

SYCAMORE RIDGE



Round-Up

June 2010

Vol. 5, Issue 5

Principal's Message



Dear Sycamore Ridge Families:

As we close off on another terrific school year, I would like to take this opportunity to personally extend my gratitude to all of you who have contributed your time, energy, resources and support to our school this year. I trust that each of you are looking forward to a fun-filled summer with your family and friends and will be ready for the new 2010-2011 school year. Sycamore Ridge is truly a special place of learning and I continue to be proud of this fine school, with its amazing school community. It is my continued

privilege to work closely with you and our entire staff and student body to provide the highest quality-learning environment possible for all of our Stallion students. As most of you know by now, I strongly believe the education of your child is a partnership between school and home. This partnership is the foundation of our learning community, and it is what makes our school special and unique. Working together, we can make a powerful difference in the life of your child.

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A Note from the Outgoing PTA President...



I am excited to share with all of you that because of your generous and never ending support of our programs and fundraisers, especially RidgeRaising, the PTA was able to donate back to our school just over \$20,000 to help purchase all new computers for our computer lab as well as purchase additional electronic and computer equipment for our classrooms! When our students come back in the fall, they will have a refreshed

computer lab to put their learning into action. The existing technology lab computers will be moved into classrooms and hallways for individual classroom use.

Staff Appreciation Week took place May 10th-14th. Our dedicated chairs, Trisha Klimisch and Raquel Dixon organized a full week of breakfasts and lunches for all of the staff at Sycamore Ridge. They and their team of volunteers treated the staff like they were movie stars at the luncheon on Wednesday complete with a red carpet, paparazzi and screaming fans (their students!). Other highlights of the week were live musicians (a pianist and flutist) playing during the luncheons and a raffle with several items donated by our parents and local businesses. I would like to thank all of the local businesses and parents who generously donated to make this week so special and I would especially like to thank Trisha, Raquel and their committee whose planning and execution made our staff feel like the stars in our children's lives that they truly are.

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Firm, Fair &
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Pictures, Pictures,
Pictures

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JUNE

3rd
4th Grade Field Trip to Cabrillo
National Monument
8:45am-1:45pm

"Teaching Your Kids to Cope with Bullies:
Both Online and in Person"
Dr. Dana Fillmore
6:30pm (MUR)
*Free Childcare Available
for Children 18months & Older

4th
1st Grade Field Trip to San Diego Zoo
8:30am-1:30pm

Spirit Day - Dress Alike Day

9th
Yearbooks Distributed

10th
Volunteer Appreciation Lunch (MUR)

11th
5th Grade Field Trip to BizTown
8:30am-2:00pm

15th
4th-6th Grade Awards Ceremony
10:30-11:30am (MUR)

16th (Wednesday)
Full day of instruction
Kindergarten Dismissal- 12:40pm
1st-6th Grade Dismissal- 2:30pm

Field Day (all grades)/ Dad's Lunch
10:30am-12:15pm (upper grade field)

17th (Thursday)
6th Grade Promotion
8:30am (MUR)

Last Day of School
12:30pm Dismissal
ALL GRADES

AUGUST

27th
New Student Orientation
10:00am

Kindergarten Orientation
11:00am

30th
1st Day of the 2010-2011
School Year

Boo Hoo Breakfast
for Kindergarten Parents
8:05am

SEPTEMBER

2nd
Back to School Night
Time: TBA

7th
No School- Labor Day
Observed

23rd
Picture Day

24th
Stallion Stampede
Time: TBA



Congratulations Class of 2010!

We are so proud of you!

Editor's Note: In the April 2010 newsletter, Mrs. Mackie was mistakenly listed as one of the 5th grade teachers instead of Ms. Stanton in the Jog-A-Thon article. Our apologies to Ms. Stanton for the omission and a very special thank you to her for her extra effort in ensuring the 5th graders were able to participate in the Jog-A-Thon.

A Note from the Incoming PTA President...



Hello Sycamore Ridge Families! I want to take the opportunity to introduce myself. My name is Carrie White and I will be taking over the position of President of the PTA for the 2010-2011 school year. You may also know me as Carrie Nydahl, I go by either name, but I am going to stick with Carrie White for simplicity's sake. I have two children, both girls, who will be entering the 2nd and 5th Grades next year. I am looking forward to another great year at Sycamore Ridge, and hoping to get to know more of you each year.

Our President for the past two years, Shannon Cary, has done an amazing job leading the PTA and overseeing all of the incredible programs that the PTA has put in place here at our school. It's going to be hard to fill her shoes. But, our new board is coming together with a team of people who are dedicated to helping make Sycamore Ridge the best environment it can be, for our kids and our families.

Returning Board members include 3rd VP, Chairman of Health and Safety: Shelley Aberle; Secretary: Debbie Romine; Treasurer: Christy Mohler; Financial Secretary: Maia Starling; Historian: Lisa Blazer; and Parliamentarian: Branden Belford. We are so thankful that they have agreed to continue participating on the PTA Board, as their contributions have been invaluable.

We have some new members coming onboard including: Executive Vice President: Victoria Shoushtari; 2nd VP, Chairman of Communications: Meaghen Gardiner; 4th VP, Chairman of Ways & Means: Eileen Johnson and Auditor: Richard Kaleta. It is wonderful to have some new members, to give us fresh ideas and insights on our school community.

We are still looking for an interested person to take over the position of 1st VP, Chairman of Programs. This person would be overseeing such programs as Stallion Stampede, Boo Hoo Breakfast, 6th Grade Promotion, Reflections, Assemblies, Study Buddies and the Everybody a Reader program. Fortunately, volunteers have generously offered to chair most of the programs identified, so the VP will be mostly overseeing these programs, and not running them, and participating in PTA Board meetings.

Please contact me if you have any questions about what we do on the PTA Board or if you have interest in volunteering in any capacity. We can always use your help. You can reach me best via e-mail at cnydahl@san.rr.com.

Under Shannon's leadership, we were able to put in place two vital means of communication this year: the PTA website and PTA e-blasts. If you haven't already, please check out the website at www.sycamoreridgepta.com. There you can sign up to receive the PTA e-blasts, which will be sent every other Sunday next year. Both are great sources of news about the events and programs at Sycamore Ridge as well as other information pertinent to our school community. The PTA is dedicated to keeping our families informed about all the wonderful things happening at our school, and we hope to be able to use this digital media more frequently to cut down on the amount of paper used. So please sign up for the e-blasts! :)

Again, I look forward to a great year next year, and hope all of you enjoy your summer break. . .

Carrie White

Accountant Needed

Are you an accountant or do you know one? The PTA is in need of an accountant to prepare our tax returns. Please contact Maia Starling if you can be of assistance: maia_starling@yahoo.com or 858-354-1183.



CONGRATULATIONS! Sycamore Stallion Superstars!

The following students were chosen by their teachers as Sycamore Stallion Superstars as persons of excellent character. The Superstars were recognized at the Villages meeting on April 14, 2010.

Kindergarten

Mrs. Jones: Jack
Mrs. Litt: Mia
Mrs. Wojtkowski: Claire

First Grade

Mrs. Howell: Christian
Ms. Saunders: Diego
Mrs. Schengel: Emily
Ms. Waxman/Mrs. White: McKenna

Second Grade

Mrs. Chung: Julia
Mrs. Johnson: Jaclyn
Mrs. Shea: Christian

Third Grade

Mrs. Hanna: Sarina
Mrs. Rex: Lika

Fourth Grade

Ms. Howard: Samantha
Mrs. Mackie: Liya
Ms. Money: Woo Jin

Fifth Grade

Mrs. Schwab/Mrs. Solowczuk: Brittany
Ms. Stanton: Oliver

Sixth Grade

Mr. Dahl: Elizabeth
Mrs. Mokiao: Danilo

Congratulations to these students!

Stallion Sixth Graders Investigate Global Warming and Participate in Ancient Greek Simulation

Sixth graders at Sycamore Ridge have been very busy; wrapping up the third trimester with studies in Global Warming and Greek Ancient Civilizations....

6th Grade Science: Energy and Resources

In science class with Mr. Dahl, students learned how and where we get our energy and resources. They classified energy sources as renewable and nonrenewable and discussed ways in which we can save energy and resources. In addition, students learned about the greenhouse effect and how humans may be influencing climate change. In order to save money, resources and the environment, students understand they need to be responsible with the way they use energy. Here is a list of some of the top ways 6th graders feel they can save energy and resources:

- Turn off the water when brushing your teeth or rinsing dishes
- Use energy efficient light bulbs
- Bring reusable bags to the grocery store
- Recycle
- Unplug inactive or unused electronics



It's All Greek to Us!

All sixth grade students participated in a six-week simulation of Ancient Greece. Under the direction of Goddess Mokiao, students chose Greek names and were divided into the ancient poleis (city-states) of Ancient Greece:



Athens, Sparta, Corinth, Megara, and Argos. Dressed in traditional Greek chitons (similar to Roman togas), student learned about ancient Greek civilization, beliefs, and education. Throughout the simulation, students competed in a variety of activities including: learning the Greek alphabet, investigating and building Greek temples, and debating in public forums the rights of women and slaves. Students also re-wrote and performed famous Greek myths giving them a modern twist. The simulation culminated in student oral presentations featuring an area of research in which they were particularly interested.



Oscar Week at Sycamore Ridge
And the awards go to our Donors, Volunteers,
and the P.T.A

“Our Oscar Week was a Wonderful Success Because of Local Donors”

The P.T.A would like to express our appreciation for the generosity and support of our local donors. The event could not have happened without their support. We would like to give Oscar applause to **Ralph's** manager Brian Zobel and Jenifer Welker for providing us with a wonderful breakfast; **Rubio's** manager Denis Vejzovic for getting the job done. He made sure every person got lunch on his day; **Dr. Babak Shoushtari, La Jolla Endodontics**, who provided us with yummy pancakes and fruit all week. In addition, **Brook Cortese** sent us tasty homemade scones, that were a huge success. **Daphne's** did a superb job providing us with the best Greek food in the county. **Sammy's Pizza**, as always, stepped up to the plate and hit a home run providing lunch for our staff. **Souplantation**, a favorite of families, graciously donated lunch on Friday. Last, but not least, we want to give a round of applause to all of the moms that brought in dessert to fill our sweet tooth and **Johnson and Johnson Real Estate** for homemade enchiladas that were accompanied by rice and beans donated by **Caliente's**. Your personal commitment was incredibly helpful and allowed us to reach our goal in expressing to our staff how much we truly appreciate them. Thank you from all of us.

Special thanks to volunteers and vendors that made this week a success:

Charisma - Mani & Pedi gift card

Ultra Star Theaters - 4 movie passes

San Diego Harbor Excursions- Harbor Excursion for 2

Panache & Company Salon - 2 Haircuts

Empire Beauty Supply - Hair Product gift basket

The Cortese Family- Theater gift basket

Papyrus - 3 gift bags

Geppettos - 9 gifts

Emaginedigital.com (John Melcher)- Banner

www.Learningmusicstudios.com- Rebecca Ramirez-
pianist for luncheon

Branden Belford- flutist for luncheon

Carmel Heights Dentistry- cookies

Rock, Stone, Tile- red carpet

Jen Varela

Janet Ross

Victoria Shoushtari

Lisa Becker

Nelar Wine

Brooke Cortese

Halia Wasserman

Tulika Agarwal

Debbie Romine

Christy Mohler

Shelley Aberle

Eileen Lundquist

Donna O'Rourke

Judy Du

Monique Torres

Lisa Blazer

Nicole Baril

Carrie White

Maia Starling

Shannon Cary

Ritta Maduntseva

Lisa Rhodes

Sun Jin

Sinyien Du

Raquel Dixon

Trisha Klimisch

Gabrielle Pool

Kimberly Reckles

Our Staff Enjoyed a Week of Food, Music, and Gifts...



Rebecca Ramirez from Learning Music Inc.



REMINDERS FROM THE FRONT OFFICE:

LOST & FOUND: Have you checked the Lost & Found lately? It is overflowing with jackets, lunchboxes, water bottles, etc. Please check it right away! **All items will be donated to charity on the last day of school!**

VOLUNTEER BADGES: Please return all volunteer badges to the front office. The school is charged \$5 per badge to replace them.

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

While I am extremely proud of the academic achievement of our students, I am equally thrilled with my daily observations of many acts of kindness demonstrated by our youngsters. Our Student Council Leaders, PeaceCoaches and Village program support our focus on social responsibility and strong ethics. As I reflect on the year, it is clear that we truly emulate a "Village" in which parent volunteers, (PTA, Everyone a Reader, Running Club Volunteers, etc.) model community service and active volunteerism for our students.

It is with gratitude that I am able to report the continuation of our well-loved ESC programs next year. Due to your generous support of the Del Mar Schools Education Foundation, we are pleased to be able to provide art, music, science, technology and physical education by credentialed teachers in the 2010-2011 school year!

It is with excitement and positive anticipation that I look forward to next year!

Best wishes to all for a fantastic summer!

Emily Morris, Stallion Principal

YEARBOOKS!



A huge thank you to Jen Ernst who is single handedly responsible for creating our Sycamore Ridge yearbook. MANY, MANY hours went into coordinating this huge project. I've had the privilege of taking a sneak peak at it and it's quite impressive!

Thank you to those parents who shared photos with us, and particularly to Scott Tanaka who frequently photographed and helped document every large and small Sycamore Ridge school event. You will find many of his photos in our yearbook and PTA photo album.

Yearbooks will soon be arriving! They will be delivered to students' classrooms and will be sent home on Wednesday, June 9th. There may be a handful of copies left. If you are interested in purchasing one for \$35, please contact Maia Starling maia_starling@yahoo.com or Lisa Blazer ldblazer@san.rr.com. It will be first come first serve until we run out!

Lisa Blazer
PTA Historian



Great job Sycamore Ridge Families!! We received \$407.50 from BoxTops this year. All of those 10 cent coupons really add up! Many BoxTops may be expiring June 2010 or December 2010, so now's the time to submit them. One last shipment will be sent at the end of the school year.

Questions? Contact Maia Starling:
maia_starling@yahoo.com.



Cartridges for Kids

Sycamore Ridge continues to participate in the Cartridges for Kids program. By donating your used ink cartridges, digital cameras, laptops, and cell phones, you can help us earn money for the school. Items may be dropped off to Mrs. Oliviera in the Tech lab. For a complete list of recyclable items, go to: cfktoday.com. For more information, contact Mrs. Oliviera: joliviera@dmusd.org.

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

Barnes and Noble/Red Robin night and our 2nd Annual Dad's Movie Night proved again to be fun for the kids and families and successful for the PTA. We are still awaiting final numbers, but Barnes and Noble was so successful that the amount of purchases made by our families allowed us to receive a higher percentage of the sales. Many thanks to Miranda Giurgiu and Ouhoud Dabbas for organizing the Barnes and Noble/Red Robin Night and to Mark Belford for putting together Dad's Movie Night.

We also had great participation in our school supply kits purchasing program. Our program chair, Marie LeRose, started this program 3 years ago and every year it grows a little more. We had almost 200 students purchase school supply kits this year and not only is that great for the families who don't have to run around all over town the week before school starts buying school supplies, but it also helps the PTA as a percentage of the sales come back to support our PTA programs. Thank you to all who purchased the supply kits- they will be waiting for your student in their classroom on the first day of school- and thanks to Marie LeRose for organizing this program again this year!

At our April General Association Meeting/Coffee with the Principal, the membership elected a new PTA Executive Board. Thank you to the nominating committee (Nicole Baril, Lisa Blazer, Raquel Dixon, Debbie Romine and Shelley Aberle) who graciously volunteered to recruit next year's board. Below are the following parents who have volunteered to serve on the board-Thank you!! As you can see there is a vacancy for the 1st VP, Chairman of Programs position. The programs that fall under this position all have chair people in place already so the VP's main job is to serve as a coordinator and liaison between the program chairs and the Executive Board, and provide support if needed. The time commitment would be attending Executive Board meetings once a month (about 2 hours/meeting) and then the rest could likely be done from home via phone calls and emails. If this is something that sounds interesting and you are looking for a way to get more involved, this might be for you! Please email me at shancary@gmail.com or the President-Elect, Carrie White at cnydahl@san.rr.com; we would be happy to talk to you more about it.

2010-2011 PTA Executive Board Members

President	Carrie Nydahl White
Executive Vice President	Victoria Shoushtari
1st VP, Chairman of Programs	Open
2nd VP, Chairman of Communications	Meaghen Gardiner
3rd VP, Chairman of Health & Safety	Shelley Aberle
4th VP, Ways & Means	Eileen Johnson
Secretary	Debbie Romine
Treasurer	Christy Mohler
Financial Secretary	Maia Starling
Auditor	Richard Kaleta
Historian	Lisa Blazer

Coming up on Wednesday, June 16th is Sycamore Ridge's 2nd Annual Field Day. Your children will be participating in fun, organized activities with their Villages on the last full day of instruction before the end of the school year. When Field Day is over, it will lead right into our last Dad's Lunch of the year. Coach Sink is currently looking for volunteers to help staff the different activities during Field Day. If you are interested in participating and would like more information, please contact him at jsink@dmusd.org.

As I reflect back over the last two years that I have served as PTA President, I think about how thankful I am to have had this opportunity. Not only has it opened my eyes to the wonders that fill the walls of not only our school but the schools of our entire district, but it has made me ever more appreciative of the community in which we all live. It is difficult for me to express how much gratitude I have for our entire school community. This dedicated and talented group of people consistently comes together time and time again to do great things for our children. From the parents and families whose support and positive and, sometimes, negative critiques have helped shape the programs in our district and face of the PTA, to the teachers who support our children and the PTA in everything that we ask of them, to the school staff (especially Lesa House, Eileen Randall and Chris Ray) who answer all of my silly questions with a smile and without whom Sycamore Ridge would not operate as efficiently as it does on a daily basis, to the students whose smiles and giggles make my heart smile-it takes all of these people to make our school not only work on a daily basis, but THRIVE. Like Mrs. Morris always says, "It takes a village to raise a child".

And speaking of Mrs. Morris, I especially want to recognize and thank her, our principal, whose dedication and loyalty to our children, to our school and to our district truly sets the stage for making our school the special place that it is. She provides the leadership and guidance needed to lead the staff and our students to excellence. Thank you Mrs. Morris for all that you do each and every day at our wonderful school.

I also would like to recognize and thank the PTA Executive Board for all of their hard work and dedication over the last year (for some of you, two years)! It has been a pleasure to work with each and every one of you and your chairs and I can't tell you how thankful I am for your commitment to our PTA and to our school. We have accomplished a lot this year due to the team ethic that we have had on this board. You have made every aspect of my position easier because of the work that you have done in your positions. I hope you all understand how much I value the experiences that we have shared through the PTA! Thank you again!

To the PTA program event chairs and committee members, thank you for all of your hard work. Your efforts have made a positive impact on our school and have enabled our students and families to create memories to be cherished for years to come.

As I close this final newsletter article, I would just like to say that it has been an honor and a pleasure to serve as PTA President for Sycamore Ridge over the last two years and I want to thank you for the opportunity to do so.

Looking ahead to next year, make sure that you remember to check out the PTA's new website: www.sycamoreridgepta.com over the summer. You can sign up for our new email newsletter that is currently going out every other week to keep you up to date on what is going on at our school and also purchase PTA memberships, and other items as they come up through the year. Our President-Elect Carrie White and her board are already starting to work on plans for next school year. They and their capable staff of volunteers (you!) will lead us through another successful year for the 2010-2011 school year.

Have a wonderful summer and we'll see you in August!

Best regards,
Shannon Cary
Outgoing PTA President



Look at all of our Jr. Olympians in Action!

Our Fifth Grade Scientists



Fifth Graders have been busy with several projects this year. Among the most recent was a podcast created during our technology lab time. Many people may not know that fifth graders are tested on both fourth and fifth grade science standards on the state test. In an effort to creatively revisit last year's standards, students used a program called Garage Band to create a presentation based on fourth grade science standards.

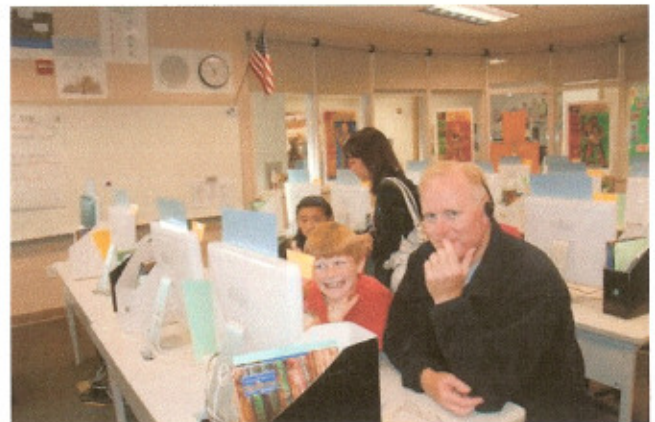
As a follow up to this activity, students were asked to view the videos and summarize the main points. Brittany, a fifth grader, commented, "It was fun to use podcasts to study for the STAR test. It was your friend's voice instead of a narrator on a CD." Through technology, our students were able to re-teach important science concepts to other students in the fifth grade. Please visit the fifth grade websites and click on student work links to see their hard work.



The Sycamore Ridge PTA is proud to announce a gift to our school of \$20,000! The gift will be used to help purchase new computers for our computer lab as well as new docucams, projectors and printers to replace broken ones in our classrooms. Thank you for your support of PTA fundraisers like Sally Foster, RidgeRaising and Restaurant Nights. Your generosity is much appreciated and is directly benefiting our students! Thank you!

Dad's Club

The next Dad's Club lunch will be in conjunction with Field Day on Wednesday, June 16th. Field Day will run from around 10:15am to 11:30am. If you would like to volunteer to help with Field Day, please email Mark Belford at: Belford_mark@bah.com. We will need help setting up for the event and helping with the different Field Day events.



Students enjoyed showing off their Technology projects to their parents during Open House.

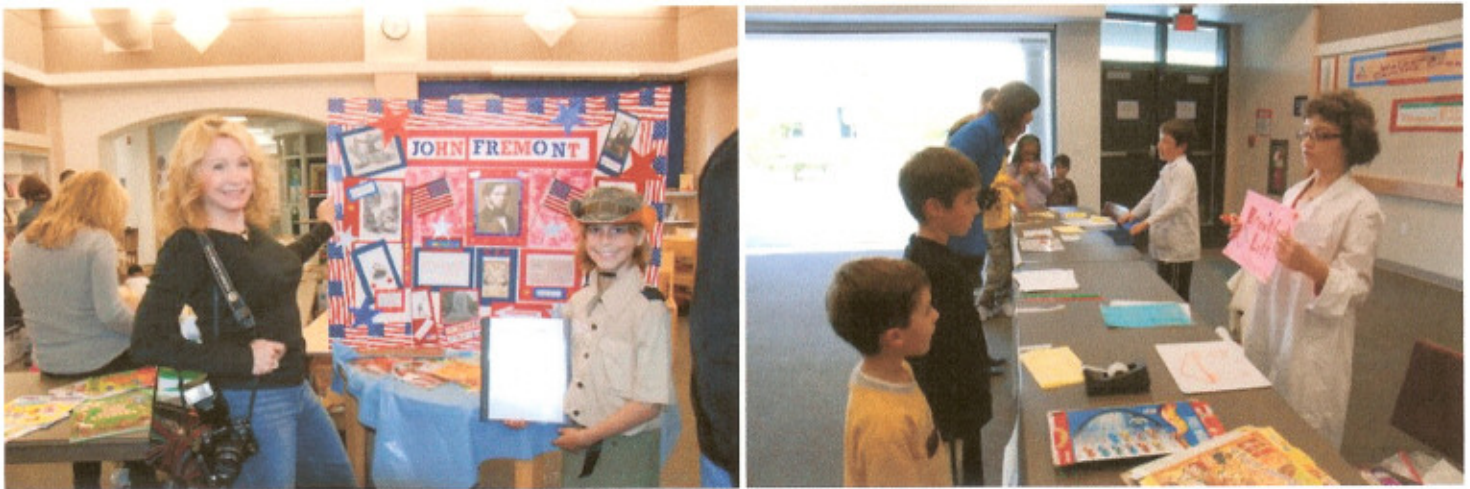
Everyone A Reader

Thanks to our incredible team of Everyone A Reader parent volunteers, we were able to offer literacy support to over thirty first, second, and third grade students. Each week every student participating received 30-45 minutes of individual reading support from a trained team of wonderful parent volunteers. Thank you to: John Taylor, Toni Fisher, Sawsan Atiya, Lisa Giap, Maia Starling, Miranda Giurgiu, Nina Sandberg, Ouhoud Dabbas, Pam Hunter, Tulika Agarwal, Halecia Wasserman, Raquel Dixon, Sandy Blackstone-Gardner, Shelley Aberle and Lisa Becker for their time and dedication throughout this entire school year. Your commitment to this program had an incredibly positive impact on the progress made by these hard-working students.

A special thanks to Christy Mohler who, as busy as she was, would stop by our EAR room to help keep things organized whenever possible. Thanks also to Karen Ettouati who would sub for us as needed. Thank you to Mrs. Morris and the first through third grade teachers for their support, flexibility, and frequent words of appreciation. Lastly, a huge thank you to the fabulous students who perhaps began a bit reluctantly, but by the end of the school year entered our EAR room with big smiles, enthusiasm and confidence!

If you have any interest in either receiving parent tips on how to work with your child at home, or if you would like to consider becoming a volunteer yourself next year, please be on the lookout for our fall parent education and volunteer training sessions next October.

Lisa Blazer
SR EAR site coordinator
ldblazer@san.rr.com



Student Council

I would like to give my heart-felt thanks to the 25 students who gave up their lunches, recesses, and sometimes their evenings to participate in Student Council this year. As part of their community service efforts, they collected Toys for Tots, Books for the St. Vincent de Paul Family Literacy Center, and started composting at lunchtime. Keeping school spirit high, Student Council sponsored Hippy Day, College Sweatshirt Day, and a Haunted Hallway at Halloween.

These student leaders have shown growth in confidence, public speaking, and have become better role models for their peers. I am proud to have worked with them and wish them the best!

-Mrs. Oliviera
Student Council Advisor



Library News

Mrs. Kathy Pechtimaldjian

Time has certainly flown this year and summer is right around the corner. It has been another fantastic year in the library. We have had tremendous support for our annual fundraisers. The Used Book Sale is just wrapping up and we made a little over \$500 for the library. The money raised is used to replace worn out favorite titles and buy new books requested by the students. A huge thanks to all of you who donated books for this fundraiser and, of course, everyone who came and bought books.

I want to thank my wonderful library volunteers: Victoria Shoushtari, Rita Madantseva, Eunkyung Chun, and Miss Tessie. Without their help, the library would not be able to function. They are amazing!

Summer Reading

To encourage the students to continue reading during our vacation, we are having a summer reading incentive program called "FLIP FLOP for READING"! More information will be sent home about this program, but the basic goal will be to read a certain number of books over the summer. There will be a form to keep track of the books, which the students turn in at the beginning of the school year. Students who complete the program will be invited to a celebration party. In addition, there are many other reading programs that you can take advantage of, including ones at the public libraries and Barnes and Noble.

I encourage you to take your children to the public libraries over the summer. In San Diego, we have the San Diego Public Library (<http://www.sandiego.gov/public-library>) that includes the Carmel Valley branch at 3919 Townsgate Dr. There is also the San Diego County Library system (<http://sdcl.org/>) that includes the branch in downtown Del Mar.

Have a wonderful summer and keep on reading!



Extended Studies News



Technology

Mrs. Jennifer Oliveira

On Behalf of the Sycamore Ridge Staff:

Thank you PTA for an amazing Staff Appreciation Week! We love working with your families! With all of the wonderful meals and treats, we felt VERY loved! Thank you!

In the Technology Lab:

Busy, busy, busy! Getting ready for Open House always brings everyone into the Computer Lab!

Students, even First Graders, are madly typing reports, and putting finishing touches on projects to make them shine for Open House. I hope you had a chance to stop by and see all of the amazing work the students and teachers have done integrating technology into their standards.

Some Summer Tips:

- Pay attention to your child's "browsing" this summer. You can click on Show History, and take a look at where everyone has been.
- Consider limiting time on the computer for health and safety reasons.
- Remind kids to be safe and not give out any personal information about themselves or their family to anyone online.
- Remind students they should never post anything they wouldn't want you to read.

Thanks, parents, for supporting our programs! It is my wish to create a program to support student learning and creativity. I appreciate the PTA's support and am extremely thankful to be a part of the Sycamore Ridge community!

Music

Mrs. Stephanie Ilkhanipour



Wow, what a year. We have had an extremely fun and jam packed year! We wouldn't have it any other way.

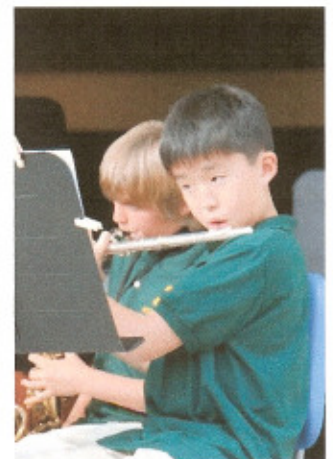
On May 20, 2010, six of our Sycamore Ridge students attended the Music Memory countywide competition at Point Loma Nazarene University. Our students received Gold Ribbons for their work. They did a fantastic job and we couldn't be more proud.

Also, the Band students performed for the Open House/ESC showcase on May 19, 2010 and true to form, they mesmerized the crowd. Such hard work from these students all year resulted in a wonderful performance. Way to go Stallions!

We have two more student performances before the end of the year so don't miss them! We will have soloist and small groups performing at both the Volunteer Luncheon and during our Sixth Grade Promotion festivities. The band will also play during promotion as well as a couple of tearjerkers from the 6th grade class.

I am very honored to work with such a fantastic group of students. I couldn't imagine a better place to spend my days.

Thank you to my Stallion family for another wonderful year!



Science

Miss Kelsey Dumoff



This month I will be highlighting the kindergarten and third grade classes. Did you know that chameleons have muscles at the tip of their tongue that grab an insect and bring it back to their mouth? The Kindergarteners have been studying reptiles this month and have been learning all about the special characteristics of these interesting animals. This week they will make their own pet reptiles that even feel real!

The third grade classes have been learning all about light and color. They were very excited to learn about the parts of our eye and how we see. Reflection has also been an important concept we were covering in class. The students were given mirrors and flashlights and were challenged to change the direction of the beam of light. They did a wonderful job! Usually we see objects under white light, but the third graders also got a chance to observe various colored cubes under red and green light to see how the color changes. Next, we will be covering "matter."

Other science news:

-Congratulations to all of the 6th graders for doing a fantastic job at the structural engineering competition at UCSD. We have such talented structural engineers!!

-Please visit my blog for upcoming science events in the community!



Physical Education

Coach John Sink



Students are busy staying active with tournaments, district-wide competitions, field day, and, of course, new, fun, and exciting activities in Physical Education.

In Physical Education classes, students are participating in orienteering, map reading, cooperative and dance activities. All lessons focus on students participating, working, and communicating together.

Over 180 students signed up for this year's hand ball tournament at Sycamore Ridge. Students in grades one through six are competing with a partner for the grade level title. Good luck to all participants!

Twenty students from Sycamore Ridge earned the opportunity to compete at our first District Jr. Olympic Skills Competition (JOSC). Students from Sycamore Ridge, who advanced from our school-wide competition, competed against students from other schools for the District Title. The following Stallions placed in their age categories: Megan P. (2nd place Basketball), Danielle E. (1st place Tennis & 2nd place Track & Field), Charlotte M. (3rd place Track & Field), Sophia L. (1st place Basketball & 1st place Tennis), and Marcelo A. (2nd place Track & Field). Congratulations to these and all of our athletes who competed in the school and district competitions!



The end of the year is fast approaching and so is Field Day, which will take place on Wednesday, June 16th. Fun, goofy, challenging activities have been planned for all the students. What a great way to end the year! Please contact me at: jsink@dmusd.org if you are interested in helping.

Firm, Fair & Consistent®

Sycamore Ridge School

Guiding Students for School Success

Satisfying friendships can take work

Is your child having difficulty with friendships? If so, it's important to help—without hurting his self-esteem. Strive to:

- **Listen.** How does your child feel about his friendships? If he's content with one or two good friends, that may be fine. But if he's unhappy, take his concerns seriously.
- **Be a role model.** Children are excellent imitators. Behave the way you'd want your child to act. Be polite, confident and considerate.
- **Talk with his teacher.** How are his social skills at school?
- **Role play.** This is a good way to practice skills. For example, what are some ways to join a group of kids playing a game? What if the kids are welcoming? What if they're not? Take turns playing different parts. With a younger child, using puppets can help.
- **Supervise.** Invite children over to play and stay nearby to be supportive. Choose guests carefully and plan cooperative activities. Set the stage for success. Give compliments when things go well and help resolve disagreements before they grow.
- **Be positive.** Tell your child exactly what he does right. "I know you really wanted a turn, but you waited patiently. That was impressive!" Give plenty of attention to behaviors you want to become habits. If problems don't improve, talk with a professional.



Source: Dr. Victoria Samuel, "Friendship problems ...," Supernanny.com, www.supernanny.co.uk/Advice/-/Learning-and-Education/-/4-to-13-years/Friendship-problems.aspx.

'Facing the music' does matter

It's tough to let your child face the consequences of her actions, but do it anyway. For instance, does she often leave assignments at home and expect you to bring them to school for her? Stop being her safety net! Let her experience the fallout of her actions—even if it means getting a failing grade on a project. After all, a little pain now may make her more responsible in the long run.



Source: "Ask Our Expert: Learning Responsibility," RaisingKids.co.uk, www.raisingkids.co.uk/9_13/ex06_pre28.asp.

Is your kids' bickering driving you batty?



Take a deep breath. Believe it or not, sibling squabbles are a normal part of childhood. Of course, if those squabbles turn physical, you need to jump in. But beyond that, take a step back and let them hash things out on their own. At the very least, it may help save your sanity!

Source: Robin Greene Hagey, "Bickering, Bloodsport of Siblings," *Los Angeles Times*, www.latimes.com/features/printedition/home/la-hm-bickering17mar17,1,4021048.story?page=1&coll=la-home-printedition.

Take a positive tone with discipline

Take a new approach to taming your child's physical exuberance! Instead of telling her what she *can't* do, emphasize what she *can* do.



For example:

- **Old approach:** "Don't touch anything at the museum!"
- **New approach:** "We need to keep our hands to ourselves in the museum. But when we're finished, let's go to the library and find some books about your favorite exhibit."

This way, she'll still get the "how to behave" message, but it'll sound much more positive and upbeat.

Source: Jeremy Jewell, Ph.D., "Defiant Children," Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, www.siu.edu/~jejewell/Defiant%20children.html.

Encourage thank-you notes with simple steps

It's important for children to say "thank you" for gifts.



You can encourage this by:

- **Making a "thank-you note basket."** Fill it with supplies such as colorful pens, stickers, note cards and stamps.
- **Creating a sample thank-you card** that gives your child ideas. Include a simple message on which he can build.

Source: Lynne Ticknor, "Manners Do Matter," *Washington Parent*, <http://washingtonparent.com/articles/0712/pep.html>.

Firm, Fair & Consistent®

May 2008

Optimism may affect school success

Is your child's attitude helping or hurting her school performance? When kids are pessimistic, research suggests, they may do poorly in school.



To help boost your child's positive attitude:

- **Plan for fun.** Make time for regular, enjoyable activities together, such as going for walks on Saturdays. This is a reassuring way to show love.
- **Think again.** If your child is grumpy about something ("Going to Grandpa's will be boring!"), offer a different view. ("Maybe. But it might be fun. He has all that cool stuff in his attic. And he always has a good joke to tell!") Don't let your child back out of events she's likely to enjoy.
- **Set a good example.** Show your enthusiasm about life—and especially about school.

Source: Alison Bell, "Turning a Pessimist into an Optimist," Parenting, www.parenting.com/parenting/child/article/0,19840,1643133,00.html?stage=812.

Questions & Answers

Q: Boredom brings out the worst in my child! How can I keep him busy—and meltdown-free—this summer?

A: There's nothing like too much downtime to turn your darling into a challenge. So it's a good idea to have a few tricks up your sleeve for keeping him occupied over summer break. You shouldn't fill every moment of his vacation, though; he needs to learn to handle boredom appropriately.

To keep your child engaged and out of trouble this summer, try these simple activities:

- **Start a play group.** Plan a once-a-week activity with other kids in the neighborhood. It's a great way for your child to boost his social skills and have fun at the same time.
- **Hit the books.** Does your local library sponsor a summer reading program? Enroll your child. It'll keep his reading skills sharp during summer break. And just as importantly, the structure may help keep his "school skills" strong.
- **Tackle a puzzle.** Don't let that 1,000-word jigsaw puzzle sit in its box anymore! Get it out of the closet and work on it with your child. Anytime he's bored, challenge him to put a few pieces together. Who knows? You may complete the whole thing by summer's end.
- **Create a memory box.** Give your child stickers, markers, etc. and have him decorate a shoebox. All summer, have him fill it with interesting treasures—from shells to ticket stubs. When September rolls around, he'll have a box full of great memories to share with his school friends.



Source: Polly Schlafhauser, "Summer Boredom Busters," Families with Purpose, www.familieswithpurpose.com/summer-boredom-busters.html.

Raise a good sport



Lace up your cleats: The summer sports season is nearly here! To make sure your favorite athlete is a good sport on and off the field:

- **Talk about what it means to win** (and lose) graciously.
- **Be sympathetic** when your child blows a play.
- **Encourage her to talk to her coach** if she gets frustrated.
- **Set a good example** from the bleachers. Never yell at the officials or argue with the other team or other parents.

Source: "When Good Kids Are Bad Sports," Family Education Network, <http://life.familyeducation.com/behavioral-problems/sports/30147.html?detoured=1>.

You can't punish your child into being more generous!

Is it really better to give than to receive? Not as far as your youngster is concerned! So what should you do if your child is selfish? Well, there's one thing you should *not* do: Punish him.

Punishment will make him resent the whole idea of giving. Instead, praise him when he is generous. The positive reinforcement may be all the encouragement he needs to become a more giving person.

Source: Karen Miles, "How to Teach Your Grade-Schooler to Share," BabyCenter LLC, http://parentcenter.babycenter.com/0_how-to-teach-your-grade-schooler-to-share_67702.pc.

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 Sycamore Ridge Elementary School
Principal

INFO BITS
Multiplication tip

Help your youngster understand multiplication by having him think of "x" as "groups of" (example: 3×2 means "3 groups of 2"). Then, have him practice with an empty egg carton and beads. He can put 2 beads in each of 3 sections and count by groups (2, 4, 6) to get the answer: $3 \times 2 = 6$.

Using ramps

Show your child how ramps help us move objects. A ramp is a kind of simple machine—an inclined plane that has no moving parts and makes work easier. Together, brainstorm examples (roller-coaster track, wheelchair ramp, slide). Then, ask her to build her own ramp (she might stack five books and slant a sixth book against them).

Book picks

▣ *Sir Cumference and the First Round Table* (Cindy Neuschwander) is a clever look at geometry. Cute names—the king's son is Radius—and clear diagrams will teach your youngster about shapes and geometric relationships.

▣ Learning about the solar system is fun when planets tell the story themselves. Dan Green's *Astronomy: Out of This World!* contains fascinating facts and details along with cartoon illustrations your child is sure to love.

Worth quoting

"The power of imagination makes us infinite." John Muir

Just for fun

Q: What happened to the plant in math class?

A: It grew square roots!



Fraction games

Does your child realize that fractions are everywhere? Next time you see a sale price ($\frac{1}{3}$ off), tell time (quarter after 9), follow a recipe ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup), or read a road sign ($\frac{1}{4}$ mile ahead), tell her, "There's another fraction!"

Playing card games is a great way to help your youngster practice comparing and adding fractions. Have her make fraction cards (see instructions in box at right), and then use them to play these games together.

Fraction War. Shuffle and deal the cards into a stack for each person. Players turn over their top cards at the same time, and whoever has the highest card takes the cards in that round. If there is a tie, each person turns over another card. Keep playing until one person has captured all the cards.

Fraction Race. Deal each player five cards. On the count of three, each person races to put her fractions in order from smallest to largest. Have your child check the results by comparing the fraction pictures on her cards.

Fraction One. The object of this game is to get as close to 1 as possible without going over. Deal everyone a card. On each turn, a player must decide if she's going to draw another card—depending on whether adding another fraction is likely to put her over 1. When all players are happy with their hands, they turn over their cards. The person who comes closest to 1 (or equals 1) wins that round. 🎲


Make fraction cards

Making a set of fraction cards will help your youngster understand how fractions represent parts of a whole.

Gather index cards, a pencil, and crayons. On each card, have your child write a fraction and draw a circle to represent it. He could make cards for $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{3}$, $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{1}{5}$, $\frac{1}{6}$, and so on through 5ths, 6ths, 8ths, 10ths, and 12ths.

To draw the fractions, have him trace around a round object (a jar lid, a large button) so the circles are the same size. Then, he can divide each circle into an equal number of slices based

on the bottom number (the denominator) and color the number of slices in the top number (the numerator). Example: Write $\frac{3}{6}$, divide the circle into 6 slices, and color 3 slices. 🎨



Fun with clouds

Children love to gaze at the changing shapes of clouds and watch them go by overhead. But does your youngster know how clouds are formed? He can learn with these two activities:

1. Have him stand close to a mirror, take a deep breath, and exhale. A circle of steam will appear on the mirror. Explain that his breath contains *water vapor*, and when it hits the cold mirror, tiny droplets of water form—causing



condensation. Clouds contain billions of droplets that are formed when water vapor rises into the atmosphere and condenses.

2. Next, he can make a “condensation chamber.”

Have him put 2 tsp. water in a small plastic cup and place a second plastic cup, upside down, on top. He should tape the two cups

together and set the chamber by a sunny window. What does he see in 1–3 hours? (Condensation will begin to form.) In 24 hours? He might notice more condensation in daytime or more drops on the side closest to the window (*the reason*: warm air holds more water vapor than cool air).

MATH CORNER

Let's estimate

Estimating is more than guessing—it's a logical way of reasoning and reaching a likely answer. Here are ways for your child to practice.

• **Figure the cost.** Have her estimate the price of filling the gas tank. When you pull into a station, ask her to look at the fuel gauge, check the gas price, and make an estimate. Over time, your youngster will get better at figuring out the cost. Or while grocery shopping, let her keep a running total of the bill. She can round off the price of each item and add as you go.



• **How many seeds?** Put out a watermelon, and ask everyone to predict how many seeds are inside. Then, slice it evenly, and have each person count the seeds in her piece. Use that number to estimate the total seeds (round the number in your piece and multiply it by the number of slices). Check the estimates by adding up the seeds when you finish the watermelon.

OUR PURPOSE

To provide busy parents with practical ways to promote their children's math and science skills.

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SCIENCE LAB

What a reaction!

Let your youngster make a “foam machine,” and she'll see chemistry in action.

You'll need: 2 glasses, 1 tsp. powdered laundry detergent, vinegar, 2 spoons, 1 tsp. baking soda, water

Here's how: Have your child put 1 tsp. powdered laundry detergent in one glass, fill it half full with vinegar, and stir. In the second glass, she can add 1 tsp. baking soda, fill it half full with water, and stir with the second spoon. In a sink or dishpan, have her pour the mixture from the second glass into the first glass.

What happens? Foam will ooze out of the glass.

Why? The acidic vinegar and the alkaline baking soda combine for a chemical reaction that produces carbon dioxide gas. When the carbon dioxide mixes with the soap, foam bubbles up and spills out of the glass.



Q & A

Calculators for homework?

Q: My child wants to use a calculator for math homework. Should he do the problems on paper instead?

A: Your youngster will use a calculator throughout life, so it's good for him to be comfortable with the tool. But he should know how to do basic math operations—addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division—on paper and in his head.

He might use a calculator as a time-saver for doing simple steps of a math problem. Then, he can focus on the

more complex parts of the homework. Another idea is to ask him how he solved a problem, including how he used the calculator. Explaining the steps to you will help him develop mathematical thinking.

Your child's teacher will usually say when it's okay to use a calculator. Ask your youngster what the instructions were, or check with the teacher on her policy.



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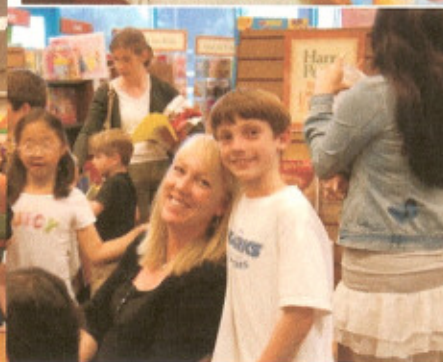
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We Had So Much Fun at Barnes & Noble and Red Robin!

THANK YOU

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Thank you to Mrs. Morris for her continued support of the newsletter and for providing such wonderful articles and resources for our parents. Lastly, thank you to everyone who has submitted articles to the newsletter over the years and to those parents who have continued to read the newsletter despite busy schedules.

-Maia Starling, Newsletter Editor

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.