

FEBRUARY 2010

Pinellas PTA[®] Courier

Official News of Pinellas County Council of PTAs

everychild.one voice.[®]

Volume 20, Issue 5



**DO
WHAT
WE DO**



**STEPPING
UP TO THE
CHALLENGE**



**WORKING
HAND
IN HAND**

Contents

Celebration of Success	11
Congrats Florida PTA	11
ESE Parent Survey	9
Florida Convention	2
Leadership Conference	2
Leadership Corner	2
NAACP Nominations	13
Nominations	5
PCCPTA Banquet	10
PCSB Parent Update	4
Rally In Tally	10
Rally Registration	12
Reflections Winners	5
Safety Harbor Dads	10
Walk & Safety Fair	3
Your Child's Vision	7

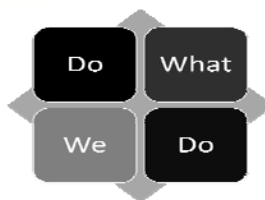
FROM THE PRESIDENT

Over 110 years ago two ladies decided to call a meeting of mothers to discuss their concerns and try to find a solution to the problems facing children. These two ladies **Alice McLellan Birney** and **Phoebe Apperson Hearst** were the start of the PTA. From 1897 to today, the mission of PTA has always centered on protecting children. While the issues have evolved, our focus on child advocacy remains as important as ever. Every year in February we celebrate our beginnings on Founders Day, February 17th. Go to www.pccpta.org click on the resources tab and program link for a PowerPoint presentation by Linda Kearschner on Founders Day.

On January 23rd the Florida PTA Board of Directors discussed the need of the children of Haiti. Without hesitation we believe in *everychild onevoice*. We know immediate support is needed but we were not sure of the current delivery methods. Therefore the board authorized the Programs Committee to form the Florida PTA United Haiti Children's Relief Effort. The committee will research the current need of the children in Haiti, those being relocated to Florida cities and the future needs of the children in Haiti. The committee will respond with some options for local units who wish to support this effort.

When disasters happen, people give with their hearts. Make sure you use your head as well to avoid giving your money to a scam, rather than the true cause. Following the tips below can help ensure your money is going where you intended.

- ask the full name of the organization
- check their mission and how the money will be spent



- ask what percentage of donations go directly to relief and not overhead
- listen to your instincts
- always give a check payable to the organization, never to an individual
- avoid giving cash
- check if they are a registered charity (they must be in Florida) by calling (800) 435-7352 or www.800helpfla.com
- donations are tax deductible if given to credible charities so ask if the donation is tax deductible
- don't be pressured....need help or been scammed? Call Justice & Consumer Service at 464-6200.

February 20th at our 1st Annual "Stepping Up To The Challenge" Walk and Health and Safety Fair, we have decided to turn the "Walk" into a "Walk for the Health of Haiti's Children." Please watch your mailboxes at school or go to www.pccpta.org for pledge sheets and other info. Gather pledges from your friends, family and neighbors to help Pinellas County PTA support the Florida PTA's United Haiti Children's Relief Effort.

Charles

Charles Derexson
President
PCCPTA



PLEASE JOIN US!
PCCPTA Walk & Safety Fair
For Haiti's Children
February 20th
See Page 3 for Details

LEADERSHIP CORNER



Bonnie Choate
VP of Leadership
PCCPTA

A brand new year, a new decade and a renewed commitment to our children, at least that's what 2010 is for me! I hope you will join me in that commitment. We have a lot of great stuff to pass on to you to help you in your individual units and I hope that you will use it.

Presidents, when you receive emails from us through your Area Coordinators, don't forget to pass this along to your boards and to your membership. They want to know what's going on too!

Florida's membership is on track to be awesome this year. Let's have our county be one of the highest. The time is NOW to really make that last push with Founder's Day around the corner! Remember our goals from the beginning of the year: increase male membership, increase grandparent membership and for PTSA's, increase student membership! If you have something that has really helped your unit do this, please share it with us so that we can post your accomplishments and ideas in the next newsletter. Encourage your members to carry their membership cards with them everywhere. Go to our website to see all of the benefits you can receive simply by showing your PTA card. We have worked with businesses throughout our county and will be adding more businesses as they jump on the bandwagon. Check back often.

Remember, each unit must attend two General meetings throughout the year to be eligible for insurance next year. We will be sending reminders to those of you who have not attended any and to those who need one more. You

probably already know who you are, so make plans now to attend the meeting this month!

I look forward to seeing each of you soon and as always, if we can help your units in ANY way, please email me at bcousins15@verizon.net or email your Area Coordinators. That's what we are all here for!

Best,

Bonnie Choate
VP Leadership, PCCPTA
President, Carwise PTSA

Florida PTA everychild:onevoice

PLAN TO ATTEND

It's never too early to plan for a mini-Florida vacation. Florida PTA's 87th annual convention is November 5-7, 2010 at the Gaylord Palms Resort & Convention Center in Kissimmee – our convention rate for the hotel is \$139.00 (plus tax) per night! What a bargain.

2010 LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



Karen Gardner
Leadership Chair

Mark your calendars for July 16-18, 2010. That's when FPTA will host the 74th Annual Leadership Conference at the Innisbrook Resort and Golf Club in Tarpon Springs. This is an important training event that you will not want to miss!

Your FPTA Board of Directors and Office Staff are ready to offer the best training ever of your newly

elected officers, board members and parents. Basic leadership training classes for presidents, treasurers, secretaries etc. along with resource classes, roundtable discussions, and "Hot Topic" classes are being planned. A health and safety fair and program exhibitors with loads of information will round out your weekend. Plan now to include this training in your budget so that your new board can be better informed and can start the new school year planning great things for your students.

One bedroom suites (2 people) will cost \$129.00. The two bedroom suites (up to 4 people) will cost \$234.00. Most suites have fully equipped kitchens for your convenience or you can visit the many restaurants located around the property. Camp Innisbrook is also available through the resort for childcare.

Registration forms for the conference and hotel will be mailed to the local unit presidents in a separate Leadership Conference mail out the beginning of May and will also be available on the FPTA website.

For questions or further information, call Karen Gardner at 727-726-5404 or email at gardnerka@verizon.net

Pinellas PTA Courier

everychild.onevoice.

February 2010

Volume 20 Issue 5

Published monthly August to May.

PCCPTA

President: Charles Derexson
Editor: Paula Keyser

Deadlines

March February 18, 2010
April March 18, 2010
May April 15, 2010

Pinellas County Council PTA "Stepping Up to the Challenge"



Walk & Health & Safety Fair

Our walk will begin on the Pinellas Trail by the Pinellas County Housing Authority & parking lot (11479 Ulmerton Rd., Largo) & continue down the trail to Walsingham Park.

Saturday, February 20th

10a.m.- 2p.m.

**Walsingham Park (shelters #1 & #2)
12211 Walsingham Rd, Largo**

- ✦ Various exhibitors will be on hand
- ✦ Games and crafts for the kids!
- ✦ Refreshments and entertainment throughout the event!
- ✦ First 100 walkers will receive a free welcome bag!



FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CALL 727-584-8180 EMAIL MALFRED@TAMPABAY.RR.COM OR GO TO WWW.PCCPTA.ORG

MANY THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS:



Academic Achievement through Health



Pinellas County School Health Advisory Committee (SHAC)



FCAT Workshops Planned for Parents

Pinellas County Schools' Office of Strategic Partnerships will sponsor a series of hands-on workshops to assist parents in preparing their children for the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT). These workshops for Reading and Math will include general information on the FCAT, breakout sessions specifically designed at elementary, middle and high school grade levels, followed by a question and answer session. Workshops will last approximately two hours.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Time</u>
Thursday, Feb. 4	Dunedin Highland Middle 70 Patricia Ave., Dunedin	5:30-7 p.m.
Saturday, Feb. 6	James W. Johnson Library 1059 18 th Ave. S, St. Petersburg	10 a.m.-noon
Monday, Feb. 8	Safety Harbor Library 101 2 nd St. N., Safety Harbor	6:30-8 p.m.
Tuesday, Feb. 9	Countryside High School 3000 SR 580, Clearwater	5:30-7 p.m.
Saturday, Feb. 13	Dr. Martin Luther King Family Center 1201 Douglas Ave., Clearwater	10 a.m.-noon
Thursday, Feb. 18	St. Petersburg Main Library 3745 9 th Ave. N., St. Petersburg	6-7:30 p.m.
Monday, Feb. 22	Citizens Alliance for Progress 401 E. MLK Jr. Dr., Tarpon Springs	7-8:30 p.m.
Thursday, Feb. 25	Title I Center 2499 25 th St. S., St. Petersburg	6-7:30 p.m.

Follow Pinellas County Schools on Twitter

In an effort to enhance communication with parents, staff and the community, the district posts district news on Twitter. Twitter is the third largest networking and micro-blogging service that lets users send and read other user's updates known as tweets. Sign up to follow district news at www.twitter.com/pcschools.

Student Calendar **Key Dates for 2010-11**

2010

Aug. 24 – First day of school.

Sept. 6 – Labor Day holiday.

Oct. 15 – Schools closed for students.

Nov. 22-26 – Thanksgiving holiday.

Dec. 20-31 – Winter holidays.

2011

Jan. 3 – Schools reopen.

Jan. 17 – MLK Day holiday.

Jan. 21 – Schools closed for students.

Feb. 14 – Schools closed for students.

March 28-April 1 – Spring Break

April 25 – Schools closed for students.

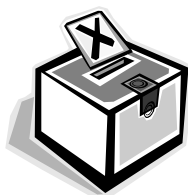
May 30 – Memorial Day holiday.

June 8 – Last day for students.

DISTRICT NEWS

Stay Connected with Pinellas County Schools

You can catch Dr. Janssen's interviews about district news on PCS Journal. This program airs daily on WPDS-TV14 at 7 a.m., 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. on Bright House Networks Ch. 614, Knology Ch. 2, Verizon Ch. 46. Or you can view a segment on the web at www.wpds.tv.



NOMINATIONS & ELECTIONS



Carol Conaway
VP of Leadership
FLPTA

Happy New Year to everyone! While most of the local units are jumping into the second half of the year, revising the budgets and looking at a possible Founders Day program, there is another matter that really needs to be attended to now - forming a Nominating Committee! If this has not been done already, it is imperative that it happen at the next General Meeting. The committee needs time to carefully formulate a slate of officers.

Please remember a few things. The Nominating Committee consists of a group of people who are elected at a General Meeting. The local unit bylaws will state how many should be on this committee, which is an odd number. Once the committee is elected, the President will appoint a Chairman pro tem, who will call the first meeting. At that meeting, a chair is elected by the committee, to preside over the meetings. (Remember that the President may NOT serve on this committee, and people who have served the year before, may not serve again for a year.)

The job of the Nominating Committee is to provide a slate of officers with one person in each position for the Executive Committee. The Executive Committee usually consists of the President, Vice President(s), Secretary, and Treasurer. These are the officers who need to be elected. Please remember that the night of the election, people may run from the floor (as long as the person has been a member of that PTA for 30 days), so the Nominating Committee cannot "stack" an election. They only choose people who they feel will do a good job, and form the slate. The slate of officers must be presented at one General Meeting with at least 30 days between the presentation and the election, to give the membership time to review this.

One other element is very important. The night of the election, a complete membership roster should be available. If any position has another person running from the floor, only people who are members may be given a ballot to vote. Therefore, this is also a good time to make sure the membership list is complete and up to date. Remember that your membership dues should have been sent into the State Office by 1/31/10 to be current.

Thanks for all that you continue to do for the children of Florida! It remains our privilege to serve with all of you!

Carol Conaway
VP Leadership
FLPTA

REFLECTIONS SUMMARY

"Beauty is.." being a part of the Reflections program. Where else in the county could you experience 446 entries of artwork all designed by students from 43 of our own schools? What other program invites all 60 county winners on a back stage tour of the Clearwater Marine Aquarium to see their wonderful artwork displayed and to see dolphins create their own painted masterpieces? Beauty truly is provided by this program.

I would like to thank the Reflections chairs for all their hard work organizing the program at the school level and all those who worked together to coordinate the county reception. I would also like to thank the following sponsors for their donations and their expertise in judging:

- Bright House Networks
- Clearwater Marine Aquarium
- Museum of Fine Arts
- Salvador Dali Museum
- WPDS TV Channel 14
- Herff Jones
- Sam Ash Music
- Star Struck Dance Studios
- Jack Rowland
- Pinellas Park High School
- Peter Pachoumis
- Gus A. Stavros Institute

Congratulations to the following students who will represent not only their schools but our county at the State level.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

Dance ChoreographyPrimary (Pre-K-Grade 2)

Daniel Rosario
Brooker Creek Elementary

Ashton Sarlo
Plumb Elementary

Amanda Wieczorkowski
Curlew Creek Elementary

Intermediate (Grades 3-5)

Amanda Cropsey
Ridgecrest Elementary

Danielle Dannunzio
Ridgecrest Elementary

Lauren Wonicker-Cook
Ridgecrest Elementary

Middle/Junior (Grades 6-8)

Carly Hamblen
Joseph L. Carwise Middle

Ella Titus
Oak Grove Middle

Senior (Grades 9-12)

Rachel Perry
St. Petersburg Collegiate High

LiteraturePrimary (Pre-K-Grade 2)

Emma Behrmann
Tarpon Springs Fundamental
Elementary

Luna Connolly
Plumb Elementary

Krishna Reddy
Brooker Creek Elementary

Intermediate (Grades 3-5)

Haley Culp
Lakeview Fundamental El.

Alec Gibbons
Plumb Elementary

Whitney James
Ridgecrest Elementary

Middle/Junior (Grades 6-8)

Zoe Forshier
Tyrone Middle

Chelsea Hudgens
Joseph L. Carwise Middle

Joeli Roth
Joseph L. Carwise Middle

Senior (Grades 9-12)

Elizabeth Hughes
East Lake High

Kailey Quintana
Countryside High

Eric Romero
Seminole High

Musical CompositionPrimary (Pre K-Grade2)

Jace Bray
Walsingham Elementary

Zoe Neville
Starkey Elementary

Alex Shetye
Brooker Creek Elementary

Intermediate (Grades 3-5)
Amanda Foreman
Cypress Woods Elementary

Colman Mansfield
Brooker Creek Elementary

Ean Neville
Starkey Elementary

Middle/Junior (Grades 6-8)

Donna Trask
Seminole Middle

Senior (Grades 9-12)

Brandon Folks
Osceola Fundamental High

PhotographyPrimary (Pre-K-Grade 2)

Katharine Eaton
Tarpon Springs Fundamental
Elementary

Raymond Park Jr.
Cross Bayou Elementary

Luke Tubergen
Cypress Woods

Intermediate (Grades 3-5)

Ashlee Comegys
Lakeview Fundamental Ele-
mentary

Kristina Martinez
Curtis Fundamental Elementary

Samantha Swift
Safety Harbor Elementary

Middle/Junior (Grades 6-8)

Kristen Borresen
Oak Grove Middle

Rachael McDonald
Largo Middle

Tess Madden
Seminole Middle

Senior (Grades 9-12)

Christina Loukataris
East Lake High

Sarah Mardis
Seminole High

Madeline Meconnahey
East Lake High

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

Visual ArtsPrimary (Pre K-Grade 2)

Yaroslav Klimenko

Lake St. George Elementary

Anna Potter

Ridgecrest Elementary

Raymond Zhang

Ridgecrest Elementary

Intermediate (Grades 3-5)

Gitana Garcia

Cypress Woods Elementary

Vsevolod Klimenko

Lake St. George Elementary

Troy Redding

Bay Point Elementary

Middle/Junior (Grades 6-8)

Donald Halpin

Safety Harbor Middle

Morgan Phelps

Oak Grove Middle

Ashlyn Willey

Joseph L. Carwise Middle

Senior (Grades 9-12)

Amanda Hunter

Seminole High

Ethan Stoop

Osceola Fundamental High

Yun Bo Tian

Palm Harbor University

Film/VideoIntermediate (Grades 3-5)

Rachael Hoff

Plumb Elementary

Angela Iachello

Brooker Creek Elementary

Megan Schultz

Cypress Woods Elementary

Middle/Junior (Grades 6-8)

Marina Kazusky

Seminole Middle

Ella Titus

Oak Grove Middle

John White

Oak Grove Middle

Senior (Grades 9-12)

Travis Stanford

Osceola Fundamental High

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OF OUR REFLECTIONS WINNERS!



YOU'RE CHILD'S VISION: IF YOU CANNOT SEE YOU CANNOT LEARN

What Parents Need to Know

Good vision is essential to every child's development. Experts say over 80 percent of what a child learns in school is presented visually, so making sure your son or daughter has good vision can make a big difference in their academic performance.

Routine eye exams for children can detect many problems, including nearsightedness, farsightedness and/or astigmatism. These can be promptly treated with eyeglasses or contact lenses. Routine exams are also needed to make sure your child's eyes are healthy and to rule out amblyopia,

strabismus and other binocular vision problems that may interfere with your child's vision development, academic performance and sports vision.

15 million people in the United States have serious vision problems; over 500,000 people in the US are blind. More than one in fifty children have Amblyopia, and one in twenty preschool children have an eye problem that could lead to amblyopia (Prevent Blindness America 2005). The good news is that amblyopia detected within the first six years of life is treatable.

Every child should have a good vision screening prior to starting kindergarten. This screening can be performed by a pediatrician, a trained volunteer, or an eye care professional (ophthalmologist or optometrist). Only an eye care professional can provide a complete eye exam, which is more complete and detailed compared to a vision screening.

After starting school, all children in kindergarten and grades 1, 3, 6 have their vision checked annually at school, but this is not as comprehensive an exam as performed by an eye doctor.

What is Amblyopia?

Commonly known as Lazy Eye, Amblyopia is the number one cause of blindness in children age 0-5 years. Amblyopia results as a misalignment of a child's eyes; as one eye becomes stronger, it will take over, and the weaker eye will often lose function. Amblyopia may be present in straight eyes as well and only a vision test will detect the problem. With early diagnosis and treatment, the weaker eye can regain its full function (Prevent Blindness America 2005).

Parents are often unfamiliar with or unaware of the warning signs of amblyopia, allowing the problem to go undiagnosed, resulting in blindness. As the child continues to age, the vision impairment becomes permanent and untreatable.

What are the signs of lazy eye?

Many different problems can cause lazy eye. Here are some signs of eye trouble that could be related to lazy eye or other eye problems:

- Favoring one eye
- Tilting the head
- An eye drifts or wanders when the child is tired, sick or in bright light
- Your child tends to close one eye, especially in sunlight
- Rubbing the eyes
- Your child seems to blink too much
- Your child holds things close to his or her eyes

If you notice these or other signs of eye trouble, contact your school nurse or take your child to an eye doctor right away. Some children with eye problems may show no signs of eye trouble, so a periodic eye exam is recommended.

Vision impairments involve more than just eyesight. Vision impairments can also hinder a child's ability to learn. Many times children are misdiagnosed with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD/ADHD) when, in reality, they have poor visual processing.

According to Margaret Livingstone from the Department of Neurobiology, Harvard Medical School and the Dyslexia Research Laboratory, poor visual processing can play a significant role in a large majority of children who struggle to read. Children who cannot see well due to a need for vision correction fail to pay attention and perform poorly in school (Children's Visual Informa-

tion Network 2007). Without being able to see the board or read papers in front of them their ability to learn is hindered. Diagnosing visual impairments or processing problems early can help a child to be able to reach their full potential, rather than being misdiagnosed and treated for the wrong disability.

Eye injuries account for 4% of the cases of blindness. Here are some tips about eye safety..

- Walk, don't run, with sharp objects such as scissors, pens, pencils and rulers.
- Avoid guns, bow-and-arrows, sling shots and firecrackers.
- Use good lighting to avoid tiring your eyes when reading, writing or cruising the Internet
- Learn basic first aid for your eyes in case an injury does occur.
- Tell your parents, school nurse or teachers if your eyes are bothering you.
- Wear proper eye protection when you are doing hazardous hobbies, chores or mixing chemicals.
- Wear proper eye protection when you are playing sports such as racquetball and baseball. According to the National Society to Prevent Blindness, the leading cause of sports-related eye injuries in:
 - 5-14 yr. olds is baseball;
 - 15-24 yr. olds is basketball;
- Wear sunglasses that block both ultraviolet-A and ultraviolet-B radiation from the sun.
- Never look directly at the sun.
- Point chemical sprays away from your face BEFORE spraying.
- Wear a helmet when biking, skateboarding or rollerskating and wear your seatbelt in the car
- It is also a good idea to get your eyes examined regularly. Your body has some "built-in" devices to protect your eyes such as:
 - Bony sockets: your eyes are located in bony sockets to protect them from getting hit.
 - Eyebrows: your eyebrows are

used to keep the light out.

- Eyelids: your eyelids can close to keep small objects out of your eyes.
- Eyelashes: eyelashes also keep small objects out of your eyes.
- Tears: tears keep your eyes moist and work to wash small objects out of your eyes.
- Blink reflex :the blink reflex automatically closes your eyes.

Interesting Factoid:

The word "pupil" comes from the Latin word "pupa" that means "doll." The use of the word pupil for the center of the eye may have come from the observation that if you look into the eye of another person, a small version of yourself (a "doll") is reflected back.

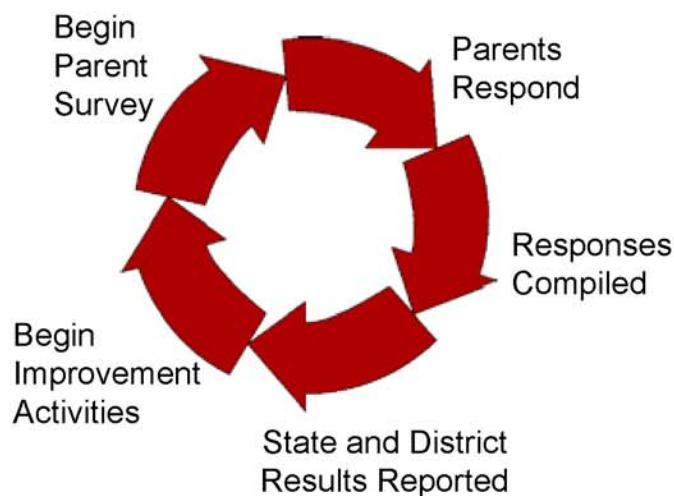
If a child needs a visual evaluation, please contact your school nurse. We are fortunate that we have several community partners to assist us when we have students that need follow-up for poor vision. Lenscrafters' One Sight Vision Van and their Hometown Day programs in Dec. 2009 assisted 243 students to be evaluated and receive new glasses. The Glazer Family Foundation and the Tampa Bay Buccaneers will be partnering with the Vision Quest Corp. to also provide exams and glasses for students that meet the qualifications starting this Spring in Pinellas County. We also have certificates for qualified students to see local eye doctors and get free glasses through a national program called VSP through the National Association of School Nurses. The local Lion's Clubs also offer assistance. It is important that we help every child meet their full potential- and if you cannot see- you cannot learn!

Resources:

www.allaboutvision.com/parents/PreventBlindnessAmerica
<http://faculty.washington.edu/chudler/eyesafe.html>

Survey for Parents of Students with an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) in Exceptional Student Education (ESE)

***How well is your school supporting your
involvement in your child's education?***



What?

The Florida Department of Education is conducting a survey designed to provide the state with information on how well schools are supporting parents' involvement in their child's education. Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), states must report this information to the federal government on an annual basis.

When?

February 1 through July 1, 2010

Who?

All parents of children with IEPs in preschool to 12th grade

How?

Go online to www.ESEsurvey.com to complete the survey.

Results?

Survey results are reported to the United States Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, as part of Florida's Annual Performance Report and are posted on the Florida Department of Education's Web site at www.fldoe.org/ease.

Improvement activities are determined based on the survey report. Progress is monitored through the annual parent survey. No names will be released in any report. All responses are confidential.

What Can You Do?

The responses to the survey provide important information for planning and monitoring improvement activities. This survey, conducted only once a year, provides parents with a unique opportunity to be heard. This year's survey deadline is **July 1, 2010**.



SAVE THE DATE

On Friday April 30, 2010, Pinellas County Council PTA will be having their annual "Celebration of Success" (formerly banquet). This event will be one that we would like everyone to come to and enjoy. Not only PTA board members but all PTA members and their families. So please put this date on your calendar and look to your upcoming newsletters for more information.

Audrey Goginsky, Banquet Chair

SAVE THE DATE Rally in Tally

We need you to join us again on March 25, 2010, on the steps of the Capitol as we continue to advocate for children and education. The rally will be preceded by an orientation/advocacy training session from 3:30-6:30 PM.

**For More Information Go
To www.floridapta.org**

SAFETY HARBOR ELEMENTARY ALL PRO DADS!

**Submitted By: Tamara Ham
Safety Harbor Elem. PTA President**

Here at Safety Harbor Elementary we are nearly busting our buttons with the pride we have for our All Pro Dads program. This is our first year starting an APD chapter at our school, and when it was suggested we add this program to our already busy PTA schedule, I was a little hesitant. Finding a chairperson, a Dad, of course, would be a challenge. Or so I thought. Last February, 2009, at our Kindergarten Grandparents Day program, I recognized a Dad having lunch with his kindergarten son. Eric

Johnson was a face I recognized from my church. I approached Eric to see if he would be interested in chairing an APD chapter at our school for the next school year. He was a little nervous, being a new dad to the school but agreed.

Over the summer Eric logged on to the Family First website that gave all the information necessary to start All Pro Dads at our school. He set his first meeting for September. I helped him along by introducing him to our Librarian, Principal, and Cafeteria manager all of whom he would be working with to plan monthly morning breakfast meetings. He emailed dads he knew and sent flyers home school-wide. Then Eric did what he does best... he started talking with all the other dads he saw as he dropped his son off at 1st grade nearly every day. I was told by other schools not to expect more than 10 dads and their kids at the first meeting. But we were hopeful that in time All Pro Dads would be a success in teaming Dads with their kids at school.

Eric kept me updated as to how many dads showed a positive response to coming to the meeting. His enthusiasm and love for his kids overflowed and he was thrilled when he boasted he had 25 dads confirmed for the next morning's meeting. Our principal, Bob Kalach along with teachers and PTA were exciting awaiting the dads and kids.

When I arrived at school the next morning, there were no parking places to be found. I weaved my way into the crowded cafeteria with the line out the door. I was greeted by our assistant principal, Mary Jane

Gordon, who enthusiastically told me there were over 70 dads in attendance along with their children, that made about 140! Our cafeteria manager was a little frazzled serving breakfast to the hungry group, but somehow she fed them all. When I finally found Eric in the sea of smiling dads and happy children, we were both speechless.

Since September Eric has kept his attendance record at about 60 dads per monthly breakfast meeting. His uplifting emails and genuine friendship to his dads keeps them connected and motivated to be better fathers. Eric has scheduled off-site events such as putt-putt and bowling. Another dad in the group offered to organize flag football on the school grounds after school on Thursdays, while other dads help with flyers. When Eric found two dads that worked at the Coast Guard Station, he jumped at the chance to schedule an educational tour for the group. On Dec. 12th they were able to see the inside of a C-130 airplane and a J-Hawk rescue helicopter. The dads and kids learned that the Coast Guard does much more than search and rescue missions. More importantly, our dads and kids have forged relationships with the school, PTA, and with each other that will positively affect them for a lifetime.

Our PTA looks forward to many more years of success with our All Pro Dads chapter. And to think it all started with just asking one dad to be a PTA volunteer.

Pictured Below:

All Pro Dads of Safety Harbor Elementary School with the Coast Guard



Florida PTA Receives National Honor for Advocacy Efforts

National PTA recognizes Florida for saving education funding

CHICAGO (January 21, 2010) – National PTA® is honoring the advocacy efforts of Florida PTA with its 2010 Outstanding Advocacy Award at the state level. Outstanding Advocacy Award recipients were chosen for their dedication, leadership and sustained effort to positively affect child related policy, regulation and legislation.

Florida PTA representatives will be recognized in Washington, DC, in March during National PTA's Legislative Conference.

Congratulations Florida PTA!

TO ALL PTA Members

Pinellas County Council of PTAs presents:
"Celebration of Success"
(formerly known as the "banquet")
Friday April 30, 2010.

This event will take place at Pinellas Park Performing Arts Center at 4951 78th Ave N. Pinellas Park, 33782
During this event we will be presenting PCCPTA awards and the Installation of PCCPTAs New Officers.

Schedule of the evening is as follows:

6:30 - 7:30 Social hour and hors d'oeuvres

7:30 - 8:30 Awards presentation and Installation of Officers

8:30 - 9:15 Desserts and Coffee

Ticket cost
will be
announced
at a later
date.

Attire:
Business
Casual
Theme:
Celebration!

We want all PTA
member's to be invited
to come, so PTA board
member's please let
your PTA members
know of this event in
your next meeting

This event will
not have a sit
down dinner. But
we will have a
cash bar,
hors d'oeuvres,
coffee and
desserts.





PARENT SUPPORT FOR EDUCATION AWARD Guidelines/Criteria

To: Organizations that serve children and parents.

The NAACP Education Committee believes that parents play a vital role in the success of children in home, school and community.

Please assist the Education Committee in our selection process **by nominating** a parent or guardian who is playing a positive role in the life of children. (Recognition will take place at the Parent Forum)

1. **ELIGIBILITY:** Parent or guardian of child living in household
2. Name: _____
3. Address: _____ zip: _____
4. Phone: _____ E-mail: _____
5. Number of children: _____
6. Brief Description on how you have or are overcoming obstacles to your child's education: _____
(Use additional space as needed. Limit you remarks to **250 -500 words or less.**)
7. As a result of your involvement, what changes have taken place with your child?
(Child's attitude, grades, and conduct at home and school?)
8. List your volunteer services related to your child's success. (NAACP Parent Council, Church, PTA, SAC, after-school sports, dance, music and arts, etc..) (Use additional space as needed.
9. List any scholarship (s) your child has received or will receive. (Use additional space as needed.

Contact: Rev. Martin Rainey - 727/420-1326

Deadline: FRIDAY, FEB.5, 2010- 12 NOON

All parent responses **MUST** be forwarded via email, (<mailto:mrainey390@verzion.net>)

The Pinellas County Council PTA Invites You to Join a **FREE**

Road Trip & Rally for Florida's Future

on Thursday, March 25th, 2010



The date is set and the site secured for PTA members and our community advocacy partners to let their voices be heard once again in Tallahassee. You were loud and clear last year with your rallying cry of "NO MORE CUTS." You made a difference! The proposed cuts were restored.

This year our task is to not only persuade legislators to restore the previous cuts, but also to make provisions for an adequate, stable source of funding for education when the stimulus dollars run out in 2010.

TENTATIVE PLANS

- Depart Pinellas - 5:00 a.m. (from Bayside High School at 14405 49th Street North, Clearwater, FL - limited parking is available)
- Arrive Tallahassee - 10:00 a.m.
- Rally - 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
- Capitol Tour/Visit Legislators - 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.
- Depart Tallahassee - 2:30 p.m.
- Arrive: Pinellas - 7:30 p.m.

All times are approximate.

This year we are offering **FREE** travel via a charter bus to Tallahassee. There is a refundable \$25 deposit to secure your space on the bus. *****100% of the deposit fee will be refunded to you upon our arrival in Tallahassee.***** To reserve your seat, please complete the registration form below and send it along with your deposit check to Pinellas County Council PTA, c/o Debbie Sawa-Szostak, 13885 Meares Drive, Largo, FL 33774 **before March 1st, 2010.** If you have any questions, feel free to contact Nancy Uelmen at nancy.pccpta@gmail.com or (727) 934-7693. You will be notified upon receipt of your registration and receive updates and more detailed plans of this statewide event. *****If you do not attend, your deposit will not be refunded and will be considered a donation to Pinellas County Council PTA Rally in Tally fund.*****



Please complete a separate form for each attendee.

Hurry - Space is Limited!

Name: _____ Email: _____

Phone/Cell Number: _____

Address: _____

Representing: _____

_____ I plan to attend the rally on March 25th and will ride the bus. I am including my \$25 fee and understand I forfeit the registration if I do not fulfill my commitment to attend. I understand \$25 fee will be fully refunded once I reach Tallahassee. Check # _____ Amount Paid: _____

_____ I cannot attend but would like to send in a tax free donation [501(c)3 Tax ID # 23-7102478]. Please send me a receipt.

Thank you for putting children first.

2009-2010**Executive Board Members(*)
and Committee Chairs**

Pinellas County Council

PTA

everychild.onevoice.®

www.pccpta.org

***Charles Derexson**
President
chasder@tampabay.rr.com

***Bonnie Choate**
VP of Leadership
bcousins15@verizon.net

***Linda Kearschner**
VP of Advocacy
LK-PTA@tampabay.rr.com

***Mary Bartholf**
VP of Education
marypta@gmail.com

***Maureen Flynn**
VP of Communication
mm.flynn@hotmail.com

***Maria Kinzer**
VP of Organization
mkinz01@yahoo.com

***Debbie Sawa-Szostak**
Treasurer
debbiesspta@gmail.com

***TBA**
Recording Secretary

***Karen Gardner**
Florida PTA Board Member
gardnerka@verizon.net

***Michelle Alfred**
Area Coordinator/ Health & Safety
malfred@tampabay.rr.com

***Jessica Summers**
Programs
pjlsommers@msn.com

***Sharon McNeal**
Public Relations
mcneals@pcsb.org

***Megan Bartholf**
Student Liaison
meganbpta@gmail.com

Kassandra Callahan
Membership
kassandra.callahan@yahoo.com

***Brandon Folks**
Student Liaison
folksfam@tampabay.rr.com

Debbie Stotts
Area Coordinator / Awards
mamabearstotts@yahoo.com

Melissa Folks
Reflections
folksfam@tampabay.rr.com

Allison Williams
Area Coordinator
ally7williams@yahoo.com

Dottie Russell
Hospitality
Russells.2@verizon.net

Cindy Ehrenzeller
School Board Liaison
dehrenzeller@tampabay.rr.com

Nancy Uelmen
Legislative Relations
nancy.pccpta@gmail.com

Amy Shafron
Platform
ashafran@gmail.com

Kathy DeSantis
Insurance
kdesanpta@aol.com

Paula Keyser
Newsletter / Handbook
pkeyser@gmail.com

Marsha O'Brien
Technology
mzob@tampabay.rr.com

Audrey Goginsky
Banquet Chair
audreygo@tampabay.rr.com

Carol Conaway
FPTA Board Member
carolconaway@verizon.net

PCCPTA MEETING AND EVENTS**2010**

- Feb 17** **PTA Founders Day**
- Feb 18** **PCCPTA General Meeting**
at Madeira Beach Fundamental
- Feb 18** **PCCPTA Newsletter Articles Due**
- Feb 20** **PCCPTA Health & Safety Fair**

*Meetings will be held at 7:00 pm in the Board Room of the Pinellas County Schools Administration Building, 301 Fourth Street SW, Largo. Hospitality is from 6:15-6:45 pm in Room D134-135

