

Remember that Friday, October 3rd is a staff development day, so there will be no school. Our next PTA meeting will be on Monday, October 6th at 7:00pm in the Pine Valley library. Also, don't forget that the week of October 6th-10th will be minimum day schedule (8:15-11:35am) due to conference week. Your child's teacher(s) will contact you if they feel a conference is needed.

Sign up for this year's Primo's Run for Education on Sunday, October 19th. Go to www.primosrun.com for more information, and to sign up today! Questions? Contact Sheila Madrieres (madrieres@comcast.net).

The first dance of the school year will be on Friday, October 24th (for 7th & 8th graders). Student Leadership will be responsible for all of the planning & ticket sales. PTA will arrange the parent chaperones and organize the refreshment donations. Please contact Amy White (semedo08@yahoo.com) or Chris Brady (chrissymae@comcast.net) if you would like to help.

Thank you for supporting our PTA magazine subscription fundraiser! We would like to thank Elaina Jurecki & Dawn McQuiston, in addition to all of their volunteers for their hard work. We use PTA volunteers to hand out the prizes, in addition to tabulating the orders. When we have many helping hands, the work gets completed that much quicker! You (and your friends and/or relatives) can still order subscriptions on-line throughout the school year, and Pine Valley will get the proceeds. Just go to www.readingathome.com and use Pine Valley's ID number of **129972**.

One of PTA's volunteer jobs includes photocopy help for the Pine Valley teachers. Thanks to Pat Wing's coordination, our 2008-2009 "copycats" are already in place and helping Pine Valley teachers by reducing their time in front of a copy machine. As always, if you are looking to get involved in Pine Valley PTA activities, please see our contact information below. Thank you!

Collette Ricks
collettericks@comcast.net

Lani Bari
lanibari@comcast.net

Principal's Message - by Jason Law

Let me first start off by sincerely thanking all of you who attended either our Back to School Night on September 4 and/or our Dedication Ceremony on September 24. Both nights epitomize what a wonderful and supportive community we live in. Both occasions gave the community an opportunity to see what Measure A funds have done to support student learning. It is great to watch students being so proud to go to school here. Staff and parents tell me that there is an energy here that they have not seen in a long time... if ever. This new facility sets the expectation bar very high and it is my goal to deliver every chance we get. This community deserves it! A very special thank you goes out to PTA President Collette Ricks, Denise Huey, and the huge amount of support we received from over 40 parents who baked, bought, and donated the many items for our Dedication Ceremony. Local businesses like Lunardi's, Lucky's, Danville Old Town Bakery, Whole Foods, Chris James with Dreyer's Ice Cream, and Peet's Coffee were instrumental in making a great evening that much more special. Thank you all!

What the staff has also been proud of is the 19 point gain in the school's Academic Performance Index (API). The State released test scores early last month and SRVUSD's average jump was 11 points. Pine Valley's new API is 897. Remember, the state's goal is to have schools score a minimum of 800. Pine Valley eclipses that mark by nearly 100 points. Congratulations to all for their hard work! That includes students, teachers, and parents. We need to continue to work together to help improve student learning and help close the achievement gap. Staff has been sitting down individually with Assistant Principal, Katie Martin and looking at specific test data to identify specific target areas in which students still need to improve. Eight Hundred and Ninety Seven is great, but with 900 so close, Pine Valley staff is still motivated and realizes that complacency is the enemy. With any sources of data, it is important to look at trends and not just raw numbers. To see a break down of scores, scroll to the bottom of our web page, www.PumaPride.org, and click on the California Department of Education link.

With October here so quickly, it is already time to take a closer look at student progress. For the first time, School Loop is going to be the source of progress reports. To communicate student progress to parents and students formally, ALL teachers were expected to update grades through September 26. The grade reported, as of that date on School Loop, is the student's current grade in that course. Parents who have students "in danger of failing" are highly encouraged to come to parent conferences the week of October 6-10. Please contact teachers for an appointment. Teachers will also be contacting specific parents to request appointments. Hard copies of student progress WILL NOT be mailed home unless students AND parents have not subscribed to School Loop.

As always, please feel free to contact me with any concerns. Together we make a difference. I am proud to be your principal.

Counselors' Corner – by Julie Damgen & Jean Journey

Fall is approaching, and the school year is off to a quick start with Progress Reports already being sent home during the first week of October and Parent/Teacher Conferences being held the week of October 6th. It is the perfect time to catch dropping grades before it is too late.

Studies have shown time and again that excellence in student achievement is closely linked to active parent participation. Children of involved parents have better grades, better attitudes, and better behavior. Please stay connected to your child's academic and personal lives, and never hesitate to utilize any of the available resources here at Pine Valley.

The best way to monitor your student's assignments and grades will be with schoolloop.com. Please register and log-in on a consistent basis to stay up-to-date with your student's academic progress. Missing assignments, low test scores, and failing grades will not have to be your student's best kept secrets any longer. All of this information will be right at your fingertips. Middle school is a critical period - please do not underestimate the value of your contribution and support!

Pine Valley Education Fund Message – by Terry Monday

At back to school night and the re-dedication ceremony, we could all celebrate the outcome of our community's vote to improve the physical facilities of our school system. We have a school that we can all be proud of and it's because the majority of us said this is important. The Pine Valley Education Fund is another direct response to the question "What kind of school do I want for my child?" Your answer comes in the donations you make to the fund, your participation in grocery programs and other rebates that benefit PVEF, and your willingness to participate on the PVEF board to help decide where to focus the spending of the Fund.

When we sat in our children's core classrooms at back to school night, we were seeing the outcome of all Pine Valley parents' responses to the PVEF. Without support of the Pine Valley Ed Fund, we would have been seeing another row of desks in those classrooms. Without support of the fund, the teachers and students would be left to muddle through any problems with the new technology that has been installed in each classroom. Because of PVEF, they can call on the full-time Technology Aide funded by PVEF.

We've done great things with the support that's been given to the PVEF so far, but there is more we could be doing. In other middle schools in the districts, Education Funds support reduced class-sizes in math and science as well as core classes. If that is something you would like for your child's classes next year, let us know. Tell us by attending Board meetings, by donating to the Fund if you haven't already (on our secure website at <http://pvef.revtrak.net>), by registering your Safeway card, Macy's card and other credit cards on eScrip, and

registering for other grocery programs. If you are financially strapped right now, there's lots of ways to support us without donating money.

All of it adds up to our school community's response to that question "What kind of school do I want for my child?" If you think your response to the question doesn't matter, talk to the admissions people at our state universities. There is a reason so many of our students go on to college, and it's not because of generous state funding. It's because of our local response to that question.

Magazine Sale a Success! – by Dawn McQuiston & Elaina Jurecki

The magazine fundraiser for PTA was a big success thanks to all the students and Pine Valley families that contributed and obtained orders. You can continue to obtain orders on-line and Pine Valley will continue to receive proceeds from the orders. The on-line website is www.readingathome.com and remember you must enter the school code number - 129972. We would like to send a special thanks to all the awesome volunteers that came out and collected orders, handed out prizes to the students and tallied up all the orders on our three turn-in dates:

Michele Arnold	Joy Hughs	Arda Page
Lani Bari	Julian Graham	Joan Prewitt
Dorene Curran	Su Jower	Kathy Ramsey
Theresa DeHope	Phyliss Looney	Collette Ricks
Jan Rutter DeVilbiss	Shannon Maser	Susan Robery
Yukiko Egawa	Laurie Melberg	Cindy Smith
Rachel Hurd	Antoinette Mendence	Nancy Steiger

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 (including rules, guidelines and required entry form), go to www.capta.org/sections/programs/reflections.cfm. The deadline to submit art work and the completed entry form is October 17. Please turn these into the office. If you have any questions, please e-mail me at eyukikosr@hotmail.com.

Red Ribbon Week – by Lisa Webster & Susan Crawley

Red Ribbon Week is coming to Pine Valley the week of October 20th.

Tragically, more and more students today are turning to tobacco and alcohol. In fact, the number one drug of choice for teenagers is alcohol and the number one killer of teenagers is alcohol-related car crashes. Educators and parents at Pine Valley are teaming up to remind students that they do not have to be another statistic. Students will be participating in special spirit days that week including: Team up against alcohol and tobacco (wearing sports team shirts), Make an Education Choice (wear a college logo shirt), United Against Drugs (wear red day), and Puma Pride Day (wear school colors). There will be prize drawings for students who participate in Red Ribbon Week, including a drawing for an iPod.

PV Library Thanks – by Gerri Peterson, Library Media Specialist

The brand new Pine Valley Library opened with great anticipation on August 28th. With the special efforts of many parent volunteers all the books were shelved and ready for the students within two days of the start of the school year.

We are thrilled to offer a state of the art library to our students and faculty. We are able to accommodate learning groups in both our library and the adjoining computer lab simultaneously.

The design provides ample seating, great natural lighting, an updated check-in/check-out desk and easily-accessible shelving. In addition to the computer lab the students also have access to a number of computers dispersed throughout the space on which to complete research or classroom assignments.

We are truly grateful to our school community for making this library a wonderful learning environment for our children.

Mark your calendars now for our annual fall book fair. This year's event will be held the week of October 27th. Check our school web site and school loop for the upcoming hours and daily events. If you would like to volunteer to help at the fair please e-mail me at gpeters@srvusd.net. It is a week of great fun and a wonderful opportunity to preview many new books chosen for middle school readers.

If you didn't have an opportunity to visit our library at Back-To-School Night or at our Rededication ceremony I hope you will come by after school for a few moments or come to our book fair and see our truly beautiful new library.

CA 15th Assembly District Candidates' Forum

Wednesday, October 1, 2008, 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.

Iron Horse Middle School Multi-purpose Room, 12601 Alcosta Blvd, San Ramon

Candidates for the open 15th District Assembly seat Joan Buchanan (D) and Abram Wilson (R) will share their views on issues that affect children. The moderator will be Phyllis Ceaser, from the League of Women Voters of Diablo Valley. This event is sponsored by The San Ramon Valley Council of PTAs and The League of Women Voters of Diablo Valley. To view the flyer with more information, [click here](#). Register to attend the Forum at www.srvcouncilpta.org.

Your Child's Learning Styles - Parent/Community Education Program

How our children learn is as important as what they learn. Kim Koppenhaver-Klute will help us better understand the different styles of learning so that we, as parents, can support our children.

Join us on Tuesday, October 7, 2008, 7:00 to 9:00 pm, at Iron Horse Middle School Multipurpose Room, 12601 Alcosta Blvd, San Ramon. [Click here](#) to view the flyer.

Register to attend by visiting the SRV Council of PTA's website, www.srvcouncilpta.org, locating this program in the **Messages** box on the left side, clicking on, REGISTER FOR THIS EVENT and completing the registration fields. There is no fee for this event. PTA membership dues and donations support this program. Registration ensures enough handouts.

Welcome to Special Education - PTA Special Needs Program

What is the structure of special education in the SRVUSD?

How can I become involved?

What is a SELPA?

Have you ever wondered how to ask for support and assessment from the schools?

What is the eligibility process?

The SRV Council PTA Special Needs Committee is dedicating our October evening program to sharing answers to these questions along with an opportunity to meet the District's Special Education Directors, Karen Heilbronner and Linda Rowley Thom, Special Needs Liaison Todd Gary, and other members of the special education administrative team and Parent Support Network volunteers. [View the flyer](#). Register to attend by visiting the SRV council of PTAs website, www.srvcouncilpta.org, locating this program in the **Messages** box on the left side, clicking on, REGISTER FOR THIS EVENT and completing the registration fields. There is no fee for this event. PTA membership dues and donations support this program. Registration ensures enough handouts.

Community Ski Swap at SRVHS

The San Ramon Valley High School PTSA has been hosting this community-wide ski and snowboard swap for 30 years. This year the event takes place on **November 1 & 2, 2008, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.** each day. Admission is \$5 (children 14 and under free when accompanied by an adult).

It is the largest swap in the East Bay with over \$1 million in inventory brought by local residents as well as from large retailers offering goods at bargain prices. Our retailers include Hughes Ski Hut, Nor Ski Sports, Milo Sport, Sports Cove, Demo Sport, Uli Seiler's Ski Shop, and Four Seasons.

The new cafeteria and the gym will be filled to the brim with new and used merchandise. This Ski and Snowboard swap is a great place to see the latest products and outfit the family. There is a huge selection of boards, skis, boots, helmets and clothing along with experts to assist you. Representatives from ski resorts and local ski clubs will be there to answer questions about their resorts/clubs and the sport.

In addition, community members are invited to sell their own ski/snowboard equipment and clothing on consignment. Instructions for bringing merchandise for sale are posted on our website. **Pre-Register your consigned equipment at <http://danville.com/skiswap>.**

Join us and bring your friends November 1st or 2nd and take advantage of this great opportunity to update your ski and snowboard equipment and support the students at San Ramon Valley High School.

For more event information check out the website: <http://danville.com/skiswap>.

For flyer go to http://www.srvcouncilpta.org/Public/uploads/SRVHS_31st_Ski_and_Snowboard_Swap_2008.pdf.

Library Teen Programs - Nancy Kaiser, San Ramon Libraries

Contra Costa County Library Announces a Teen Fines Forgiveness Program

The Contra Costa County Library, in celebration of Teen Read Week, invites teens to "Take a Bite out of Fines". Teens in grades 6-12 have the opportunity to clear late charges from their library card accounts during the week of October 12 - 18, 2008. In an effort to encourage teens to return to the library, all Contra Costa County Library locations will designate a day and time when teen patrons can read in the library for an hour to earn a certificate to clear their account of late charges. While the certificate will not cover lost items, or accounts sent to collections, teens are encouraged to return all overdue materials so that their fines can be waived. Each teen must bring his or her library card or valid ID to participate.

Join us for Fine Forgiveness Read-ins:

- Dougherty Station Library, 17017 Bollinger Canyon Road, on Tuesday October 14, 5-7pm or
- San Ramon Library, 100 Montgomery, on Saturday October 18 11am-2pm.

Refreshments will be served to participating teen readers. For more information contact Nancy Kreiser at nkreiser@ccclib.org or visit the library's website at ccclib.org.

Adina's Deck: Solving Cyber Bullying Mysteries and Exploring an Issue Facing Teens in our Community
Saturday, October 18 at 3:00 PM at the San Ramon Library, 100 Montgomery

This important program features the award winning film, *Adina's Deck*, which explores cyber bullying in a way that is both entertaining and educational. Cyber bullying is a serious problem. It occurs when e-mail, instant messaging, cell phones, or other forms of information technology are used to deliberately harass, threaten, or demean someone. As children and teens gain increased access to these technologies the problem has grown, impacting preteens, teens, teachers, and parents.

Adina's Deck stars East Bay teen actors. The short film explores the topic speaking directly to young people. It can serve as a springboard for meaningful family discussions and greater understanding of the issue. We'll hear from the creators of the film and from two of the actors that appear in the movie. Representatives from local schools will be on hand to help us understand cyber bullying issues in our community. Parents and their children in grades 6 through 12 are encouraged to attend. Don't miss this important program!

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 at the success of our new Teen Centers at Pine Valley and Gale Ranch. The Teen Centers provide supervised and structured academic and recreational activities from after school until 6:00 p.m. every school day. The program includes dedicated homework time with staff available for assistance and recreation programs that promote health, fitness, teamwork and leadership. 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

Youth Hoops

Youth Hoops is a recreational, non-competitive basketball league. The emphasis of the league is on fundamental skill development, every player participating, and learning to love the game of basketball. Standings and Stats are not kept in our leagues. Practices will start the week of December 1. There will be no practices from December 22 - January 3. League games begin Jan. 10. **Registration deadline is October 23rd.** All Participants are required to attend and participate in the skills observation. Skills observations will take approximately 15-20 minutes. You may attend anytime within the designated time. Skills Observation will be Saturday, October 25, 2008 and Sunday, November 2, 2008 at Pine Valley Community Gym.

Upcoming Events

Middle School Halloween Dance (October 24)

The Middle School Halloween Dance for 6-8 grade students will be on Friday, October 24th from 6:00-9:00 p.m. at the San Ramon Community Center. Every student must have a valid school ID. At this adult supervised event, your teenager can enjoy music, free food, and have a free picture taken in our decorated photo booth. We will also have a costume contest for scariest, funniest, most original, most authentic, and overall best! Tickets will be sold during lunch on October 13th and 20th or afterschool at the Teen Center. Tickets will be \$6 if bought in advance or \$7 at the door (if still available). A permission form is required to be signed by parents and returned the night of the event for students to attend. The form will be attached to the ticket. 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.

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 September Students of the Month who are recognized for exhibiting the life skill of Cooperation. The featured life skill for October is Organization.

<u>Student</u>	<u>(Selected by)</u>	<u>Student</u>	<u>(Selected by)</u>
Oren Abrahams	(Mr. Vespi)	William Hsiao	(Mrs. Loughery)
Kamran Amirly	(Mrs. Rosenberg)	Naureen Kazi	(Mrs. Johnston)
Brianna Anderson	(Mrs. Irvin)	Sarah Kim	(Mrs. James)
Leimomi Baker	(Ms. Huff)	Kassondra Kochan	(Mrs. Locke)
Andrea Barr	(Miss Clarkson)	Alec Ledbetter	(Miss Krummes)
Eric Bender	(Mrs. Moore)	Samuel Lee	(Miss Damgen)
Michael Berge	(Mrs. Marchese)	Allison Lepere	(Ms. Charles)
Jacob Buckle	(Mrs. Kontilis)	Annette Madera	(Mr. Erbez)
Trevor Cai	(Miss Martin)	Maureen O'Neill	(Mr. Boyd)
Savannah Coy	(Mrs. Svoboda/Gross)	Connor Owens	(Mr. Wulff)
Michael Di Dio	(Mrs. Barks)	Kristina Pagano	(Mrs. Knudson)
Robert Ellery	(Miss Ciriaco)	Jordyn Pierce	(Mrs. Marohn)
Anthony Epshteyn	(Miss Gault)	Kevin Pinney	(Mrs. Schluntz)
Cameron Eubanks	(Miss Myers)	Shashank Rao	(Mrs. White)
Anwar Francis	(Miss Meredith)	Caitlyn Sampson	(Mr. Reeves)
Breanna Gaither	(Mrs. Rowland)	Jared Sawdey	(Mrs. Nair)
McKenna Gin	(Mrs. Fleshman)	Madalyn Schenk	(Dr. Grame)
Elza Gogichaeva	(Mrs. Peterson)	Monica Suh	(Mrs. Shivitz)
Ryan Hansen	(Miss deSilva)	Kameron Suoja	(Ms. Phillips)
Jacquelyn He	(Mr. Cepeda)	Randi Taylor	(Miss Pappas)
Nicole Hemstalk	(Mr. Munson)	Thomas Tobin	(Mrs. Hegarty)