

SYCAMORE RIDGE



Round-Up

December 2009

Vol. 5, Issue 2



Principal's Message

As the holiday season approaches, and our busy lives get even more hectic, it is easy to lose sight of the true spirit of the season, and the important things in life. And so, I'd like to devote my Principal's Message to give gratitude for all of you who give unselfishly of your time and talents to make our school truly outstanding!

We make a living by what we get, we make a life by what we give.
~ Winston Churchill

A Time for Thanks!

Sycamore Ridge School is a very special place of learning... sure the facility is beautiful; we offer state of the art technology, special laboratory settings, and fancy playground structures, but we know that it is the Stallion people and community that make our school so special. The wonderful staff and dedicated parents of Sycamore Ridge work together to ensure a productive, enriching, and caring environment for all of our learners.

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...and so much more!

Happy Holidays



A Note from the PTA President...

The school year is off to another great and busy start! Our Membership Chair, Joy Toro, and Directory Chair, Richard Kaleta, were very busy these last few months inputting information for over 180 families who have joined the PTA this year. We would love to see 100% of our 250 families join the PTA this year. It is not too late to join and if you didn't get a student directory, you can get one free with your \$25 membership! Membership dues go to support the PTA programs at our school which ultimately help all of our children succeed through the partnership of families, school and community.

October was a busy month starting off with our first PTA sponsored Coffee with the Principal and PTA General Association meeting. Principal Disney gave an update on school achievement scores and presented the latest information on the 7/11 committee. Sylvia Wahr organized another successful Walk to School Day where walking families were greeted at the front gate with a healthy snack and stickers.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DECEMBER

1st-11th
Toys for Tots Drive
(front of school)

9th
DMUSD Board Meeting
5:45pm
Del Mar Hills PAC

10th
Dad's Lunch
11:30am

15th
4th Grade Field Trip
Midway Museum
8:30am-2:00pm

16th
Band Concert
8:15am (MUR)

21st- Jan. 1
Winter Break- No School

JANUARY

4th
School resumes

8th
Student Council/ Dad's Club
Career Day/ Lunch
10:45am-11:30am (in your
child's classroom)
11:30am-12:15pm (lunch)

13th
"H2O Where Do You Go?"
Assembly
8:15 and 9:15am (MUR)

18th
Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday-
No School

20th
Jog-A-Thon
(upper grade field)

22nd
5th Grade Musical
"Bones"
8:15am (MUR)

FEBRUARY

1st & 2nd
No School- Local Release
Days

4th
Reflections Reception
6:00pm (MUR)

5th
Student Council Spirit Day-
Hero Day

12th & 15th
No School- President's Day

19th
2nd Grade Musical
"BUGZ"
8:15am (MUR)

22nd-26th
Parent/Teacher Conference
Week

**12:30pm dismissal
ALL GRADES ALL WEEK**

Mark your calendars!
The 5th Annual
Sycamore Ridge
Jog-a-thon is coming!

Jog-a-thon is scheduled to take place on January 20th. We are looking for volunteers to help out with the event (field set-up, lap markers, water station attendants, lap and pledge tally workers).

Please contact Shelley Aberle at saberle@san.rr.com or Shannon Cary at shancary@gmail.com if you can help out at this super fun event. Look for event details and pledge envelopes to be distributed after winter break in your Wednesday folder.



PTA Nominating Committee

Are you looking for a way to get involved but only have a few hours to give? Consider volunteering for the PTA Nominating Committee. We are in need of 5 volunteers and 2 alternates to help recruit members for the 2010-2011 PTA Board. You do not have to be a Board member to be on the Nominating Committee and it will only take a few hours of your time to serve on this important committee. For questions or if you are interested in serving on the Nominating Committee or the 2010-2011 Board, please contact Shannon Cary at: shancary@gmail.com or (858) 481-5489.



CONGRATULATIONS! Sycamore Stallion Superstars!

The following students were chosen by their teachers as Sycamore Stallion Superstars as persons of excellent character. The Superstars were recognized at the all-school Village Meeting on October 7, 2009.

Kindergarten

Mrs. Jones:

Andrew

Mrs. Litt:

Bailey

Mrs. Wojtkowski:

Tabrezia

First Grade

Ms. Matthews/Mrs. Howell:

Mauvie

Ms. Saunders:

Irene

Mrs. Schengel:

Matthew

Ms. Waxman/Mrs. White:

Adam

Second Grade

Mrs. Chung:

Grace

Mrs. Shea:

Justin

Mrs. Johnson:

Natasha

Third Grade

Mrs. Hanna:

Anjali

Ms. Hasler:

Isabel

Fourth Grade

Ms. Howard:

Claire

Mrs. Mackie:

Alyssa

Ms. Money:

Hannah

Fifth Grade

Mrs. Schwab/ Mrs. Solowczuk:

Jacqueline

Ms. Stanton:

Michelle

Sixth Grade

Mr. Dahl:

Eve

Mrs. Mokiao:

Eddie

Congratulations to these students!

2nd Grade Fun

Hooray for second grade! We are having a blast learning so much about our world and each other. One of our recent celebrations was the Math and Science Pumpkin Carnival! The students rotated through 7 stations of inquiry from *floating* to *weighing*. The air was filled with laughter, prediction, and friendly conversations followed by yummy pumpkin cookies and drinks!

Aren't they adorable!



Look at everyone's inquiring minds!

We are looking forward to more celebrations in our learning journey with our annual Family Tree Project in Social Studies. It is a fun time to research and learn more about our roots and traditions; and for our fellow classmates to gain another perspective of one another in a creative way.

The second grade teachers are having an incredible time with each second grade class during rotations. The fun individual personalities and change of scene brings us closer together as we transition into learning about animal life, important people and places, and staying healthy, while honing in on our coordination skills...*to use someday in Division I sports!*



REFLECTIONS



"Beauty Is..."

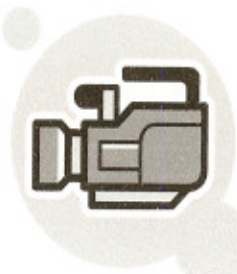
What a great turn out! The committee was overjoyed to collect the 143 Reflections entries. We were amazed to see the amazing artwork created by our students. Our Sycamore Ridge students **have talent!**

Out of the 143 entries, there are 95 **Visual Arts** entries, 18 **Photography** entries, 20 **Literature** entries, 6 **Musical Composition** entries, and 4 **Dance Choreography** entries. We hope there will be some **Film/Video Production** entries next year.

We want to express our heartfelt appreciation to all the classroom teachers for their support, especially our art teachers, Jacque Folgner and Cat Gilbert, who volunteered extra time to help students getting their projects started and our parents who encouraged their children's participation. We'd also like to thank our parent volunteers: Victoria Shoushtari, Janet Ross, Shannon Cary, Erica Carrico and Rachel Yang who spent hours of their precious time collecting, mounting, and sorting the entries. A special thank you to Principal Emily Disney and front office staff, Eileen and Lesa, who provided endless support. We are so lucky to have this team.

The first round of selections were completed and the selected entries have been forwarded to the district level! All entries will be proudly presented at our annual Reflections Reception: **Thursday, February 4, 2010 at 6:00 p.m.** Please mark your calendars for this special event!

Volunteers are still needed to organize the reception. Please contact Eileen Lundquist (laiwing8@gmail.com) if you are interested in helping.



Sponsored by the Sycamore Ridge PTA
For more information, please contact Eileen Lundquist, laiwing8@gmail.com

Extended Studies News



Technology

Mrs. Jennifer Oliveira

I have several goals in the Technology Lab. My primary goal is to educate the kids on safe and responsible use of the great technology tools we have in the lab. So far, the kids are doing a great job. Another goal is to integrate the California State Standards into the lessons and products. For example, fifth graders need to know about weather forecast tools and severe weather. Working with the classroom teachers, we develop a project so they can show their knowledge of those standards in a newsletter or newspaper. Soon, the fifth graders will be creating weather reports on video, showing their knowledge of the appropriate vocabulary and tools. They will be cool!

In addition, I work with classroom teachers to fine tune their skills. As you know, technology is constantly changing and evolving. Teachers and parents need to be up to date on what students are doing for several reasons. Tools like UnitedStreaming and our online reporting system take time for teachers to learn and I feel lucky to work with such professional teachers who want to learn more. Students are engaged in technology and it will always be a part of their lives. Many teachers do not feel as strong in technology as their students and that's where I come in. Part of my job is to work with teachers, at whatever their level, to expand their knowledge, and allow them to practice what they've learned, so they can use more and more appropriate technology in their classrooms.

Look for the teachers to be posting some of their student products online soon.



Art

Ms. Jacque Folgner

I am settling into the routine at Sycamore Ridge and enjoying it very much. The students have lived up to their reputation of being creative and full of fun. My biggest challenge is remembering all the names. In this newsletter I will focus on Kindergarten and 1st Grade.

Kindergarten students finished their abstract designs and we moved on to directed drawing of birds. We talked about how color is up to the artist and can be non-realistic, whatever the artist desires. Color can change the mood of a picture besides enhancing the appearance of the picture. The students had a lot of fun picking whatever colors they liked and enjoyed, and the end product was spectacular. The Kindergarten students just finished fish drawings before Thanksgiving. We talked about the elements of line, shape, and color and our media was crayon and watercolor (crayon resist). We then practiced our cutting technique and cut the fish into strips and rearranged them onto black paper. They turned out great! We are starting abstract bears after Thanksgiving. I have stuffed bears around the room on display and we draw by looking at the shapes of the bears. The students will add clothes, hats, shoes, whatever they desire. The students will take each part or shape of the bear and abstract him into a design. This is very fun and challenging for the students.

1st Grade students finished their flower drawings and paintings that were mentioned in the last article. They turned out fabulous and the students were really pleased with themselves. The students are now creating shape creatures. We talked about math shapes (squares, circles, rectangles), color, and texture. Students are in the process of creating the shape creatures using wild colors of paper and cutting the shapes that will be used to construct our shape creatures. This is a lot of fun because the students' imagination goes wild.

We have Open Studio on Monday (1st, 2nd, 3rd grade) and Friday (4th, 5th, 6th grade). The students may choose to come into the art room at lunch recess to create something on their own - a free time in the art room. Come visit anytime - everyone is welcome.

Science

Miss Kelsey Dumoff

The students have been working so hard in science this year! I will be highlighting two grade levels in each newsletter and this month I've chosen to highlight the sixth and second grade classes.

This month sixth graders have been learning all about the different types of movement that occur in our Earth. Not only did the students simulate a convection current using various materials, but also they constructed models of the sea-floor spreading process. The students have also been studying various kinds of faults and the types of stress that can cause faults to occur. They even had an opportunity to build their own faults with modeling clay. Many were surprised to learn how close we all live to the famous San Andreas Fault! Learning all about plate tectonics has been a blast for the sixth graders and next they will be studying earthquakes and volcanoes.

Do you know how a sound is made? The second graders can tell you! They have been learning all about vibration, sound waves, volume and pitch. The students were thrilled to create their own small instruments like spoon gongs and cup banjos. Through careful observation they were able to even see and feel the vibrations that were making the sound. Next they will be studying magnetism.

Other News:

- Thank you parents for providing those yummy baked goods for our bake sale. We were able to raise a good amount of money for our science lab pets!
- Our garden has begun to bloom and we are now growing lettuce, sugar snap peas, and green beans. The students are looking forward to enjoying these healthy treats once we harvest them.



Second graders Vitush and Jinwoo are strumming their cup banjos to learn about vibration and sound.



Sixth graders Jayla and Sarah are constructing their faults using clay.



Physical Education

Coach John Sink

We are heading into the fall season with new, fun, and exciting activities for the students at Sycamore Ridge. Integrating grade level standards into PE has been a fun, new, challenging approach to Physical Education. These new activities challenge both the bodies and minds of students in the same lesson. Some of the activities include: bouncing to spell, stretching through the languages, bowling over fractions, and scrabble laps.

Students are continuing to be recognized for bringing the proper equipment to class. Students bringing a reusable water bottle and a hat for sun protection are rewarded after each class. Please continue to encourage your son or daughter to be prepared for PE.

Many students this year have received the PE All-star of the day. This reward is given to students for their positive behavior and performance in class. Students have received this award for: good listening skills, displaying leadership, offering to help other students, sharing kind words, and good sportsmanship. Students are rewarded with a high five token for their hard work.

Students in all grades are continuing to enjoy organized recess games at lunch. I am so pleased to see so many students getting involved in the activities offered. When we return from break, students will have the opportunity to participate in our first school tournament of the year, ultimate football. Good luck to all the teams signed up.



Music

Mrs. Stephanie Ilkhanipour

Movin' and groovin' as usual in the Music Room!

The third and sixth grades have already presented their plays this year to a great audience...with major success. What a hard working group of students we have. I am so very proud of them.

So, who is up next?

On Wednesday, December 16th the Sycamore Ridge band students will present their very first concert of the year. They will perform for all parents at 8:15 am. The students are very excited so we hope you can all attend.

The 4th graders will be working on creating movies about the musical history of their culture. The 4th graders will get to be the "teacher for a day" as they share their culture and music history with their classmates. I can't wait to be the student for a change.

The 6th graders will be working with their poetry unit in music class. Students will learn how important poetry has been in creating amazing vocal music. Students will choose one of their favorite poems and turn it into a song using our Garage Band technology. During this unit, students will learn about amazing lyricists and poets who have become famous making their poems into music (i.e. Bob Dylan, Jewel, Shakespeare).

The 5th graders will be presenting a new musical called "Bones" this year. This play incorporates their 5th grade science standards as we travel through the skeletal system and understand just why we need all of these bones in our body! Their play will be held on Friday, January 22nd at 8:15 in the MUR. Please watch their Wednesday folders for a letter with all of the information regarding this play.

Events scheduled for the remainder of the year are as follows:

February 19, 2010: 2nd Grade "BUGZ"

March 2, 3, and 4, 2010: 4th grade play, Go West!

March 24, 26-27, 2010: 101 Dalmatians (large scale musical including 4-6 grades)

April 23, 2010: 1st Grade musical: Sounds A Little Fishy To Me!

May 17, 2010: Kindergarten Musical: E-I-E-I Oops!

We will round out the year with the spring band concert that will be set in late May or early June. Information regarding this concert will follow.



Library News

Mrs. Kathy Pechtimaldjian

Book Fair Wrap Up

THANK YOU Sycamore Ridge Families! Because of you our 2009 Scholastic Book Fair was a great success! Our sales totaled \$10,768 earning the library a whopping \$3,380 to use for purchasing new books and resources. Thank you for your generosity and support.

The book fair would not have been a success without the help of our amazing and numerous volunteers. We had some returning parent volunteers as well as some new recruits. Parents helped with setting up the book fair, running the cash registers, assisting the students in counting out their piggy bank money, and cleaning up. Our superb 6th grade students did a fantastic job of advertising the fair by dressing up as Clifford and Geronimo Stilton (a sweaty task). They also helped keep order during the book fair, and assisted with bagging and check out.

Our Dads and Doughnuts morning event and the Family Night featuring Animals from Around the World were great fun and brought in a lot of business. Thank you to everyone who attended. At our Family Night event we also held a successful and delicious bake sale, run by Girl Scout troop 1281 and Ms. Dumoff, our science teacher. The girls were enthusiastic entrepreneurs and sold out of almost all their goodies. The bake sale earned \$75 for the science room to purchase supplies.

I especially want to thank Julie Anderson and Victoria Shoushtari, the PTA Co-Chairs of the Book Fair. Their creativity transformed the library into our Destination Book Fair/Read Around the World theme which was awesome. They also worked tirelessly during the book fair to ensure that all the details and needs were covered. Thanks to Shannon Cary and the entire PTA for sponsoring this important fundraising event.

Other Library News

We have been enjoying reading some Halloween and Thanksgiving stories as well as learning about the Dewey Decimal System. The upper grades played a game called Continent Conquest to test their skills in using reference books.

The lower grades have been learning the different parts of a book and recognizing and differentiating between fiction and nonfiction books.

Our Bookmark Design Contest will start in December with forms being sent home the first week after Thanksgiving. This will be the 3rd year for this event. Students are challenged to design a bookmark that promotes reading. A winner is chosen from each grade level and bookmarks of the winning designs are made for all the students to enjoy.

With the holidays fast approaching I encourage you to give the gift of reading! Enjoy!



Thank you to all of our Book Fair volunteers!

Parents:

Janet Ross, Tiffany Wickham, Nina Sandberg, Steve Thunder, Karen Ettouati, Raquel Dixon, Maia Starling, Darcy Buchanan, Jen Ernst, Toni Fisher, Cindy Pokal, Judy Balsiger, Christy Mohler, Rita Madantseva, Tulika Agarwal, and Shannon Cary

6th Grade Students:

Sydney, Ryan, Kevin, Miranda, Sameen, Megan, Jena, Luis, Ryan, Danielle, Lynn, Marikit, Ashley, Brandon, Louie, Hyewon, Sarah, Jason, Jason, Olivia, Alexis, Sarah, Bianca, Elizabeth, Rubia, Lea, Wasef, Brian, Sierra, Eddie, Colby, Eve, and Sesang

Girl Scout Troop #1281:

Hallie, Samantha, Maxine, Kaitlin, Lindsay, Chloe, Claire, Alexandra, and Alyssa



A very special thank you to La Jolla Endodontics & Dr. Babak Shoushtari for donating the doughnuts for our Dads & Doughnuts event.



DMSEF

Phone-A-Thon is a great success!

The Del Mar Schools Education Foundation held its first annual Phone-a-thon on November 16, 2009 and the calls resulted in approximately \$175,000 in pledges from our parents across the district. Over 100 parent volunteers gathered across our 8 schools and called approximately 2,500 families in our district to help raise awareness of the budget crisis and to help fund our ESC programs consisting of Music, Art, Science, Technology and P.E.

The district budget crisis has made the Foundation's goal of raising \$2 million, along with 100% participation from our families, a critical piece of the ESC program funding. With the efforts of our parent volunteers, we were able to personally communicate the tremendous need for community support to many of our district families.

The Del Mar Schools Education Foundation wants to thank each volunteer and our corporate donor, Leucadia Pizzeria, for their time, energy, and commitment to the children of our district.

Principal's Message
(Continued from page 1)

The holidays certainly remind us to be thankful for the many blessings of our life, both personal and professional. During this season of thanks there are many who deserve special gratitude:

Thank you to –

- all of the **classroom and special department teachers** who've been ready from the first minute of this school year with lesson plans and instructional activities that meet state standards and engage our youngsters. Our students are happy and love learning!
- our dynamic **Extended Studies teachers, Mrs. Folgner, Mrs. Gilbert, Mrs. Ilkhanipour, Ms. Dumoff, Mr. Sink, and Mrs. Oliveira** who work so very hard each day to instill in our children a love of art, music, science, technology and physical education.
- the wonderful **front office team, Mrs. House, Mrs. Randall, and Mrs. Brizes** for always having a smile for every student, parent and teacher, even after the 100th disruption.
- an exceptional **paraprofessional staff** whom work closely with our certificated teachers to ensure that every child gets what he/she needs.
- our hardworking and dedicated **PTA President Shannon Cary and Executive Board** who have planned and executed numerous events and programs to support our students and families. Our PTA Board consists of supportive and extremely capable members who give so willingly of their time, talents and energy wherever they are needed.
- an outstanding group of **Everyone a Reader (EAR)tutors** who provide support to our students to build their literacy skills. To our wonderfully dedicated and organized **EAR coordinator, Lisa Blazer** for her commitment to the program and for making a true difference in our young readers' lives.
- our **Stallion Sprinters volunteers and Sprinter Coordinator, Marie Lerosé**, who reliably spend many hours tracking laps and handing out toe tokens for our eager runners, keeping them happy and healthy.
- all of **our parents** for the positive support and involvement in your child's education.
- our **Stallion Students**, who demonstrate their personal best everyday. We are so thankful for you! You amaze us with your enthusiasm for learning and strong citizenship. Sycamore Ridge Stallions are learning skills to succeed in an increasingly competitive world while also learning the value of helping others!

The people who make up our village are the ones who make this place so special, and so it is that I am ever so grateful this holiday season. It is with excitement and great joy that I look forward to the year ahead!

Wishing you and yours a very happy holiday season!

All the best, *Emily Disney*

Dear Great Pumpkin-

I waited all night in the pumpkin patch on Halloween Night and I wanted to follow up my wishes with a letter to you. Thanks for listening, by the way. I know our Sycamore Ridge families are technologically savvy and I bet a lot of families will be getting new Digital Cameras this holiday season. I wonder if families would be willing to donate their older working Digital Cameras to our school.... It would be fun to have cameras to work with in the Computer Lab and I would happily take their working 5MP (more or less) cameras off their hands.

It's just a thought, Great Pumpkin. If you have any questions, please feel free to email me, Great Pumpkin, at joliveira@dmusd.org.

Thank you for making this past Halloween the best ever!

Mrs. Oliveira

Technology Teacher



Save the Date March 13, 2010

The Third Annual RidgeRaising Dinner and Silent Auction
will be held at the Grand Del Mar.

Look for these great auction items:

Teacher Features
Sycamore Stallion Original Works of Art
Sports Memorabilia
Reserved Sycamore Ridge Parking Spaces
and many more.....

Check out our Blog at www.SycamoreRidgeRidgeRaising.blogspot.com

Sponsorship opportunities available. Contact Eileen Johnson at ejohns@san.rr.com or
Christy Mohler at crmohler@gmail.com.

President's Message
(Continued from page 1)

Red Ribbon Week, led by Chairperson Carrie Nydahl, was celebrated in October as well. In addition to pledging to live a healthy lifestyle and creating the wonderful handprint posters that you may have seen displayed around the school in classrooms, the students were treated to an assembly by the Chris Rubio group and parents were invited to our first Parent Education night of the year. Local psychologist Dana Fillmore spoke on "How to Raise Children to Make Good Decisions in the Real World" and free childcare was provided by the PTA to the parents who attended the talk. Look for more parent education nights to come after the New Year.

The national PTA program "Reflections" collection took place in October. Over 125 submissions were collected from our Stallion students on collection day and our Reflections Chairperson, Eileen Lundquist, organized a great group of volunteers to prepare the submissions to be judged by the panel. Save the date to view all of the submissions at our Reflections Reception scheduled to take place on February 4th in the MUR. Everyone A Reader trainings were held in October as well and Lisa Blazer met with parents to give them strategies on how to help their own children become successful readers as well as train volunteers to work with the children in the classrooms. This valuable program pairs children who are not reading at their grade level with a parent volunteer who helps to bring them up to reading at their grade level. This program has had a 100% success rate every year!

October wrapped up with the Scholastic Book Fair during conference week in the library. Julie Anderson and Victoria Shoushtari, along with their team of volunteers, transformed our library into scenes from around the world, complete with a hot air balloon over the counter! It was fun to see the students and their Dads (or other special person!) shopping at the Dads and Donuts event as well as see the kids checking out the "Radical Reptiles" at the Animals Around the World family night during the Bookfair. Thanks to all who supported the bake sale at the family night where over \$75 was raised to help support the pets in the science lab. And thank you to all who supported the book fair. Over \$3,000 was raised! The book fair is the main fundraiser for the library and the money raised goes to help grow our library collection.

November and December are quiet months for the PTA but chairs are busy planning for events after the New Year. January 20th is the date for our 5th Annual Jog-a-thon. Look for more information about this super fun event to come home in your Wednesday folders. Also, Eileen Johnson, Christy Mohler and their committee are busy planning for our 3rd Annual RidgeRaising event to be held on March 13th at the Grand Del Mar. Again, look for more information to come on this fantastic event.

Finally, as we look forward to the New Year, it is that time again to solicit volunteers for our PTA Executive Board Nominating Committee. We are looking for 5 people and 2 alternates to seek and identify candidates for the PTA Executive Board next year. This is a great way to contribute and participate in the PTA without having to make a big time commitment. Please consider serving on this important committee. Additionally, if you are interested in becoming a part of the Executive Board this is your chance! Please contact me for additional information or if you are interested in participating. I would be happy to talk to you more and answer any of your questions. Elections for the Executive Board will take place in April.

I would like to take a minute to thank all of our PTA volunteers, especially the chair people mentioned throughout this article. The time that you all spend contributing to the many programs offered throughout the school year are very much appreciated. In addition, thank you to the volunteers in our classrooms and to those of you who participate in the various PTA programs through your attendance. Whether it is a restaurant night or a Parent Education event, your support makes this all work and benefits ALL of our children. And finally, I would like to extend my gratitude to all of those who have been involved in the PTA board in the past. It is your efforts and time that have laid the groundwork for all of the successes that we celebrate in our wonderful school.

Best wishes to all of you for a restful and memorable winter break. See you next year!

Shannon Cary
shancary@gmail.com
(858) 481-5489

Sycamore Ridge Kids Korps

The Kids Korps chapter at Sycamore Ridge kicked off on Friday October 16th. The students supported an organization called Soldier's Angels, and we made blankets and holiday cards for troops overseas. Our next event is serving lunch to the families who are staying at The Ronald McDonald House while their ill child is treated at Children's Hospital. We welcome new members!

Please register at www.kidskorps.com

Any questions can be sent to sycamoreridgekidskorps@gmail.com



Red Ribbon Week- October 12-16, 2009

Red Ribbon Week, which was celebrated October 12-16, was a big hit with the kids this year. They especially enjoyed the entertaining percussion assembly, hearing Torrey Pines High School students speak, and creating their "Pledge to Live a Healthy Lifestyle" posters.

Carrie Nydahl, Red Ribbon Chair, would like to thank Holly and Rich Kolman, Shannon Cary, Scott White and the following members of Brownie Troop 1281: Kaitlin, Hallie, Maxine, Chloe, Lindsay, and Samantha. for their help in decorating our school with so many big red ribbons. A big thank you also goes to Brooke Cortese and Janet Ross for creating the beautiful Pledge posters, and to the teachers for completing them with their students. Finally, thanks to Coach Sink for creating physical activities that focused on educating the kids about the heart.

A Note from our Student Council Historians

October

By: Sara Shoushtari

There were many things going on during October. We had an awesome Haunted Hallway, made and sponsored by the Student Council, with a little help by the Tanaka family with décor. Only grades 3-6 were able to go through the Haunted Hallway. Though, that isn't all the fun we had in October.

We also had the Gruesome Guts, where the students could touch creepy things like Frankenstein's Brain, cockroach eggs, and even the Headless Horseman's Big Toe! Grades Kindergarten, 1st and 2nd had a great time.

In addition, we had an amazing Halloween parade, hosted by Ms. Disney, Principal, Sarah, President, and Tegan, Vice President. There were some great costumes out there!

Stallions had a great time in October!



November

By: Sierra Campisano

Hello, I'm Sierra Campisano, the Student Council, 6th Grade Historian. In November, as we get ready for the holidays, many exciting things have been happening at Sycamore Ridge! The first was our first spirit day of the 2009-2010 school year, Sports Day! We had many spirited outfits. Some students (and staff) wore Chargers jerseys, or their favorite team's jersey. Some kids also wore soccer and basketball uniforms. Those who didn't have any sportswear still showed their school spirit by wearing Stallion T-shirts and sweatshirts.

Another event was our annual canned food drive. Students donated canned food and dropped them into large bins that had been placed in the front of the school. And everybody thanks the PTA for sponsoring it.

The sixth graders just had their last play, "Dig It!", as Sycamore Ridge Stallions. The comedy committed lots of laughs from the audience, especially appealing on the adult's side, and was a great play. As Confucius would say, "Confucius says: 'It was a great success!'" The extraordinary finale for the Stallion's top dogs was the best one yet. Thank you to Mrs. Ilkhanipour for directing the 6th graders, and having yet another success.

We just had our school fundraiser at Sammy's Fired Pizza, and it was very crowded. We raised a lot of money for our school. A round of applause for the PTA for sponsoring us!

November was a one of a kind month for the Stallions!

A classroom teacher's perspective...

November 18, 2009

Dear Sycamore Ridge Community,

The classroom teachers of Sycamore Ridge School are writing this letter to the families of our students to share with you the profound effect our Extended Studies Curriculum (ESC) has on your child's days at school. We, like you, want the very best for your child. **Our ESC program provides the very best. ESC not only offers the best in art, music, science, physical education and technology** for your child, but it also allows classroom teachers to offer the best program in a variety of ways. Please take a few moments to read about the **value and hidden benefits ESC provides** your child in the classroom and consider making a donation to the Del Mar Schools Education Foundation.

ESC affects your child's daily school experience by providing:

- **happier students!** There is enhanced excitement on the part of students for their school experience not only because of the ESC classes themselves, but also because of the additional programs the ESC teachers provide like organized recess games, musicals, participation in the school art galleries, student council, lunch clubs, Science Night, and so much more.
- **an approach that values the "whole child."** ESC helps develop well-rounded students who are given the opportunity to explore their potential in a variety of ways.
- **support for teachers from specialists for art, music, physical education, science, and technology.** Through classroom teacher and ESC teacher collaboration, curriculum delivery is enhanced providing multiple exposure to enrich and differentiate the learning. (For instance, John Sink our P.E. teacher trains staff in P.E. instruction and regularly shares lessons. Stephanie Ilkhanipour reinforces content standard acquisition through song, dance and movement. Art teachers, Jackie Folgner and Cat Gilbert lead our children in thinking about standards in creative ways, expressing their understanding of curriculum through right brain thinking. Jen Oliveira provides technical support and instructional expertise so teachers can incorporate more technology as a tool for learning. Kelsey Dumoff offers hands on science lab experiences that reinforce our classroom science curriculum.)
- **frequent opportunities for teachers to meet and collaborate on building program.** (When teachers are given time to collaborate multiple experts are working together to develop a program instead of many working in isolation. The difference in what we are able to accomplish is significant. Assessments are created, analysis of students needs more comprehensive, curriculum is improved, and instructional strategies are fine tuned.)
- **frequent opportunities for teachers to evaluate student progress and plan instruction.** (The time it takes to prepare a quality day for your child is considerable. Time also needs to be spent on grading and parent communication. We are all working well beyond our paid hours. We cannot deliver the same quality of program without ESC. We believe ESC is one reason for our outstanding API score of 959 that placed us in the top 10 schools in all of San Diego.)

A season of gift giving lies in front of us and there is no better gift you could give your child's teacher, or your child, than a gift to support our school. The teachers ask that in lieu of personal holiday gifts this year you give to the foundation and preserve the quality of what we can provide your child. Funding for our school has been cut so dramatically that without a concerted effort on the part of our community our unique and valuable program will be eliminated and the remaining years your child will spend at Sycamore Ridge detrimentally impacted. We currently have ONLY 16% participation by our families at Sycamore Ridge. The size of the gift does not have to be large. **The number of families participating does.** *Please join the many teachers who have donated part of their salaries to the Foundation and make your gift before the February 15th deadline.*

Respectfully, Sycamore Ridge Teachers



Career Day with Dads!



We will be having a Dad's Club Career Day
on Friday, January 8th.

Dad's will speak in the classroom about their
professions and then we will have lunch with the
children.

10:45 - 11:30 - Talk about profession in classroom

11:30 - 12:15 - Dad's Club Lunch

If Dad cannot make it, you are welcome to invite Grandpa, Mom
or another family member.

Please look for a flyer in your child's Wednesday folder to RSVP
to let your teacher know you are coming

Presented by Sycamore Ridge Dads' Club
Sponsored by the Sycamore Ridge PTA

STUDY BUDDY Program

What is the STUDY BUDDY Program?

The STUDY BUDDY program is sponsored by San Dieguito Alliance, the Cardiff, Del Mar, Encinitas, Rancho Santa Fe, Solana Beach Elementary School Districts, the San Dieguito Union High School District and their PTA. STUDY BUDDY is a community service opportunity for teens to tutor and mentor an elementary school student for one hour after school each week, during Spring and Fall semesters, at elementary school campuses.

The success of the program lies in the unique partnering and mentoring that takes place between the high school student and the younger child. Their teachers who identify those pupils who can benefit academically, socially or emotionally from "mentoring" refer elementary school students to the program. The friendship bond that develops can be particularly rewarding for children and the teens.

High school students are recruited at their schools and sent to one of 22 school sites. As part of the application process, high school students must sign a pledge that they are "alcohol, tobacco and drug free" before being accepted as mentors into the volunteer program. Each school site determines the breadth, scope and frequency of the program, after assessing its priorities, academic challenges and school population. Usually 18 pairs of mentors and pupils meet on weekday afternoons for 40 minutes of STUDY time and 20 minutes of BUDDY time.

Two adult coordinators, who coordinate the teacher referrals, the parent permission letters, and create the teen and elementary school student STUDY BUDDY team, supervise each school site's program.



Please continue to support the PTA...

- If you haven't already, become a PTA member! Membership forms are available in the front office. \$25 for a family membership and it includes a student directory.
- Sign up with eScrip @ www.escrip.com. Our group name is *Sycamore Ridge PTA* and our *Group ID# is 500002133*
- Collect and turn in Box Tops for Education. Collection box is located in the school office.
- Attend restaurant family dinner nights
- Volunteer for a PTA program (Everyone a Reader, the Jog-a-thon, Dad's Club, etc.)



Time: A Parent's Most Precious Gift

If you want to give your child a truly memorable gift for the holidays this year, take a tip from principals and teachers and give something special that doesn't cost a dime – a gift of your time and attention. In today's fast-paced society, where busy parents rarely find time to spend with their children, nothing is so dear and precious to a child as a parent's time and undivided attention.

Sadly, parents today spend much less time with children than they once did. Psychologists are calling *the decline in the amount of time a child spends with a parent – Time Poverty*. A study published in Family Circle magazine notes that while mothers in 1959 reported playing with their child about 275 hours a year, or 23 hours a month, by 1983 the time had shrunk to only 75 hours a year – or about 6 hours a month!

Most elementary principals believe that this lack of adult interaction takes a toll on a child's school performance. Therefore, they recommend time as an ideal gift for children from parents (as well as grandparents and other adult relatives). It is a flexible gift suitable for any age, schedule, and budget. This year try tucking an "IOU an Outing" greeting card with your child's holiday gifts. Here are some suggestions for using the gift of time:

For the child who likes to read – or who should read more: Make visits to the library a fun time between you and your child. Spend time browsing through the shelves and discussing different kinds of books before selecting those special ones to take home. Then set aside some time each day to read and discuss the books together.

For the child who is crazy about sports: The opportunities are many in our area, and can fit any budget. Take in a local high school or college game and cheer for the home team. Or watch an important game on television together. Or you might try swimming together at an indoor pool, or jogging some laps around the track.

For the child who likes to cook: Offer to help your child plan and prepare a simple, inexpensive meal for the family or a few friends. Sit down with your child to plan the menu, look up recipes, make out a shopping list, schedule the food preparation and create a centerpiece theme. On the big day, watch your child glow with pleasure, both from accomplishment and from appreciation of your presence.

For the child who loves nature: Spend an afternoon with your child at your local nature center or zoo. Plan a hike in the country or a walk along the beach. Take your child to the library and introduce him/her to nature books. Or you might want to set up a bird feeder in your backyard. Give your child a bird identification book and share the enjoyment of observing and identifying winged visitors.

For the child interested in art: Plan a visit to one of our great California art museums like the Los Angeles Museum of Art, the Norton Simon or Getty Museums, the Huntington Library or even your local art galleries. Browse in the museum gift shop afterward and let your child select postcards or prints of favorite paintings.

For the child who adores family games: Buy your child a new, age-appropriate game – or an old favorite like Monopoly or Scrabble – that the family can play together. Even if it is only a simple card game, like Old Maid or War, children cherish the opportunity to compete against their parents and other family members – and sometimes win!

For the child who enjoys music: Check out the performance calendars for the local theaters and colleges which provide wonderful, inexpensive concert opportunities for you and your child. Real “live” entertainment is a great motivator. Remember that your child will be as happy accompanying you to a high school band or church choir concert as to a symphony or musical performance – especially if you top it off with an ice cream at the local ice cream store.

Think about making a New Year’s resolution to give a special gift of time and attention to your child, not just on holidays, but all year long. It is one of the most important contributions you can make to your child’s education and quality of life.

As Walt Whitman expressed it so eloquently in *Song of Myself*:

“When I give, I give myself.”



The Sycamore Ridge Round-Up is provided by the

SYCAMORE RIDGE PTA

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THE SYCAMORE RIDGE PTA, DEL MAR UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT IS A MEMBER OF THE NORTH COUNTY COASTAL COUNCIL AND NINTH DISTRICT OF THE CALIFORNIA CONGRESS OF PARENTS, TEACHERS, AND STUDENTS (CCPTS).



Please check your BoxTops many of them are expiring on **12/31/09**. I will be sending in BoxTops over the holiday break, so please turn any BoxTops in by **December 18th**. BoxTops can be turned in on a submission page or in a Ziploc bag.

Thank you to everyone who has diligently clipped your BoxTops. So far our school has raised **\$197** from BoxTops thanks to all of you!

Questions? Please contact Maia Starling: maia_starling@yahoo.com or 858-354-1183.

LOST & FOUND

Missing your lunch box? . . . A favorite sweater or jacket? Check out the overflowing "Lost and Found" cart! **All unclaimed items will be donated to charity as of 3:00 p.m., December 18, 2009.**



Did you know Sycamore Ridge collects and recycles your old ink cartridges? And cell phones? And game consoles? And laptops? We also collect and recycle: video games, DVDs, iPods, digital cameras, GPS devices, and calculators. We send them to a company called Cartridges for Kids: (cartridgesforkids.com) and they send us a small rebate for our efforts. At this time we **DO NOT** take hard drives or monitors. So remember your child's school the next time you change your

ink cartridge! Contact Mrs. Oliveira (joliveira@dmusd.org) with any questions.

eScrip

Do you want to give FREE money to Sycamore Ridge? It is so easy! Just register for eScrip! eScrip is a free program where VONS and other participating merchants contribute a percentage of your purchases directly to the school. eScrip can contribute thousands of dollars through parents just shopping as usual! If you don't know your VONS card number, please call 1-877-723-3929, and VONS will supply you with the number. When you know your VONS club Number, please go online to www.escrip.com and register!! Our group name is "Sycamore Ridge PTA" and our Group ID # is **500002133**.

If you have any questions or if you don't yet have a VONS card, feel free to contact the Sycamore Ridge eScrip coordinator, Branden Belford, at bbelford@san.rr.com

Stallion Q & A: Answers for parents about the Stallion way of life.

Do you have a question about how things work at Sycamore Ridge? Confused about fundraisers, programs, academics? In an effort to better serve parents (new and old), the PTA offers a question & answer column. Simply email your question to Maia Starling at: maia_starling@yahoo.com and she will respond to you in a timely manner. Questions may then be published in the next newsletter (names omitted) to help better inform other parents.