

IN THIS ISSUE

President's Corner.....1
 Happenings.....1-3
 Local Unit News.....3-6
 Legislative News..... 6
 Editor's Thoughts.....7-8
 Texas PTA 2009-2010 Recruiting Poster...9

PRESIDENT'S CORNER



Greetings PTA Volunteers, and welcome, welcome to the 2009-2010 School Year! Hopefully all of you will be able to take

advantage of the programs and information listed in the "**Happenings**" section below.

Also, if you didn't have anything to contribute to the newsletter this time around you will have more opportunities. Please send details any time to our editor, David Watson, whose contact information can be found at the end of this newsletter. Information printed in your school newsletter or principal's notes, which may highlight activities, upcoming events (such as fall carnivals) or student achievement, are all shareable events.

Thank you again for your service to our children. Its going to be a **great** year!



--Rose Terry, President
pao40r@aol.com
 October 4th, 2009

HAPPENINGS

Awards criteria for 2009-2010 are now posted on-line through the Texas PTA website (www.txpta.org) for local and council PTA awards.

Important information for local PTAs:

Texas PTA cautions all local PTAs doing business with or contemplating doing business with Top Ten Fundraiser/Desktop School Supplies. They have received several complaints from various Local PTAs about purchase orders not being properly fulfilled by Desktop School Supplies, and Texas PTA advises all Local PTAs to carefully review any purchase orders and supplies received. These concerns have been expressed to Top Ten Fundraiser/Desktop School Supplies and Texas PTA expects the matter will be resolved soon. If you are experiencing similar problems please contact Texas PTA at 1-800-TALK-PTA.

The Fall issue of *The Voice* is now published on-line.

Some of the features include: The Centennial Celebration at the Cotton Bowl; Legislative Session Update; and the Election of Texas PTA Officers. Also included are: Awards, New PTAs, Web- site Links, Event Highlights and Membership Information.

Texas PTA Announces Changes to State Fair Events:

The Texas PTA Centennial Celebration at Cotton Bowl Field will not be held as scheduled. If you already purchased

a ticket, your ticket can be used for entry to the State Fair of Texas from September 25 to October 18.

To receive a refund for your ticket purchase, tickets must be mailed back to the Texas PTA State Office at the address below and must be received by October 7, 2009. Any tickets received after that date will NOT be eligible for refund.

To request a refund, mail your tickets to:
Texas PTA
Attn: Kat Dauchy, 408 W 11th St., Austin, TX 78701

Texas PTA President Jan Wilkerson was in Dallas recently to participate in the State Fair Kick-Off Parade held in downtown Dallas. This year, fair goers will have an additional surprise as Big Tex brings birthday greetings to Texas PTA.

Don't miss the beautiful Texas PTA Centennial Exhibit in the Food and Fiber Pavilion when you visit the fair grounds. Texas PTA officially turns 100 years old on October 19.

Make the fair a part of your family's plans in the coming weeks and be welcomed by Big Tex's grandiose "Howdy Ya'll!"

Also start planning for **National Safe Schools Week October 18-24**. This is an effort to bring awareness to school violence prevention and promoting school safety. Over 1,000,000 students across America take a weapon to school each month, and over 1.3 million students are

injured or threatened with a weapon at school each year (Source: US CDC). For a complete Events and Activities Planning Guide and sample press releases and proclamations visit the web-site at www.texassafeschoolsweek.org/index.htm Below are just a few ideas for making Safe Schools Week fun and educational. See the web-site for additional ideas:

- **Hold a poster or t-shirt contest:** Ask students to create a poster or design that expresses the importance of school violence prevention.
- **Dedicate a sporting event:** Pick a sporting event most likely to have high attendance and ask the team to dedicate the game to National Safe Schools Week and violence prevention.
- **Write a newspaper article:** Encourage students to submit an article on school violence prevention and National Safe Schools Week to the school newspaper.

Keep in mind the **Fourth Annual National Bullying Prevention Awareness Week October 4-10**, which calls on communities to unite: It takes a community to prevent bullying of children. This awareness program encourages communities nationwide to work together to increase awareness of the prevalence and impact of bullying on all children. The Texas PTA Parent Education Program uses "Stop Bullying Now! Take a Stand. Lend a Hand." This information will provide students with activities and webisodes. For more information and activities for Elementary, Middle and High Schools you can go to the National Center for Bullying Prevention Web-site.

October is International Walk to School Month. Schools around the world are celebrating Walk to School for the entire month of October in order to include as many schools as possible. To register for Walk to School activities go to www.walktoschool.org and get access to bonus downloadable materials like stickers, badges, certificates and event ideas from classroom activities to walk/bike to school checklist.

LOCAL UNIT NEWS

PTA News for PHS and SNGC

PTA volunteers spent many hours at the end of summer to help administrative staff copy and stuff enrollment packets for back to school registration.

The PHS and SNGC teachers and staff received "welcome back" receptions with decorated cakes provided by the PTA. PHS received theirs on the Thursday prior to school starting and SNGC was honored on the first day of school. The PTA welcomes all staff members back to school and wishes for a great 2009-2010 school year.

The Rig concession stand is open most every Thursday and Friday during football season. Please stop by to get refreshments when at the game. Help is also needed during the following game times: Thursdays 4:30 and 6:00; Fridays 7 p.m. Concessions are open for all Varsity and Sub-Varsity football games played at the Rig by either SNGC, Dawson, or PHS. Proceeds go to the High School PTAs to be used for scholarships, teacher and classroom donations, staff hospitality, etc.

PHS PTA General Association Meetings – All members welcome:

- January 11, 6:30 p.m., located at SNGC campus library (North Campus)
- March 1, 6:30 p.m., located at SNGC campus library (North Campus) – Elections
- May 3, 6:30 p.m., located at SNGC campus library (North Campus)

Rustic Oak Elementary

We are in full swing over at Rustic Oak! We hosted all of our grandparents on Friday, September 11th for Grandparents Day and it was a huge success. There are many programs to look forward to, including a "Bully Busters" program from the Morris Brothers. Our Parent Involvement Chair is planning an ice cream social and a night for our students at The Main Event. The Recycling program will start up again in October; on a monthly basis we recycle aluminum cans, paper, cell phones, and ink cartridges. Each drive we have for aluminum cans brings in about \$40.00 and this money goes toward teacher mini-grants that they can "apply for" to use in their classrooms and so that they do not have to spend their own money.

Our Fundraiser is wrapping up as we speak. The kids have had a fun time selling Entertainment Books and Otis Spunkmeyer cookie dough. Some of our plans for this money are additional document cameras in the classrooms, new die cut machines and supplies, and upgrades to our playgrounds. We really appreciate all of our parents and teachers support!



Our Dads club, POPS in PTA, is planning a "Donuts with Dad" breakfast in October and

Breakfast with Santa is scheduled for December 5th.

We are looking forward to a great year! Please contact our PTA at www.info@rusticoakpta.org

--LeAnne Baroni, President

Silvercrest Elementary

Fall has arrived....and we are happy to announce lots of fun and exciting events in store for our Silvercrest Stallions!

We are very excited that PTA membership has reached almost 400! We hope those numbers can continue to increase. We are encouraging all DADS and GRANDPARENTS to join the PTA. The cost to join is \$7/person. You can be involved as little or as much as you can. This is such a great way to be a strong part of your student's elementary school experience. For more information, please contact Lori Montgomery at fied96@yahoo.com. We hope that all parents will plan to attend our bimonthly PTA meetings—the next one is on November 12!

We wanted to thank two local businesses for their generous donations to our school—Whitney Bank sponsored our Back to School Teacher Breakfast and Advanced Pharma donated \$500 towards book for the STEP tutoring program.

The outdoor learning center is almost complete! Proceeds from last year's fundraiser allowed us to finish the learning center with three picnic tables and three benches, buy swings and a fire truck play structure for the K-2nd grade playground. This year, our fundraising goals are

technology upgrades. We look forward to providing this for our awesome teachers!

The Fall Box Tops Contest will be October 1 through October 16. Please start collecting Box Tops, Tyson Chicken labels and Campbell's Soup labels for our fall contest. The class who has the most labels and box tops in each grade will have a treat party on October 29!!! Forms will be sent home so you can fill out your child's name and teacher and attach your box tops and labels. For more information, contact Sarah Symecko at 281-352-3832. (Remember that every label helps our school. Last year, we raised over \$1,700!!!)

Silvercrest is also selling tickets for "Macy's Shop for a Cause"! These tickets give you 20% off your entire Macy's purchase of sale and regular items when you shop on Saturday, October 17. (Some restrictions apply). Tickets cost \$5 and the entire \$5 goes to Silvercrest Elementary PTA. The day of the sale, Macy's will have a drawing for a \$500 Macy's gift card. These tickets can be used at any Macy's. Please support the PTA by purchasing a ticket. Don't forget to ask neighbors, families and friends if they would like to buy a ticket!

Also, Stallion Scrips is coming! We will once again offer the Stallion Scrip gift card program this November. You can purchase gift cards for all of the people on your holiday list and buy gift cards for all the retailers you regularly buy from. Percentages from each of the gift cards bought will go to the Silvercrest PTA. Look for more details next month.

Other important dates this fall:

- October 8—Fuddrucker's Night (dine out and raise money for our school!)

- October 16—Silvercrest PTA and Berry Miller PTA are doing the concession stand at the Dawson vs. Friendswood football game. Proceeds go to local scholarships. If you are able to volunteer for this, please email SilvercrestPTAinfo@gmail.com
- October 17—Macy's Shop for a Cause
- October 21—Jake's Grill Night (dine out and raise money for our school!)
- October 26-30—Red Ribbon Week
- November 11—Dream Dinners Night (prepare meals and raise money for our school!)
- November 12—General PTA Meeting at 6:30 p.m. in the cafeteria with Chick Fil A sandwiches for sale
- November 18—Donuts for Dad
- November 19—Papa John's Pizza Night (order in and raise money for our school!)
- December 3—Evening with Santa...enjoy book reading, crafts & dinner (6:30 to 8:30 p.m.)
- January 12—General PTA Meeting at 6:30 p.m. in the cafeteria with school board member Andrew Solomon as speaker



In October, Silvercrest students will have the opportunity to display their creative talents in the Reflections Program, an art competition sponsored by the PTA. The theme for the competition is "Beauty is. . .". Winners will advance to an area competition. More details coming soon.

Please consider volunteering for our STEP program—this is a wonderful opportunity to help first graders learn to read...and it only requires a 30 minute per week

commitment! We typically have 40 to 50 students in this program...and currently only have 20 volunteers. We need your help! Tutors meet with their student one time a week for a half hour during school hours (Monday through Thursday, 8 a.m. to 11 a.m.) You can choose the day and time each week. Once our volunteer team is assembled, we will conduct training so no advance knowledge or experience is needed. If you would like more information or would like to volunteer, please contact Micheline Abboud at abbouds@sbcglobal.net or at 713-851-0099.

We invite all parents and teachers to join/register on the Silvercrest PTA website (<http://silvercrest.txpta.org/>) so that you can be on the email list and receive important information from the PTA. Just go to the website and click on "register" in the upper right corner. You then create an account login name and password. You may also email the PTA directly at SilvercrestPTAinfo@gmail.com

--Angela Dennis

Challenger Elementary

Health & Safety: Safe Route to School Safe travel to and from school happens through the efforts of a vigilant and caring community. Families and friends walking, biking and riding to school in groups create a friendly supervision for our young students. Thank you to Pearland Police for their increased presence near Challenger during school zone times. The efforts of Challenger staff and PISD administrators to encourage a safe atmosphere around our school are appreciated.

Hearing and Vision Screening: Volunteers are needed to assist with Hearing and Vision

Screenings September 21 to October 2. This involves a short training class to become a certified screener. Screenings make a huge impact on the academic health and well being of our young students. Please contact Debbie Brogan, our school nurse for details. 281-485-7912

Yearbook: The theme for the 2010 yearbook is "Diary of a Challenger Kid." It's a Challenger Eagles' life, and who better to help illustrate it but our own students! Yearbook Call for Student Artwork. We need original artwork to fill the pages, and part of the cover design so get your creative juices flowing. All grades are encouraged to send in artwork. Art guidelines will be coming soon in your Tuesday folder and detailed information will be posted on the website.

Yearbook Pre-Sale is coming: Save \$4 when you pre-order your 2010 book October 1st – 15th. Prices will go up, so order early.

Birthday Celebrations: Our October birthday celebrations will take place October 8 & 9 when we celebrate all students with an October birthday.

Retail Partners: This month's retail partner events include:

- October 6 - Flip-n-Out Spirit Night
- October 14 - Which Wich Fundraiser Day - This is an all day event so you can either stop by and pick-up lunch to bring to your child at school or dine-in with the family at dinnertime.
- October 27 – Jake's Grill Spirit Night

PTA Movie Night: Challenger PTA will host Family Movie Night on October 30 at 6:30pm. Watch for your movie night ticket in your child's backpack coming soon. Come join us as we enjoy a free night of

family entertainment! (for more info: txmhansen@sbcglobal.net)

RIG Night: Challenger PTA will be manning the concession stand at The Rig on October 9th. All profits from the concession stands go into a scholarship fund that is awarded to a qualifying senior from either PHS or DHS. The area council relies on volunteers to help at football games. Challenger PTA will be working alongside Jamison on October 9th for the Dawson High School game against Angleton High School. It is a fun way to help PISD in a broader way. Please email Renee Hansen at txmhansen@sbcglobal.net if you would like to join us at the game!

Cookie Dough Distribution: will be after school on October 26. All orders must be picked up on this day. Thank you to all the parents and students that have worked so hard to make this fundraiser a success. The funds raised by cookie dough help to fund the events and projects of the Challenger PTA such as B.E.A.R. night, S.T.E.P., school field trips, Arts in Education programs and many more. For any questions concerning this fundraiser please contact Claire Churchman at claire_churchman@att.net or by phone at 832- 671-6269.

Dates to Remember:

- 1st—15th—Challenger Yearbook Sale (Early Bird Price)
- 6th- Flip n Out Spirit Night
- 8th – October Birthday Celebrations (K, 2 & 4)
- 9th—October Birthday Celebrations (1 & 3)
- 14th- Which Witch Fundraiser Day
- 26th—Cookie Dough Distribution Day
- 27th- Chick-fil-A Sprit Night
- 30th—Teacher Luncheon (for more info: staceycormier@gmail.com)
- 30th—PTA Family Movie Night @ 6:30pm

in school cafeteria

LEGISLATIVE NEWS

There are several **new state laws** that impact our children:

- HB 537 requires that everyone in the car, regardless of age/where they are sitting in a vehicle, needs to wear a seatbelt
- HB 61 requires that all children younger than 8 years and less than four feet nine inches tall be in a child safety seat system
- HB 55 prohibits drivers from using wireless, hand-held communication devices in school crossing zones unless the vehicle is stopped or the device is hands-free. PISD is placing signs to remind drivers of this new law.

For more information, see also this flier:
<http://www.txpta.org/documents/Legislative/2009/august/Teen-booster-flier.pdf>



Federal Legislation: Congress Needs to Reauthorize the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP A) this year. Contact Your Members of Congress Today!

JJDP A is up for reauthorization and this month marks the 35th anniversary of JJDP A. JJDP A provides the major source of federal funding to improve states' juvenile justice systems and sets federal standards for the protection and rehabilitation of youth involved in the juvenile justice system. On March 24, 2009, Congress introduced JJDP A (S. 678), but with Congress' focus on other legislative matters, such as health care reform, JJDP A has been sitting in the wings of U.S. Senate

Committee on Judiciary. Visit [PTA Takes Action Center](#) (<http://capwiz.com/npta2/issues/alert/?alertid=14068986&PROCESS=Take+Action#>) and contact your members of Congress Today!

EDITOR'S THOUGHTS

PTA Really Does Speak for *every child with one voice*

A recent blog posting in the Houston Chronicle (http://blogs.chron.com/pearland/2009/09/from_pta_to_pto_silverlake_ele.html) alerted me to the fact that one of our Pearland ISD local PTA units had made the decision this past summer to form a PTO (Parent Teacher Organization) this year rather than affiliate with the Council of PTAs. The posting also links to a document comparing the two types of organizations; interesting reading that I will come back to momentarily.

A clear message from the blog entry is that this move is intended to keep monies paid as dues at the local level. It was pointed out by the blogger that dollars are being sent out of PISD to support both the state and national PTA organizations...and then, by implication of course, that those dollars wouldn't therefore be benefitting our kids here in Pearland.

Sadly, I believe such logic really misses the larger point (though it certainly does play to the sympathies of a constituency already convinced that those functioning at the state and national levels don't have the best interests of our children at heart). Namely, that PTA, at all levels really is about advocacy. Or to put it another way, speaking with one voice on behalf of every child (to paraphrase the PTA's adopted slogan) for safer and better schools.

As an example, look on page 6 of this newsletter at the new laws benefitting children that just went into effect on September 1st. These came about in no small measure because of the efforts of many of PTA volunteers who traveled to Austin and visited with their legislators, convincing them of the value of supporting the bills that became these laws. This approach is repeated in state after state and year after year.

In the comparison document mentioned above, the PTO freely admits that it doesn't advocate for legislation. Because of the efforts of people like Kelly Moody, last year's Council Legislative Chair, and many other council volunteers like her, literally thousands of postcards were hand-delivered to our elected representatives—

who then did indeed act on our behalf to do what they could to address the crisis in school funding.

...and therefore a BIG THANK YOU to the Honorable State Senator Mike Jackson and the Honorable State Legislator Randy Weber for your efforts on behalf of Pearland ISD and other area school districts!

Public education is a critical component of a free and prosperous society, and advocacy on behalf of our children requires effort from each and every one of us. Isn't it great that the **PTA** is there to speak for our kids.

--David Watson, Editor

Pearland Council of PTA's Newsletter
drdawatson@gmail.com



**Making Every Child's
Potential a Reality**

Texas PTA Recruiting Poster for 2009-2010



<http://www.txpta.org/documents/Family%20&%20Community%20Resources/Poster1.pdf>