

SYCAMORE RIDGE



Round-Up

February 2010

Vol. 5, Issue 3



Principal's Message

Dear Stallion Parents and Guardians:

As most of you know by now, our school has implemented a new lunchtime schedule on a trial basis. Several schools in neighboring districts, and across the United States, have tried the "Play First" Lunch schedule with many benefits including:

- Improved student behavior on the playground and in the classroom
- Students are more relaxed and focused on eating rather than thinking about getting out to the playground to play
- More food eaten; increased fluid intake
- Students return to the classroom more quickly and are settled and **ready to learn**

Before eating lunch, students are dismissed to the playground to play followed by time for going to the restroom, washing and sanitizing hands before sitting down to eat in the lunch areas.

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Bookmark Design Winners

Special Education Symposium

...and so much more!



A Note from the PTA President...

Belated Happy New Year to everyone! I hope that everyone had a restful and restorative winter break and is ready tackle the next half of the school year. The PTA is working on a number of things that will be coming up in the future months. As you know, the 5th Annual Jog-a-thon scheduled for January 20th has been rescheduled to March 17th due to rain.

All proceeds from the Jog-a-thon will be donated directly to the Del Mar Schools Education Foundation in support of our Extended Studies Curriculum staff. If you already sent in your pledge sheets and /or donations- THANK YOU!! All cash/check donations received already will be forwarded to the DMSEF immediately. Pledge sheets that were collected will be kept and tallied in March when the jog-a-thon occurs.

(Continued on page 14)

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

FEBRUARY

1st & 2nd
No School– Local Release Days

4th
Reflections Reception
6:30pm-7:30pm (MUR)

5th
Student Council Spirit Day– Hero Day

10th
School Tour for Parents of Incoming
1st-6th grade students
9:45am (school office)

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

17th
DMUSD School Board Meeting
Del Mar Hills PAC

18th
Dad's Lunch
11:30am-12:15pm

19th
PTA General Association Meeting
8:00am (MUR)

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

22nd-26th
Parent/Teacher Conference Week
12:30pm dismissal
ALL GRADES ALL WEEK

26th
Yearbook Orders Due!

MARCH

2nd
4th Grade Musical
(Ms. Howard's Class)
"Go West!"
8:15am (MUR)

3rd
4th Grade Musical
(Ms. Money's Class)
"Go West!"
8:15am (MUR)

4th
4th Grade Musical
(Mrs. Mackie's Class)
"Go West!"
8:15am (MUR)

5th
Dr. Seuss Dress As Your
Favorite Book Character
Spirit Day

Dad's Read In/ Lunch
10:50am

6th
RidgeRaising
6:30pm
Grand Del Mar

17th
Jog-A-Thon
9:30am (upper grade field)

24th
101 Dalmations
1:30pm (MUR)

26th
101 Dalmations
7:00pm (MUR)

APRIL

5th-9th
Spring Break
NO SCHOOL

22nd
Family Movie Night
TBD (MUR)

23rd
1st Grade Musical
"Sounds A Little Fishy To Me"
8:15am (MUR)

A NOTE FROM THE OFFICE:

The office was just informed that Volunteer badges will now cost \$5 each. Please remember to return all badges when you check out so we can keep our replacement costs down. Thank you for all your volunteer time.

Thank You!

The PTA would like to thank Todd Saier, Ocean Air PTA Treasurer, for preparing our tax return. In lieu of payment, Mr. Saier asked us to donate his fee to the DMSEF to benefit all of our children.



CONGRATULATIONS! Sycamore Stallion Superstars!

The following Sycamore Stallion Superstars were chosen by their teachers as persons of excellent character. The Superstars were recognized at the all-school Village Meeting on January 13, 2010.

Kindergarten

Mrs. Jones: Helen
Mrs. Litt/Ms. VanDeweghe: B.J.
Mrs. Wojtkowski: Zeb

First Grade

Ms. Matthews/Mrs. Howell: Bella
Ms. Saunders: Karly
Mrs. Schengel: Martha
Ms. Waxman/Mrs. White: Malak

Second Grade

Mrs. Chung: Conor
Mrs. Shea: Ole
Mrs. Johnson: John

Third Grade

Mrs. Hanna: Andrew
Ms. Hasler: William

Fourth Grade

Ms. Howard: Zachary
Mrs. Mackie: Jeffrey
Ms. Money: Siana

Fifth Grade

Mrs. Schwab/ Mrs. Solowczuk: Keaton
Ms. Stanton: Anthony

Sixth Grade

Mr. Dahl: Lynn
Mrs. Mokiao: Tegan



Ridge Raising 2010

A SYCAMORE RIDGE PTA EVENT

Saturday, March 6,

2010

6:30 pm

the Grand Del Mar Clubhouse Grill

Silent auction, no host bar & lite dinner fare. Stick around after the auction for music & dancing with Primo DJs.

Tickets go on sale February 3rd

Check out our blog at www.sycamoreridgeridgeraising.blogspot.com

We would like to thank our generous donors:



SCOTT WHITE
CONTEMPORARY ART



Kindergarten Fun!

The Kindergarteners are having fun and keeping busy. We ended the 2009 year with a gingerbread unit. The kindergarteners enjoyed comparing gingerbread stories, designing gingerbread houses, and making their own gingerbread people.

We began the year by decorating the classrooms with penguins and snowmen, as we studied winter weather. We have been busy practicing and learning songs and poems for our Valentine's Day performance in February.

Extended Studies is a very special part of our Kindergarten program. We love going to computer lab, music, art, and science with our specialist teachers. Here are some of the things we have been learning:

In the Science Lab with Miss Dumoff, we studied solids, gases, and liquids. Students observed the process of evaporation as Ms. Dumoff placed water under heat. We made predictions and reviewed the results.

In music with Mrs. Ilkhanipour, the students have started to learn some of the songs for our Spring play. Students are also learning the stories that go along with these songs. Save the date for our performance on May 17th!

In technology, with Mrs. Oliveira, students are using Kid Pix to write sentences. She supports our weather unit through the use of united streaming video clips. We are continuing to use www.starfall.com to practice our reading skills.

In art, our instructor, Ms. Folgner, introduced the elements of art: shapes, lines, and texture. The students used these elements to draw dolls, dogs and cats. The students then created patterns as a decoration. Look for their wonderful creations to be displayed at our Open House.

Sycamore Ridge is a great place to learn and grow. The Kindergarteners have begun their educational careers with enthusiasm and excitement. The parent support has been amazing. This is a special year of growth and we are excited to be a part of it!

Sincerely,

The Kindergarten Team





Library News

Mrs. Kathy Pechtimaldjian

Wow, what a crazy rainy week we've just had—great reading weather. Of course, the weather books are flying off the shelves. Luckily, thanks to your generosity, I just placed an order for about 100 new books that should be arriving sometime in February.

Here in the library we've been staying warm and dry reading the nominations for the California Young Reader Medal 2009-2010. For those of you not familiar with this award, it is an honor given to a book that has been voted on by only California students and educators. Students and parents can nominate books. There are several categories. For grades K-2 we read the picture books, and for grades 3-6 we read the older reader picture books. Once done, the students will vote for their favorite book. Our school's votes are then sent to the CYRM office and the winners are announced in May. I will let you know the winning titles.

In December we had a Bookmark Design Contest. Students who wanted to, could design a reading-themed bookmark. We had some fantastic designs this year. For each grade level, a design was selected to be made into "real" bookmarks that the whole school could enjoy. Congratulations to the following students: Tabrezia (K); Joseph (1st); Justin (2nd); Chloe (3rd); Michael (4th); Anthony (5th); Wesley (6th); and James (6th, Honorable Mention). All the designs are displayed in the library so come by and take a look.



Coming Up:

In February we will begin our annual reading incentive program. This year's theme: CHILL OUT and READ! More information will be forthcoming about the program but, as in the past, we will be having weekly prizes given out as incentives. Donations are greatly appreciated. Gift cards to local stores and restaurants work really well (especially Barnes and Noble). We also need small prizes such as mechanical pencils and erasers.

We will be celebrating Dr. Seuss' birthday on March 5th by reading favorite Dr. Seuss stories and having a *Dress As Your Favorite Book Character* spirit day. It should be interesting and fun.

In May, we will have our annual Used Book Sale so if you have any gently used books (adult and children's) that you would like to donate, please drop them off in the office. Thank you to the Dewey family and the Ettouati family for their donations.

Thank you all for your support and for encouraging your child's love of reading.



Be on the lookout for a yearbook order form coming home February 17th! You'll have the opportunity to purchase your 2009/2010 yearbook for the early bird special price of \$25 until February 26th. Yearbooks will arrive in early June and will be filled with photos of this wonderful Sycamore Ridge school year. Our yearbook creator, Jen Ernst, is hard at work! If YOU have any photos you'd like to share with us, please contact PTA Historian, Lisa Blazer at ldblazer@san.rr.com or 858-945-6920. We would love to have more photos to choose from as we create yearbook and school album pages. Thank you!

“Stallion” Greetings From the 3rd Grade Classrooms to our Sycamore Ridge Families:

We're halfway through the year, and it's been so much fun. We'd like to take this opportunity to share a few highlights from the year. To begin with, one of the social studies standards in the third grade is to study "American Indian nations in our local region from long ago and in the recent past." During our study of the Kumeyaay this fall, we participated in an on-site field trip: the Kumeyaay trunk show presented by Heritage Tours of San Diego. This hands-on, student-centered, interactive presentation was the launch for the new unit of study. The students were able to see and touch various Kumeyaay artifacts, both from long ago and some that were created more recently. What an exciting way to appreciate the history of Native Americans in our local community!

In December we embarked on another grand adventure when we traveled on a field trip to the San Dieguito Heritage Museum in Encinitas. We had completed our study of San Diego history, and when we arrived at this site, our third grade students were able to step back in time. We marveled at the artifacts and photos on display at this museum, which included exhibits that truly reflected the great changes that have occurred in San Diego County. Amazingly, one of the docents at the museum is a direct descendant of one of the original families that settled in Encinitas in the 1800s. We felt as if this uniquely personal perspective made our visit all the more memorable.

Of course, the exciting activities that take place in our third grade classrooms are too numerous to outline here, but we felt that sharing just a few of our special experiences might provide our Sycamore Ridge community with a better sense of the learning that takes place in third grade. Quite soon, we'll begin our rehearsals for "Vacation on Mars", a musical play that reinforces third grade earth science standards pertaining to the Solar System. We'll sing, we'll dance, we'll laugh, and we'll have a jolly time. That is, after all, the best part of learning, isn't it?

From our classrooms to your homes, we wish you all a wonderful remainder of the school year...

-Miss Hasler & Mrs. Hanna
The Third Grade Team

What fun we had at our holiday party!



Principal's Message
(Continued from page 1)

Our new schedule is as follows:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

11:30-11:52- PLAY

11:30 Bell: Start of recess

11:52 Bell: End of recess

- Students walk back to classroom to pick up home packed lunches and check Hot Lunch List.
- Hand sanitizer positioned in front of Hot Lunch line.
- Noon Duty Supervisors positioned in both lunch areas with hand sanitizer.

11:55 – 12:12 EAT

12:12 Bell: Clean up and dismissal, back to class.

12:15 Bell: Students in line for class.

Wednesday

11:20-11:40- PLAY

11:20 Bell: Start of recess

11:38 Bell: End of recess

11:40 – 11:57 EAT

11:57 Bell: Clean up and dismissal, back to class.

12:00 Bell: Students in line for class.

We hope that the “Play First Lunch” schedule will promote healthy eating and improve student achievement. Since the children are eating lunch about a half an hour later than what they have been used to, you may consider sending a hearty mid-morning snack with your child each day.

During the month of May, I will be sending out a survey to parents, staff and students to re-evaluate how things are working, and to determine if additional adjustments need to be made. Until then, please feel free to contact me with any questions or comments about this new initiative.

As we move into the second half of our school year, I continue to be amazed and appreciative of the wonderful people and programs that make our school so special. We truly are lucky to have an involved school community with some of the most caring and capable people I have had the pleasure of working with in my 20 plus years in education. In the spirit of celebration (this is our fifth year school birthday) and appreciation of the outstanding, well rounded education our program provides, please enjoy the following articles written by two of our 6th grade Stallion students who shared their thoughts about what they love about their school...

The reason I love Sycamore Ridge sooo much is because of all the smiling faces of other students and teachers when you go through the front door. I also love Sycamore Ridge because of all the great ESC programs such as: science by Miss Dumoff, tech by Mrs. Oliveira, art by Mrs. Gilbert and Mrs. Folgner, P.E. by Coach Sink, and Music by Mrs. Ilkhanipour, who also is in the works of providing the musical, 101 Dalmatians. Next, is one of my favorite reasons why I love Sycamore Ridge. It is because of all it's extra activities students can participate in. There are many like The 101 Dalmatians musical, student council, geek squad, band and many more. Although I have never been in any of Mrs. Ilkhanipour's musicals I assume they are a bunch of fun. Student council is a whole ton of fun. I have been in student council before, last year as the student body treasurer. In student council students can connect with the school by helping with newsletters, spirit days and more. Coach Sink provides us with great competitions like ultimate football and handball tournaments, which are always fun. All of these things combined create one fun and great school. Go Sycamore Ridge Stallions!

Written by: Colby, 6th grade student

Written By: Eve, 6th grade student

My name is Eve. I came to Sycamore Ridge School as a fifth grader. Though I was nervous about starting the year at a new school, I quickly felt like I was a part of this great big family of kind-hearted students and teachers.

As a new student, I was shocked at all the activities that Sycamore Ridge had to offer; a band that practiced after school twice a week, a school play directed by our music teacher, Ms. Ilkhanipour, a "Geek Squad" that helped Ms. Oliveira, our technology teacher, clean and take care of our computers, a student council, recess activities with our P.E. teacher Coach Sink, and many other new activities that I wasn't used to.

What mostly caught my attention was the school play. Last year, we did a production of Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory and this year, we are doing a production of 101 Dalmatians. I was thrilled at how professional the process was. We had real auditions, practiced during our lunch-recess time, and sold tickets for the performances. After all, I was only used to the educational 1st and 2nd grade plays at my old school where the roles were picked out of a hat.

Coach Sink has kept all of us healthy by organizing recess games like ultimate football, soccer, and many other fun games. He even organizes handball and ultimate football tournaments!

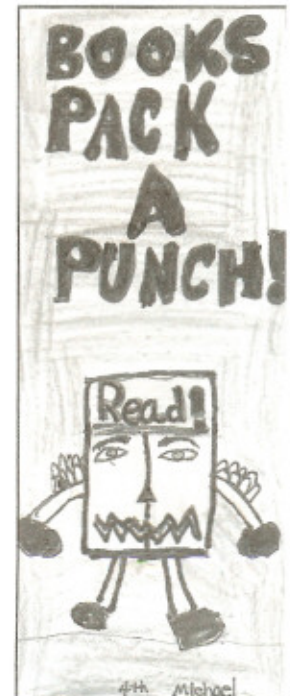
I think that Sycamore Ridge's peace building policy has made this school a great environment for everyone. We have Peace Coaches that hand out praise notes to students that show caring, fairness, trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, or citizenship. This keeps our school a safe, bully-free school where everyone is treated with respect. Go Stallions!

Thank you parents for your involvement in our school, (we love our volunteers, you make a difference, and the children benefit from the time you spend working with us whether it be in the classroom or on the PTA), for your financial support of our enrichment programs (we can offer the array of ESC programs in the arts, sciences, technology and physical education due to your contributions), and for your interest in helping your child be the best learner and citizen possible.

As ever,
Emily Morris, Principal

**PTA General Association Meeting
Friday, February 19th
8:00am (MUR)**

Please join us for our next PTA General Association Meeting. Nominating Committee Elections will be held. If you are interested in getting involved with the PTA next year, please plan to attend this meeting. We would love to answer any questions you may have. For further information, please contact Shannon Cary: shancary@gmail.com or 858-481-5489.



Extended Studies News



Technology

Mrs. Jennifer Oliveira

Teachers are testing out a new way to show student work on the web. We always make sure only first names are shown. You may have seen a student news report given by your class, or some weather reports, or even PowerPoint Presentations via your teacher's web page. If you haven't, don't worry, they're coming. Here are some of the projects we're working on lately:

Kindergarten: Typing sentences and drawing in Kid Pix
 First Grade: Creating a booklet about the seasons in Kid Pix
 Second Grade: Typing stories and recording voices in Kid Pix

Third Grade: Creating Kumeyaay PowerPoint Presentations with voice recordings

Fourth Grade: Recording explorer interviews in GarageBand.

Fifth Grade: Creating Colonial brochures

Sixth Grade: Creating Volcano brochures

Thanks, as always, to parent support for Technology and all of our amazing programs at Sycamore Ridge!



Music

Mrs. Stephanie Ilkhanipour

Notes from the Music Room!

What a great performance the 5th grade presented. We learned so much about the skeletal structure, and had lots of fun!! Way to go 5th grade!

The 2nd graders will present their musical, *BUGZ!* on Friday, February 19th at 8:15 am in the Sycamore Ridge MUR. They are so excited about this play, and it is one of my favorites. We hope to see you there.

The 4th grade will present their play, *Go West*, in March. Because this is a very small play, the students chose to do a play per classroom. So, each class will be presenting their program on different days. Ms. Howard's class will be presenting on Tuesday, March 2. Miss Money will present on Wednesday, March 3rd and Mrs. Mackie will present on Thursday, March 4th. Each show will be at 8:15 am in the MUR.

101 Dalmatians practice is in full swing. We will present this full-scale musical at a matinee performance on Wednesday, March 24th at 1:30 pm. Our final performance of this show will be on Friday, March 26th at 7:00 pm. Please watch your child's Wednesday folders for ticket prices and seating information.

The 6th graders are almost finished turning their poetry into songs. They will be working with Mrs. Oliveira in the Technology lab to add their voices and instruments to their lyrics. Students will contribute one song, and we will make a complete classroom CD to share with their teacher. I can't wait to hear how this turns out. We have some very talented 6th graders.

Now that the 5th grade is finished with their play, we will be discussing American history and the music of our country. We will talk about blues and jazz and the student will create their very own blues or jazz song. They will be working with the Garage band technology to complete this project.

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

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.

Science

Miss Kelsey Dumoff



This month I will be highlighting the 4th graders and 1st graders. Need an electrician? The 4th graders have learned so much about magnetism in the past couple of months and are currently studying electricity. This week they constructed simple, series and parallel circuits and learned about the flow of electricity. Next they will be using circuits to test whether objects are insulators or conductors.

The first graders have been doing a fantastic job identifying the properties of solids and liquids and making careful observations. This month we are starting our plants unit. The students are excited to learn about how plants grow and they are even planting their own grass seeds. We are also going to take a walk in our Sycamore Ridge Learning Garden to observe other types of plants and flowers and learn about the different parts of a plant.

Other Science News:

- Please visit my blog on the Sycamore Ridge website! On there I will have current information about specific projects grade levels are working on as well as fun science websites. I am also working on posting upcoming community science events that you can attend with your families.

- The Invention Showcase inventions are due on February 18th! Please stop by the library during conference week to check out the wonderful inventions.

The District Invention Showcase is on Thursday, March 4, 2010 at Torrey Hills. All families are welcome to attend even if your student's invention is not being displayed at Torrey Hills.



1st graders planting grass & alfalfa seeds (at left)

At right: 4th graders making circuits



Physical Education

Coach John Sink



We are heading into 2010 with new and exciting activities in physical education, tournaments at lunch recess and a school wide Jr. Olympics Skills Competition.

Congratulations to all students who competed in the Ultimate football tournament. Twenty teams competed for the championship with the "Bag of Skittles" team taking the title. Great Job! We will be starting our annual Hand Ball Tournament soon.

Come Out and Give It a Shot!!! The Del Mar Jr. Olympic Skills Competition is a free local grassroots skills competition that provides boys and girls ages 8 to 13, the opportunity to showcase their athletic abilities in four sports - basketball, soccer, tennis and track & field. The Del Mar Jr. Olympic Skills Competition encourages youth participation in sport and emphasizes fair and friendly competition. Youngsters can participate in any or all of the individual sports and advance through two levels of competition, to include a district qualifying event and a District Final. Each sport is scored individually and the boys and girls compete separately. At the District Qualifier, students will be able to earn a 1st, 2nd, or 3rd place ribbon while competing against their peers at their school. The top scoring athlete in each event, age group, and gender will advance to district Finals where they will have a chance to become a District Champion. Mark your calendars for Wednesday, April 14th. If you are available to help with the event, please contact me.

Grab your running shoes. The Jog-A-Thon has been rescheduled for March 17th. The Jog-A-Thon is a no-pressure, fundraising event that is fun for students, and offers both participants and sponsors an opportunity to support Sycamore Ridge.



You are invited to attend the annual
North Coastal SUPERINTENDENTS FORUM
 Brought to you by your North Coastal Council PTA

PTA

every child, every voice

Take this opportunity to hear first hand from Superintendents of **Del Mar, Carlsbad, Encinitas, Solana Beach, and San Dieguito School Districts**. Superintendents will give an update on the important issues concerning your district and your school followed by a question and answer period.

Friday, March 5, 2010

Encinitas Community Center

1140 Oakcrest Park Drive, Encinitas, 92024

(I-5, Encinitas Blvd. East, Right on Balour, Left at Oak Crest Park Drive and Left into the Community Center parking lot. Follow NCC PTA Superintendents Forum signs through the building and to the left.)

9:15-- 9:30am: Refreshments

9:30 – 9:50am: General Meeting/Annual NCC Award Presentations*

10:00 – 11:30am: Superintendents Forum

Everyone Welcome—PTA members, Parents, and the Community at large!

Issues to address include:

- California State Budget Crisis
- State Testing programs and what they mean to your school
- Parent Involvement at school
- School Development (New Openings? Remodeling? Changes?)

Specific issues you would like addressed? Contact Ryn Spiering ryn@spiering.com

***NCC PROGRAM AWARD PRESENTATIONS:** Unit PTAs will be recognized with **Council Awards of Excellence** for providing for our children through outstanding **Character, Community Service, Communication, Parent Involvement, and Reflections** programs. Contact Ryn Spiering at ryn@spiering.com to share information on an outstanding program provided by your PTA.

NCCSE
NORTH COASTAL
CONSORTIUM FOR
SPECIAL EDUCATION



PE 108

15th ANNUAL NCCSE COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
SPECIAL EDUCATION PARENT SYMPOSIUM

2010 Special Education Parent Symposium

Target Audience

Parents whose children receive services through an Individualized Education Program (IEP) in NCCSE member school districts and interested staff who work within the NCCSE member school districts.

About the Symposium

Free half-day parent conference. Includes numerous workshops on special education related topics, time to meet other parents, and to speak with over 20 local agencies who serve people with disabilities and their families. Free continental breakfast provided.

<i>Date & Time</i>		<i>Location</i>
Saturday, March 6, 2010		North County Regional Education Center 255 Pico Avenue San Marcos, CA 92069 www.nccse.org
8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.	Registration	
8:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.	Agency Resource Fair	
9:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.	Keynote and workshops	

Register on line at www.nccse.org, or mail this registration form to NCCSE, 255 Pico Avenue, Suite 101, San Marcos, CA 92069, or fax to Fabiola Vasquez at 760-471-2008.

More details will be available at the NCCSE home page, www.nccse.org, starting in January 2010 or contact Lisa Houghtelin the NCCSE parent liaison at lhoughtelin@sdcoe.net or 760-761-5120.

Registration is limited to the first 200 participants. No child care is available.

PLEASE FILL IN ALL FIELDS

Name _____

School _____

Role (e.g., Parent, Teacher) _____

District _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

*President's Message
(Continued from page 1)*

Mark your calendars to join us for the 5th Annual Reflections Reception on February 4th from 6:30-7:30pm in the MUR. Come and view our 125+ entries that were received back in October for this National PTA Arts Recognition and Achievement program. We had submissions in the areas of Visual Arts, Literature, Music, Photography and Dance. Congratulations to all of our Stallion Artists for their participation in this unique program that encourages exploration of various art forms.

Excitement is building for our 3rd Annual RidgeRaising event on Saturday, March 6th at the Grand Del Mar. RidgeRaising is an adult only, community building event that includes a silent auction featuring unique teacher features where children have a special opportunity to participate in a fun activity with a teacher, themed baskets donated by each grade level and other items donated by businesses in our community. The proceeds from this evening will go to support the PTA and Sycamore Ridge School. Please check out the website at www.sycamoreridgeridgeraising.blogspot.com to purchase tickets to the event, buy opportunity drawing tickets for a chance to win a \$1000 gift certificate to Nordstrom and preview silent auction items that will be available for bid at the event. In addition to the many fabulous donated items, there will be art projects created by our own Stallion artists up for auction as well. Look for more information on these awesome auction items to come. We hope to see you all there!

Be on the lookout for yearbook order forms coming home soon. Our Yearbook Chairs Jen Ernst and Lisa Blazer have been busy recording our school year on film and putting their various photos together in to create a special memory for our children. Yearbooks are a wonderful way for our kids to remember their school year. Orders will be due by February 26 and will be delivered in June. Prices will be \$25 for the first yearbook, \$20 for additional books.

The Dad's Club is busy as well. Under the leadership of Mark Belford, the Dad's Club has scheduled several upcoming events including two Dad's Lunch days on Thursday, February 18th and Friday, March 5th. A movie night is planned for April 22nd with another lunch date to follow in May on the 18th. As always, if Dad is not available to attend, Mom, Grandpa/Grandma, etc. are welcome to attend instead!

A quick update on PTA membership- a total of 180 families have joined the PTA this year. Thank you to all that have joined the PTA this year and are supporting all of our programs at Sycamore Ridge. If you have not joined the PTA yet, you still can! Maybe you are new to the school, maybe you just didn't fill out the form in the beginning of the school year because you were too overwhelmed by the all the paperwork due in those early weeks. Whatever the reason, your membership in the PTA is needed and appreciated. Not only does your membership benefit the PTA here at Sycamore Ridge and provide funding for the numerous programs that we provide to our students and families but it is also important in the bigger picture. According to Jo Loss, President of the California State PTA, "In this year of unprecedented school budget and economic challenges, the mission of the 112-year-old PTA becomes ever more crucial for the future of children in our state and nation. Now more than ever, PTA is a rallying point for parents and teachers who resolve to build a stronger and more cohesive school community and a culture of success for all students." The PTA is able to use the power of its membership numbers to lobby in Sacramento to fight for the much needed funding for our schools. Help support all of our efforts by joining the PTA today! Membership is \$25 for a family membership and forms are available in the school office or I can email the form to you. Just drop me an email at shancary@gmail.com or call me and I will get you a form.

I know we are only half way done with this school year but it is already time to think about next year's PTA Executive Board. We are currently seeking volunteers to serve on the PTA Board in various positions. There is no experience necessary, just the desire to help and serve our school. Training is available, and new, fresh faces are always needed and welcome! If you are interested in serving on the PTA Executive Board next year or would like to volunteer for a PTA sponsored program, please contact me and I will get you more information. Without you, the PTA won't exist! Please consider volunteering your time for this valuable organization at our wonderful school. Our next PTA General Association meeting will be February 19th at 8:05 in the MUR where the nominating committee will be elected. We are still looking for 2 alternates to serve on the nominating committee which is charged with identifying potential members to fill PTA Executive Board positions and Program Chair positions for next year. Again, if you are interested in serving on the nominating committee please contact me immediately for more information.

Finally, I would like to encourage all of you to check out the monthly Board of Trustees meetings that take place, normally, at Del Mar Hills MUR. If you are unable to attend the meetings, agendas, board packets and minutes are available for review on the district website at www.dmusd.org under the Board of Trustees link. Click on "Board Meetings" on the Board of Trustees page and the list of board meetings/agendas will come up. There are many big issues facing the Del Mar Union School District right now, including how to close a forecasted \$2 million budget shortfall for next year, where to move the district office, employee childcare and preschool before May 2011. I am sure that many of you are aware of the 7/11 committee and its charge of identifying surplus space within the district. The findings have been presented to the Board of Trustees and the Board is now poised to make a decision regarding potentially closing a school within our district or co-locating the district office at an existing school site. The final report from the 7/11 committee is posted on the district website at www.dmusd.org. Click on the 7/11 District Advisory Committee link and scroll down to the January 13, 2010 meeting where you can click on the link to download the final report. No decisions have been made yet by the Board of Trustees, but this year will prove to be one of tough decisions to meet our budget constraints.

Best wishes for a wonderful Spring! I hope to see you all at one of the many PTA events coming up in these upcoming months!

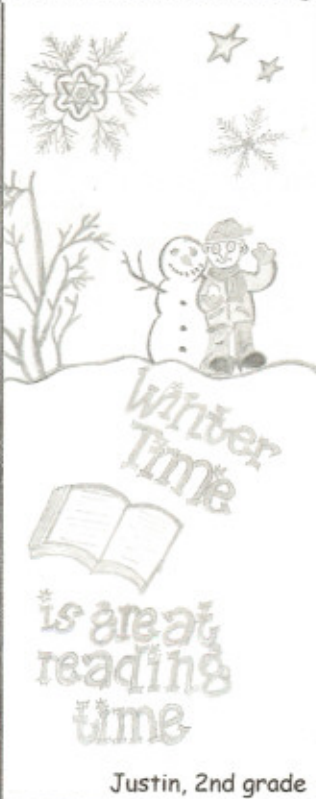
-Shannon Cary, PTA President

Jog-A-Thon March 17th!

Our annual Jog-A-Thon has been postponed to Wed. March, 17th due to the poor weather. Please contact Shelley Aberle at: saberle@san.rr.com if you are no longer able to help out with the event or if you are now able to volunteer some time that morning: We would still love to have you!



Pledge forms or donations may still be turned in to your classroom teacher or the front office. Please make checks payable to "Sycamore Ridge PTA". The PTA will donate any funds to the DMSEF right away to help save our ESC programs. Please contact Shelley Aberle or Maia Starling: maia_starling@yahoo.com if you have any questions.



Justin, 2nd grade



Joseph, 1st grade

Student Council News

Mrs. Oliviera would like to thank the Fall Student Council members for all of their hard work. Elections for Spring Student Council will deliver another group of great kids focused on school spirit, giving, and community. I am excited to work with this new group and will introduce them in the next newsletter.

Upcoming Student Council Events:

- * Valentines for Vets- First week of February
- * Hero Day- Spirit Day- February 5th
- * Dr. Seuss's Birthday + Dad's Day + Read-in- March- March 5th.

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).

Save the Date for the Upcoming Dad's Club Events:

February 18th:
Dad's Lunch
11:30am

March 5th:
Dad's Read-in and
Lunch 10:50am

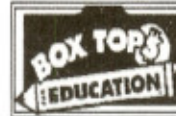


Stallion Q & A: Answers for parents about the Stallion way of life.

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.



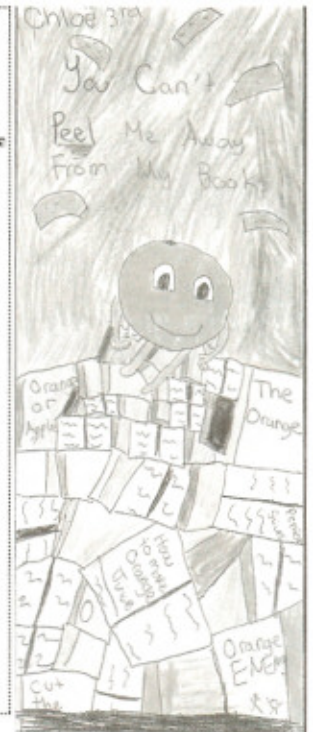
5th Grade Field Trip To Ruben H. Fleet Science Museum



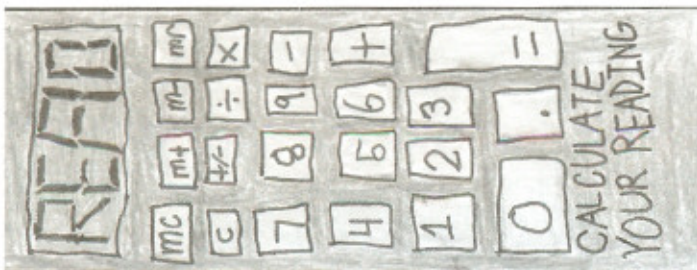
Update

Way to go Stallions! We just received a check for \$277 from BoxTops for our submissions through December. Keep up the good work! Every BoxTop helps the PTA continue to run our programs and support our students.

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



Anthony, 5th Grade



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Sycamore Ridge School

Guiding Students for School Success

Teach respect by daily example

You want your child to show respect for you, his teachers and people in general—not to mention respect for rules and belongings. Teaching respect is a big job. But thankfully, research shows a specific method to use.

Children learn respect when they are *treated* with respect. So make these simple efforts a daily habit:

- **Communicate with respect.** Listen attentively to your child. Don't interrupt. Make sure you understand what he is saying. Focus on the positive.
- **Practice solving problems calmly.** Use "I statements" ("I feel ignored when you don't answer me") instead of hurtful accusations ("You always ignore me").
- **Take responsibility.** When you make an agreement with your child, stick to it—and expect him to do the same. If something goes wrong, the person responsible should make amends and learn from the experience.
- **Care for belongings.** Cleaning up is a way of showing respect for things around the house. Talk about this with your child. What if no one pitched in? What steps, such as organizing toys, could make the job easier?
- **Be encouraging.** Support your child's interests and strengths. Talk about values, including those your family has passed down for generations. What does your child value? How can he show this? Strong character should be a source of pride.



Source: "What Does 'Strong Character' Mean? II," U.S. Department of Education, www.ed.gov/parents/academic/help/citizen/part5.html.

Teach that all actions have consequences

Children's experiences with the world are limited, so it's hard for them to imagine the possible results of their actions. They need parents' help. So even if your child knows whether a choice is right or wrong, help her consider the pros and cons. What could happen in the short and long term? After talking with you, the right choice may be more clear.



Source: Loren G. Yamamoto, MD, MPH, MBA, "Tidbits on Raising Children," The University of Hawai'i System, www.hawaii.edu/medicine/pediatrics/parenting/c32.html.

It's a new year, so turn over a new leaf!



If you've been a little lax in the discipline department lately, resolve to:

- **Set reasonable rules.**
- **Be consistent** about enforcing those rules.
- **Remind yourself** that discipline is not punishment.

Keeping these resolutions just may mean a year of smooth sailing for you and your child!

Use goal-setting to motivate your child

Help your child set goals and you may help her do better in school.

How? By giving her something to work toward—and achieve. Have your child ask herself:

- **What do I want to achieve?**
- **What am I doing to achieve it?**
- **Are the things I'm doing really helping?**

The more specifically she can answer these questions, the better able she may be to set—and reach—her goals.

Source: "Motivating Your Child to Achieve," Jeffco Public Schools, Golden, CO, http://jeffcoweb.jeffco.k12.co.us/communications/csrc/school_newsletters/2004.01.09/assess_news_art.doc.



Poor behavior: Is it a pattern or a phase?

Will your child's bad behavior last, or is it just a phase?

Ask yourself:

- **Are his actions** age-appropriate?
- **Are many of his peers** acting the same way?
- **Has the behavior lasted** six months or fewer?

If the answer to these questions is *yes*, chances are your child is going through a phase. But if the answer is *no*, look for other possible causes for his behavior.

Source: Russell A. Barkley, Ph.D. and Christine M. Benton, *Your Defiant Child*, ISBN: 1-57230-321-2 (The Guilford Press, 1-800-365-7006, www.guilford.com).



Share the school's discipline goals

Your child has misbehaved, and the principal calls you at home. Suddenly you're wondering about the school's discipline policy. To avoid this situation, read the policy ahead of time and review it with your child.

It is likely to:

- **Promote** the safety of students and staff.
- **Make** the school a better place to learn.
- **Focus** on respect for others.
- **Explain** ways to resolve conflicts.
- **Define** discipline problems.
- **List** possible consequences.



After reading the policy, write down any questions. Talk with school staff about them. It's much better to prevent problems than to face them later.

Source: "Discipline K-12 at home and school," Partnership for Learning, www.partnershipforlearning.org/category.asp?CategoryID=11.

Questions & Answers

Q: My third grader has almost no self-control! I know I should be helping him develop it, but I honestly don't know where to start. What can I do?

A: First, don't be too hard on yourself. Chances are you've been nudging your child toward self-control all along—he just hasn't mastered it yet. Even the most well-behaved kids act up (or melt down) sometimes. It's a normal part of childhood.

The key is to help your child develop enough self-control so that he behaves appropriately most of the time—at school, at home and out in public. Just remember: Like discipline in general, learning self-control is a long-term process.

Here are some ways to help your child develop self-control:

- **Be consistent with the rules.** It's critical that your child know exactly what's expected of him. Make sure your rules are simple, fair and consistent.
- **Ignore minor misbehaviors.** Is your child acting up to get attention? Don't reward him by giving him any. This alone might help him rein in his behavior.
- **Point out the positives.** Praise your child when he behaves well. This gives him a huge incentive to continue his good behavior, rather than lapse into bad behavior.
- **Help him succeed.** If your child fusses about being hungry the moment you enter the grocery store, offer him a healthy snack before leaving home. If he's whiny and bored during errands, assign him a fun task to complete while you're running them. In other words, make it easier for him to control himself.



Source: Robin E. Goodman, Ph.D. and Anira Gurian, Ph.D., "About Discipline—Helping Children Develop Self-Control," NYU Child Study Center, www.aboutourkids.org/aboutour/articles/discipline.html.

Banish bullying—teach your child to CARE

Nip bullying in the bud! How? By teaching your child to CARE.

Michele Borba, author of *Parents Do Make a Difference*, suggests responding to your child's unkind behavior by:

- Calling attention to it.
- Asking your child how she'd feel if she were the victim of the behavior.
- Recognizing the consequences. Explain how unkind actions make others feel.
- Expressing disapproval.

Teach your child empathy today, and who knows? You may prevent full-blown bullying tomorrow.

Source: Michele Borba, *Parents Do Make a Difference: How to Raise Kids With Solid Character, Strong Minds and Caring Hearts*, ISBN: 978-0787946050 (Jossey-Bass, 1-877-762-2974, www.josseybass.com).

Don't sabotage your child's attitude toward homework!

You know the old saying, "The apple doesn't fall far from the tree." Well, it applies to attitudes about homework, too. Studies show that when parents look down on homework, their kids tend to do the same. So don't darken your child's attitude toward assignments. If you think homework is a hassle, keep it to yourself!



Source: Harris Cooper, *The Battle Over Homework*, ISBN: 1-4129-3713-2 (Corwin Press, 1-800-233-9936, www.corwinpress.com).

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