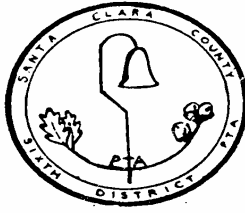


THE



BELL

Volume 10, Issue 4

“Working Together for All Children”

December 2006

Insurance Premiums Are Due Now

The Councils and the Out-of-Council units need to get the payments and Workers Comp forms in by **December 21st**.

In-council units need to mail the workers comp and insurance payments to their councils and each council sets it own due date.

EVERY UNIT must send in a Workers Comp Form. If you had no employees or independent contractors, on the Workers Comp insurance form, fill in the unit information at the top and just write NONE across the form.

Insurance Premiums will be:

- Units: \$200
- Councils: \$120
- Workers Comp: 5% of wages in excess of \$1000

The Financial mailing will be sent out in November. The Worker's Comp Form was included in the Financial mailing in November or you can get your insurance forms at

<http://www.capta.org/sections/finance/forms.cfm>.

The 6th District PTA

Wishes you a restful Winter Break

And hopes you are able

To spend time with your

Family and friends.

Happy holidays and

Happy New Year

Honorary Service Award

Now is your chance! Do you know someone who has given outstanding service to children and youth?

The Honorary Service Award is a PTA sponsored program in which deserving PTA, school or community volunteers are recognized for outstanding service to children and youth. The Sixth District PTA Honorary Service Award Selection Committee will consider nominations for individuals from Santa Clara County. Nominees should have provided service to children beyond their own school district or unit.

Please fill out the nomination form on page 9.

Nominations must be RECEIVED by Friday, January 5, 2007.
Awards will be presented at Sixth District PTA's Annual Luncheon, February 8, 2007.

Letter from Colleen B. Wilcox, Ph.D.
Santa Clara County Superintendent of Schools

All Work and No Play



A few weeks ago, the American Academy of Pediatrics sounded an alarm. They warned that play time for children, which is vital to healthy development, has been “markedly reduced” at home and at school. They blamed the loss on our “hurried lifestyles,” changes in family structure, and increased focus on

academics at the expense of recess and free play. Play is essential to the cognitive, physical, social and emotional well-being of children. It helps them to develop creativity, explore the world, practice adult roles, conquer fears, and acquire skills that build confidence and resilience. Play contributes to health and fitness and helps children to learn to work in groups and resolve conflicts. It is so important that it is recognized by the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights as the right of every child. Nonetheless, opportunities for play are diminishing.

Losing Time for Play

Busy parents, many raising children alone, find it increasingly hard to provide the highest quality time – not taking kids to organized enrichment activities, but simply talking, preparing meals together, or participating in child-centered play. Busy teachers and administrators, responding to the pressures of testing and accountability programs, often shorten recess and physical education time to focus more on academics. There aren’t enough hours in a day – but, as the pediatricians said, we must do what we can to protect the power of play. The key is to find the right *balance* between work and play by giving children ample, unscheduled time to be creative, to reflect, and engage in active play (vs. passive TV or video entertainment).

Toys as Tools

Toys and other objects often are the tools of play, and the pediatricians are not the first to advocate for “true toys,” such as blocks and dolls, which allow children to use their imagination fully. Board games, brain teasers, and card games can teach kids about rules, encourage language and cognitive skills, and sharpen their ability to memorize and improvise. Jump ropes, balls and bikes keep kids active and fit. Science kits and art supplies encourage experimenting and inspire creativity.

Children with Disabilities

Children gain the full benefits of play when activities are suited to their developmental level and abilities. Choosing toys for a child with disabilities is not much different from choosing for any child. Safe, durable toys with multi-sensory appeal and simple methods of activation are best. Toys that are popular with other children and that encourage social interaction hold extra appeal for children who may often feel excluded from playing with others. When a child with disabilities plays with toys or games, the focus for both the child and the parent or teacher switches from deficits to capabilities and interests.

Playing Our Role

The developmental benefits of play, with toys or without, are well documented. More important, the joy of playing, alone or with friends, provides memories of childhood that last forever. If our times threaten to diminish opportunities for this generation, we need to remind ourselves that *all* children need ample, unscheduled, child-driven vs. adult-directed time to be creative, reflective and playful. Whether through a longer school day, more child-focused time at home, or other approaches, we need to maintain a better balance for children between work and play.

President's Letter

Diane Foote, 6th District President

Happy Holidays

Welcome to our newest PTA, Burnett Middle School, San Jose Council.

It is hard to believe but the PTA year is almost half over. We have accomplished so much – our reported membership is almost 44,000 and I have been told there are more memberships yet to be turned in. Many of our councils and units have reported that their memberships are up over last year. I want to thank all of you for your hard work.

I was speaking to a unit president recently who was surprised that the membership numbers mattered that much to me. I said that our number one job was to be an advocate for all children and it was much easier when I can say I am speaking for over 50,000 members in Santa Clara County or when our state leaders can say they are speaking for more than 1 million members or a council president at a school board meeting stating she is speaking for 5000 members. The public and our public officials react to the numbers – we are unpaid volunteers whose constituency is the children of the state.

Last year those numbers helped to secure funding from the state for the arts and increased funding for education. This year we need those numbers again as according to Elizabeth Hill, the non-partisan legislative analyst who provides budget advice to state decision-makers, is projecting a \$5.5 billion deficit for the 2007-2008 budget year that begins July 1 and a roughly \$5 billion gap in the following year. (Mercury News Nov 15, 2006). So I am asking, no begging you to make another push for members, make sure you have membership information in your school and school district offices for new families, at all PTA events and ask people who do not have children to join the PTA. If they say they are not affiliated with any school say they can still be a PTA member to show their support for all the children – you can give them the Santa Clara Valley PTA membership form and membership letter which

can be found at www.capta6.org. Dr. Colleen Wilcox is a charter member of Santa Clara Valley PTA.

Many of you have already sent in your insurance and workers compensation form, and workers comp premium if applicable. Insurance premiums are \$200 per unit and \$120 per council and workers comp forms for all units and councils need to be sent to 6th district by December 21. **Reminder -- every unit must fill out and submit a Workers Comp form. If you have no employees or independent contractors write NONE across the form.**

I know it is hard to believe but during January and February you will need to select and elect your nominating committee. In January you will be receiving the information about convention. Everyone will be registering on line this year. Your council convention chairs or presidents will be there to help you. Convention is May 3-6, 2007 and will be held in Sacramento.

Check your bylaws but most Unit/Council/District treasurers will need to turn over the books for the first half of the year the first week of January. You may want to get the books in order before the holidays and enjoy. If you have paper scrip you must arrange a physical count with the Auditor.

Please invite your board members to visit our website at www.capta6.org. The Bell is posted there as well as other useful information.

As I read many of your newsletters I can see you have all been busy and I hope you are enjoying your PTA year. You are all providing a valuable service to the children of Santa Clara county. Thank you for all your hard work.

Thanks for all you do for children,

Diane Foote
6th District PTA President
650-722-1863
president@capta6.org

The 6th District PTA Spring Luncheon has, for years, been held in the Spring.

However, with so many Units and Councils also holding year-end events, we found that our luncheon often conflicted with local celebrations.

Thus, we have decided to try something new!

Please save the date for the annual Sixth District PTA celebration in honor of PTA Founders' Day.

We'll join together to celebrate PTA's past, while looking to the future with great anticipation.

Questions?
Contact
Barbara Spreng
BSpreng@aol.com
650.326.1584

SAVE THE DATE

6th District PTA

Annual Luncheon

Thursday, February 8, 2007

11:30-1:30

Nicolino's Garden Cafe

1228 Reamwood Avenue,

Sunnyvale

This annual event is a celebration of the many ways our PTAs and outstanding individual contributors have selflessly served children and families in Santa Clara County and beyond.

Watch for your invitation in January.

In the meantime, start extending invitations to your executive board members, outstanding volunteers, unit presidents, principals, school district administrators and board of education trustees.

And, enjoy a festive holiday season!

Health & Community Concerns

Mental Health should be and is of vital concern when it comes to our children. Many feel pressured by their parents and by the need to get good grades. And many pressure themselves. What can be done to provide services for our children? For their parents?

The following information was obtained from a California State PTA report on the California Juvenile Officers Association 57th annual Conference:

Do you know that SUICIDE

ranks as the THIRD leading cause of death for ages 15-24?

as the FOURTH for ages 10-14?

is the SECOND leading cause of death for our college age youth?

Girls attempt suicide over three times more than boys because they usually choose drugs as a means which provide a "window of opportunity" to intervene?

Boys COMPLETE suicide over three times more than girls, because they use firearms in almost 70% of completed suicides?

Four out of five young people who attempt suicide have given clear warnings?

These are scary statistics. But they should make us think what we as parents, as a society, are doing to make our young people so scared of and pessimistic about life. The above statistics should give us pause.

Over the past few years, many changes have occurred in our Juvenile Probation Department. In 2007, we plan to have a program which will speak to those changes.

The Juvenile Justice Committee recently visited the Bill Wilson Center for Homeless and Runaway Youth in Santa Clara.

This clean and charming shelter, which houses 16, offers short-term housing and intensive individual, group and family counseling to youth (ages 11 to 17). The shelter is one of several sites operated by the Center, whose mission is to support and strengthen the community by serving youth and families through counseling, housing, education, and advocacy in the least restrictive setting possible.

With the involvement of the community, The Bill Wilson Center serves over 10,000 clients in Santa Clara County annually and has served over 130,000 clients since 1976.

Founded in 1973 and named for a former mayor of Santa Clara who saw a need for counseling troubled teenagers in less restrictive settings before public institutions become necessary, the Bill Wilson Center, a non-profit agency, currently runs 13 programs. These focus on building self-confidence and developing personal assets toward the goal of helping troubled youth to change the direction of their lives.

The Family and Individual Counseling Center provides counseling services to individuals of all ages and addresses, including family conflict, school problems, substance abuse, depression, stress and out-of-control behavior.

While Bill Wilson Center programs primarily focus on youth, some of their services also include adults and families. They have a 7-week parenting class, and have recently merged with The Centre for Living with Dying.

With over 100 trained multi-lingual volunteers they are committed to provide support as long as the need exists.

With the increasing awareness that families need strengthening, Sparkey Harlen, executive director of the Bill Wilson Center, applied for and recently received a federal demonstration grant under the Fatherhood Initiative, which will enable the Center to help young fathers improve their economic stability through employment, education and financial planning. This program should strengthen families. Sparkey is to be congratulated for her courage and creativity.

Barbara Emerich

Vice President for Health & Community Concerns

phone: 650/948-3666

e-mail: careevol@aol.com

Disaster Preparedness



Santa Clara Valley is in the heart of EARTHQUAKE country. The area is also subject to wild fires, flooding, and of course flu pandemic. Should any of these occur it would be a disaster.

Phases of a disaster: RRRR- Readiness, Response, Relief, Recovery

- **Readiness**- prepare, get a plan, get supplies, get trained, drill
- **Response** – the “badges” (police, fire and government and utilities) will try to help, yet everyone in a big regional disaster should be ready to handle the post-disaster for 72 hours on their own. Schools have responsibility for the children until an authorized person claims each and every one.
- **Relief**- after the initial life threatening issues are dealt with what people need immediately after the disaster: to restore SSS – Safety, sanitation, security
- **Recovery** – the long term return to normalcy for the individual, schools, business and community.

Who among us is most likely to be at most jeopardy and have the hardest time after a disaster: LLL – the Least, last and the lost.

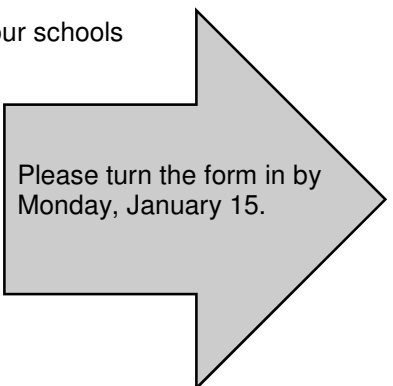
- These include ALL children and the disabled and elderly,
- those of less economic resources,
- and those speaking other languages than the emergency responders.

As PTA leaders, it is prudent that we review whether our schools are ready.

- The Sixth District PTA is a participant in the Joint Venture Silicon Valley Disaster Preparedness Initiative.
- **As part of this effort, attached is an assessment form for each school PTA to send back so we can have a profile of our current readiness. Please take the couple minutes to give your best guess as to the status and return the forms promptly. Please have the forms in by January 15.**

During the second semester I will be distributing information to help you make your schools and the families more prepared.

Catherine Vonnegut
Sixth District PTA Disaster Preparedness



Sixth District PTA Assessment of Disaster Readiness

Please fill out the form and return by folding, staple or tape and mail as already addressed on the reverse side (*Don't forget a stamp!*) Please give your best guess, rather than delay the reply.

1. Name of school: _____
2. Address of school: _____
3. Name of person filling out assessment _____ phone or email _____
4. How many students at this school? _____
5. How many teachers at this school? _____
6. Does the school have a disaster plan? _____
7. Does the school use the SIMS model for disaster/emergency management? _____
8. Is the plan district-wide or school specific? _____
9. Does the school PTA have a disaster preparedness chairperson? _____
10. How much water is stored on site for sanitation purposes? _____
11. How much water and food is stored on site for students/staff for disasters? _____
12. Does every room have first aid supplies and instructions? _____
13. How often does the school drill for evacuation? _____
14. How often does the school drill for shelter-in-place and lock-down? _____
15. Has your school experienced a disaster or emergency? _____
 - If so on a scale of 1 to 10 (10 being best) how was it handled by staff _____
16. Is your school designated as a Red Cross shelter for a disaster? _____
17. How many showers does the school have? _____
18. Does the school have a staff kitchen? _____
19. Does the school have a cafeteria/kitchen for preparation of student meals? _____
20. Please describe (briefly on the back) the release procedure for students after a disaster _____
21. On a scale of 1 to 10 (10 being best) how well prepared is your school in your opinion _____

Please answer 20 here: (student release procedure):

22. Are the parents informed/about the emergency/disaster plans and procedures? _____

Fold along this line and mail

Stamp here!

Sixth District PTA
1290 Ridder Park Drive
M/C 214
San Jose, CA 95131-6768

ATTN: Disaster Readiness Assessment

Honorary Service Awards

Hooray for Volunteers!

Now is your chance! Do you know someone who has given outstanding service to children and youth throughout Santa Clara County? Your PTA Units and Councils honor volunteers with Honorary Service Awards. Sixth District PTA does that, too!

The Honorary Service Award is a PTA-sponsored program in which deserving PTA, school or community volunteers are recognized for outstanding service to children and youth. Recipients do not have to be connected with PTA.

For each award, a contribution is made (in the recipient's name) to the California State Honorary Service Award Program. These contributions provide resources for State PTA's Scholarships and Grants Program, which awards

- scholarships to graduating high school seniors, and to teachers, counselors, and nurses, for their continuing education
- and grants to PTAs (at all levels) to assist with parent education, cultural arts, leadership development, and translation of PTA materials. For more information, please see www.capta6.org/hsa.

The Sixth District PTA Honorary Service Award Selection Committee will consider all nominations at the county level and will make final award decisions from among these award possibilities: Very Special Person Award (VSP), Honorary Service Award (HSA), Continuing Service Award (CSA), or the Golden Oak Award.

Please fill out this nomination form and send to: Sixth District PTA, c/o Diane Foote, 1290 Ridder Park Drive, M/C 214, San Jose, CA 95131.

Nominations must be RECEIVED by Friday, January 5, 2007. Awards will be presented at Sixth District PTA's Annual Luncheon, February 8, 2007.

Please let us know about that special volunteer who best exemplifies PTA!

I hereby nominate:

Describe in detail the service provided to school/community organizations and events (education, sports, scouts, religious, etc.) Please use reverse side of this application or attach to application. Limit one page.

Nominated by: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

DEADLINE FOR NOMINATIONS - JANUARY 5, 2007.

Treasurer's Calendar and Important Dates

For Councils and Out-of-Council Units

The following items are due to 6th District from councils and out-of-council units by the date indicated.

If your unit is in a council, please check with your council treasurer for their due date. Usually it will be due at the council level at least two weeks before the due date listed below.

December 21, 2006

- Forward Workers Comp reports (for all units with no wages subject to WC premium).
- Membership Dues and Report
- Unit Insurance Premiums

January 10, 2007

- Forward Workers Comp reports (for all units owing Workers Comp)

January 2007

- Audit Report Forms (Councils and Out-of-Council units)

March 10, 2007

- Final Membership Dues and Report need to be remitted in order to qualify for awards for 2006-07.

Remittance Information:

- Remittances are to be received in the Sixth District PTA office on or before the due date.
- Out-of-council units and Councils need to submit ONE CHECK (payable to Sixth District PTA) for membership and need to be submit it with the Sixth District Remittance Form. The form is available at the Sixth District Office or online at capta6.org
- Out-of-council units have the deadlines listed to the left.
- Units (in councils) need to observe their council deadlines.
- All payments submitted after due date must be accompanied by late fees (\$25.00)

**All money must be remitted through channels.
All checks must have two (2) signatures.**

Send remittances in duplicate and payment to:

Sixth District PTA
Attention Treasurer
1290 Ridder Park Drive, M/C 214
San Jose CA 95131-2398

Fees:

- **Membership:**
ALL Units — \$3.50 per member
(\$.50 District, \$1.25 State, \$1.75 National)
- **Insurance:**
Unit \$200; Council \$120
Worker's Comp—5% of wages in excess of \$1000

Save the Date

2007 California State PTA Convention

**May 3—May 6, 2007
Sacramento**

Convention registration materials will be mailed in January 2007. This is the first year that California State PTA will offer online registration and individuals will register directly with the State PTA; registration will no longer be sent through channels (unit to council to district PTA). You will be able to register online, by fax or by mail. Look for more information next month.

Bylaws – Time to Update Yours?

Bylaws are the guidelines for how your PTA operates. Every member of the executive board should have a copy of your bylaws. Bylaws should be formally reviewed every year and updated to the newest format every two years. They need to be current so you're following the most up to date PTA and IRS guidelines and they need to reflect how your PTA really operates. For example: if your bylaws call for 3 vice-presidents and you only have one – your bylaws need to be updated; if you've changed your dues or meeting dates – your bylaws need to be updated. This applies to councils as well as units.

As of November 1, only the new 2006 bylaws format will be accepted.

If you have any questions, contact
Susan Cassens,
6th District PTA Parliamentarian
scassensemail-pta@yahoo.com

Information

Telephone Tax Refund

Good news from the IRS!
Yes, really!

On 2006 tax returns there's a place to get a tax refund for telephone taxes paid the last few years.

It's not complicated, but it is fairly detailed, so do check out the websites below for specifics.

<http://www.irs.gov/newsroom/article/0,,id=161506,00.html>

<http://www.snopes.com/business/taxes/excise.asp>

Also, feel free to tell others.
--*Marcie Brown*, Directory Editor

Insurance Premiums

The councils and the Out-of-Council units need to get the payments and Workers Comp forms in by Dec 21st. In-council units need to mail the workers comp and insurance payments to their councils and each council sets it own due date. **EVERY UNIT** must send in a Workers Comp Form. If you had no employees or independent contractors, on the Workers Comp insurance form, fill in the unit information at the top and just write NONE across the form.

Insurance Premiums will be:

- Units: \$200
- Councils: \$120
- Workers Comp: 5% of wages in excess of \$1000

The Financial mailing will be sent out in November. The Worker's Comp Form should be included but if you want to get your insurance forms early it can be found at <http://www.capta.org/sections/finance/forms.cfm>.

SIXTH DISTRICT OFFICE

All local PTAs and councils of PTAs in Santa Clara County are served by the Sixth District PTA office. The office is here for your benefit, whether it be for materials, video loans or inquiries on PTA matters, such as obtaining information about past Honorary Service recipients. Many of the California State PTA publications are available in the office. These items may be requested over the phone, or you can stop by to see what materials are on hand.

If you are planning to come down to the office, please call first to make sure that our office manager, Paula Traynor, will be there to assist you.

For information on ordering supplies or obtaining videos please contact Paula Traynor at the Sixth District PTA Office number listed below.

The office is located in the Santa Clara County Office of Education, 1290 Ridder Park Dr., San Jose 95131-2304. The phone number is (408) 453-6536. Email for Paula is paula_traynor@sccoe.org The office is open Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM.

The office is closed on all school and county holidays.

BELL Information

The "Bell" is the 6th District PTA newsletter, full of valuable information on what is happening in 6th District/ Santa Clara County. However, it does not take the place of attending District Meetings. We welcome your feedback about the "Bell" and look forward to receiving some. Please take time to read the entire "Bell".

During the 2006-2007 school year in order to maximize efficiency and lower costs, we will offer an option to receive the "Bell" by email.

Article authors: please keep the deadline dates below in mind and submit your articles (by email, please) and other information on time. If time sensitive, special information must get out, arrangements will be made to do that. If problems arise regarding deadlines, please contact Wendy Akers-Ghose.

2006-2007 Bell Deadline Dates

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Deadline</u>
January	January 5

Please send article submissions to:
Wendy Akers-Ghose at
wendyghose@yahoo.com,
phone 650-813-0192

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California Congress of Parents and Teachers

SIXTH DISTRICT PTA/S.C.C.O.E.
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San Jose, CA 95131-2304
(408) 453-6536
VOLUME 10 ISSUE #4

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PTA newsletter

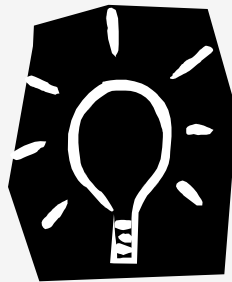
President Diane Foote
Editor Wendy Akers-Ghose

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San Jose, CA 95131-2304

Phone: (408) 453-6536

The Bell is also available
at www.capta6.org



"Education is the
movement from
darkness to light."

Allan Bloom
Educator
1930-1992

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only 6th District
"BELL"

The "Bell" is published seven times
during the year.
A subscription is only \$8.00 per year.

Make check payable to 6th District PTA:

Name _____

Unit/Council _____

Address _____

City/Zip _____

Mail this form and a check to:

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1290 Ridder Park Dr.
San Jose, CA 95131-2304