

Missouri Parent Teacher Association

# CONTACT

Volume 89, Issue 2  
September 2007

*everychild. onevoice.®*

*believe*

**BELIEVE...**

Parent Involvement  
Makes the Difference!

# You Won't Want to Miss Rachel's Challenge

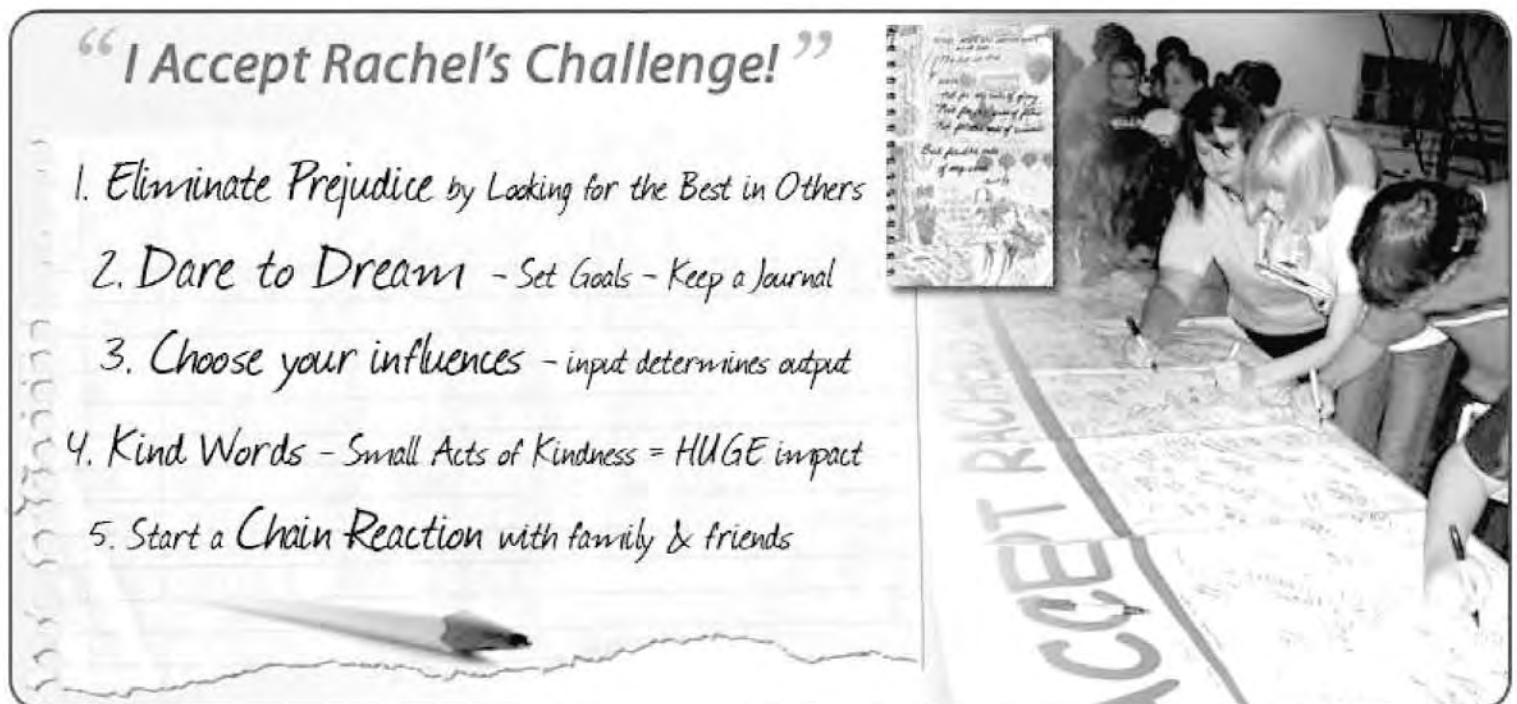
**Missouri PTA State Convention Keynote – October 12th**

Rachel Scott was the first person killed at Columbine High School on April 20, 1999. Her acts of kindness and compassion coupled with the contents of her six diaries have become the foundation for one of the most life-changing school programs in America. Using a mixture of powerful video/audio footage of Rachel's life and the Columbine tragedy, attendees will be spellbound as they experience a presentation that will motivate them to make positive change in the way they treat others. The presentation is interactive and is designed to not only sustain the momentum but learn the "how to" while ensuring that the positive impact will continue.

The Rachel's Challenge speaker will conduct this powerful session, ending with a specific challenge to parents and community leaders, showing them how they can reinforce the decisions their youth are making. Entertainers, politicians, sports celebrities, educators, and even two Presidents of the United States have been impacted by Rachel's Challenge. However, students are the target audience and they have proven that they will respond with positive words, attitudes, and actions.

What a great opportunity to hear an moving story of an amazing young person who wanted to "start a chain reaction" of compassion. Even more exciting is the fact that you can be part of it. You just won't want to miss it!

For more information, please visit the Rachel's Challenge website ([www.rachelschallenge.com](http://www.rachelschallenge.com)).



**Cover photo:**

Voy Spears PTA made a difference with their cultural arts program. The cover features some of the students' artwork.

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# Do You Make a Difference?

*By Kathy Nevans,  
Missouri PTA  
president*

Schools have started and about now you might be wondering: how can PTA/PTSA

insure that kids will achieve success? I wonder that also and over the years have had lots of time to think about this topic. I was very fortunate to have two great kids that loved learning and from day one realized the need to graduate high school before being able to go on to college and study what they wanted. (Truthfully, it wasn't always pleasant reminding them of homework as well as chores, but it was worth it!) Did I think that I was doing anything special to help my kids during that time? No, that was not my reasoning but let me tell you, what I was doing was helping them build a strong self esteem and confidence in themselves and eventually through my volunteering, working for all the kids in the elementary school and then throughout the district.

First of all, I made myself available to help out at school, whether it was in the classroom, library, or cafeteria, planning a party, or working on a bond issue. I let the PTA know when I was available and how much time I could volunteer. I became a partner with the school and, in return, they held out the welcome mat to me. It was a two way street that kept communication open and frequent because I realized we...the school and I the parent...wanted the same thing....for my child and others to achieve success. Eventually, what I was doing was building a relationship with the other PTA members, the teachers, the school personnel, and the children. No longer was it about volunteering for my child but for the whole learning community.

At times throughout the middle school and high school years, I truly wondered if what I was doing was helping the children in any way. But all it took was one very enthusiastic group of sixth, seventh, and eighth graders that wanted to do a project that had not been approved by the PTSA. Did they give up? No. They came to PTSA and asked what they needed to do

and for the next couple of weeks, the students were taught basic parliamentary procedure (so they could make a motion and be prepared to address the board the right way). Then they planned the event, prepared a budget, spoke with the necessary people to help carry out the activity, and came before the board and asked for permission, money, and volunteers to go forth with their project. Were they successful? Absolutely! The last group of those students just graduated high school in May of 2007 and told me how valuable those lessons they learned in PTSA years ago were to them throughout the rest of their high school days.

Throughout my local volunteer days, several bonds and levy issues were brought forth to our community. Because of my knowledge of the needs of the children firsthand, I was fortunate enough to be actively involved in these districtwide committees. Again, I had to ask, how can a bond and levy help a child achieve success? Bonds help with the school facilities and the learning environment that all of our children need to be safe and comfortable during the year. Levies help with teacher's salaries, curriculum, and improving the skills of those who teach to insure that we have the best people for the job necessary to educate our children. What a partnership one can develop working with community members who want the best schools, teachers, and school personnel for their town. But more importantly, it showed the children that adults, parents, teachers, grandparents, neighbors, and the community at large cared enough for them and their education to approve these bonds and levies.

Have I helped student achievement? Yes, I believe I have. But what is the real message I am trying to convey to you? It is that I am no different than you and YOU can do the same things I did. YOU can volunteer, YOU can build relationships, and YOU can develop partnerships with you communities and help ALL children succeed! I challenge YOU to do what is necessary to make this generation of children a success in whatever they pursue. Do this because it is what you believe to be what is right, what is necessary, and what will help all of our children.

I believe in YOU and all that you do, will do, and hope to do for all of our children to improve their achievement through your involvement. Believe in YOURSELVES and the CHILDREN!

*CONTACT* is the official publication of Missouri Congress of Parents and Teachers. We are a branch of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers. *CONTACT* is published September through May, seven issues. Subscriptions are \$7 per year. Missouri PTA Office, Editorial and Publication Office: 2100 I-70 Drive SW, Columbia, MO 65203, PHONE: 800-328-7330 FAX: 573-445-4163 or [www.mopta.org](http://www.mopta.org) Please notify the Publication Office in case of change of address or to purchase a subscription. It is important that we have accurate addresses so that we may provide the support and information to each local unit. NOTE: Advertisements appearing in this publication do not constitute PTA's endorsement of the product or service. PLEASE SHARE THIS MAGAZINE. Information from this magazine may be excerpted for other PTA publications as long as credit is given to Missouri PTA and any byline that may appear with the item must be included. National PTA Office: 330 North Wabash Ave Suite 2100, Chicago, IL 60611-3690 Phone: 312-670-6782 (670-NPTA), [www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org). MO PTA 800-328-7330

# Who We Are



# Meet the New National PTA President - Jan Harp Domene



## PTA Vision

Making every child's potential a reality

## PTA Mission

PTA is

- A powerful voice for all children,
- A relevant resource for families and communities, and
- A strong advocate for the education and well-being of every child.

## PTA Values

- **Collaboration:** We work in partnership with a wide array of individuals and organizations to accomplish our agreed-upon goals.
- **Commitment:** We are dedicated to promoting children's health, well-being, and educational success through strong parent, family, and community involvement.
- **Accountability:** We acknowledge our obligations. We deliver on our promises.
- **Respect:** We value our colleagues and ourselves. We expect the same high quality of effort and thought from ourselves as we do from others.
- **Inclusivity:** We invite the stranger and welcome the newcomer. We value and seek input from as wide a spectrum of viewpoints and experiences as possible.
- **Integrity:** We act consistently with our beliefs. When we err, we acknowledge the mistake and seek to make amends.

## PTA Purposes

- To promote the welfare of children and youth in home, school, community, and place of worship
- To raise the standards of home life
- To secure adequate laws for the care and protection of children and youth
- To bring into closer relation the home and the school, that parents and teacher may cooperate intelligently in the education of children and youth
- To develop between educators and general public such united efforts as will secure for all children and youth the highest advantages in physical, mental, social, and spiritual education

Jan Harp Domene has been a member of PTA for 31 years. She was elected to PTA's national board of directors in June 2001. During her years with PTA,

she has facilitated collaborative partnerships with many education, health, safety, and child advocacy groups to benefit children and provide valuable resources to PTA members. As a mother and grandmother, she champions meaningful parent and family involvement as the most effective way to help all children be successful and healthy students.

Appointed by the president, Domene currently represents PTA on the PBS KIDS Next Generation Advisory Board. She has served PTA in numerous leadership positions including PTA national secretary-treasurer, national chair of the Strategic Planning Committee, and California State PTA president.

Domene is a great spokesperson for PTA as she believes that "PTA is unique. No one else looks out for the health, safety, well being, and education of the whole child. No one else engages parent leaders. No one else monitors the holders of the purse strings, holding those in power to be accountable for the funding promised and necessary to ensure that every child can succeed. No one else

works to make sure that children have the benefit of arts, music, physical activity, and social interaction. PTA is indeed unique."

According to Domene, "PTA is an amazing place to connect and this convention has connected us all. Our first connection starts with membership. We need sustained, passionate, and knowledgeable members that comprise a healthy and articulate force to fuel the spirit of the organization. Membership is passion! It is commitment! It is courage! It is energy! It is YOU!"

Outside of PTA, Domene owns and operates Domene's Consulting, an event and party planning company. She has also held volunteer positions for the Red Cross, Missing and Exploited Children, Susan B. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, Special Olympics Committee, and is a past advisory board member for the Prevention of Youth Violence Taskforce. She is married to Greg Domene. They have three married children and four grandchildren.

Domene's words to parent volunteers: "To make a difference and see it daily, to see the joy in the eyes of a child when that child accomplishes something remarkable...that is what we are all about. Remember our vision to 'make every child's potential a reality.' This vision of the well-being of our children has inspired us since the founding of PTA one hundred and ten years ago. This vision was alive in us then; this vision is alive in us still. So stay committed, stay focused, stay connected."

## Kudos!

Missouri had two winners in the Picture PTA Photo contest!

**Membership:** Mary Austin of Peculiar Elementary PTA

**Diversity:** Melissa Clark of Peculiar Elementary PTA

Congratulations to both; each will receive a \$50 gift card from a major retailer. Their entries will be displayed online soon at

[www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org).

# New PTA Website Coming Soon!

# EARLY BIRD MEMBERSHIP AWARDS



ATTENTION:  
Presidents & Membership Chairs!

Early Bird Membership Awards will be given out at the State convention in October.

These awards go to the units that send in the HIGHEST MEMBERSHIP based upon last year's TOTAL MEMBERSHIP to the state office.

DEADLINE POSTMARKED ON OR BEFORE SEPTEMBER 21, 2007

Be a Winner!  
Get those membership dues sent in!  
POWER IN MEMBERSHIP...  
Join PTA!

# Superstar Unit Sunny Vale Middle School PTSA

Sunny Vale Middle School PTSA is a perfect example of a unit that started off their school year facing many obstacles but through the dedication and help of parents, students and a supportive school staff, ended the year as a success. They not only achieved many of their goals but are well on their way to accomplishing the rest.



Sunny Vale is located in the Blue Springs School District in the Three Trails region. They have a student population of approximately 700 students. Sharon VanHaele took on a large responsibility when she agreed to serve as unit president for this PTSA in the 2006-2007 school year. She started off the year with only one board position filled and virtually no information passed on about the unit's previous year's activities or financials. After starting the process of filling the most necessary board positions, the next step was to plan their goals. They decided to start with three initial goals: (1) Increase membership, particularly student membership; (2) Increase the PTSA unit visibility throughout the school; and (3) Provide an outdoor beautification area to be used by students and staff.

They started off putting a membership sign-up form on the back of all the school supply lists provided to local stores. Then a membership sign-up form was included in

the orientation packet along with a letter explaining what PTSA meant to the school and their goals for the year. At orientation, the PTSA sold school supplies at cost – parents were able to buy the exact number of items needed rather than being required to buy packs of pens or pencils when they only needed two. This provided the PTSA board the opportunity to offer PTSA membership forms at that time along with the ability to interact directly with parents and increase PTSA awareness. All the school staff was invited to join and they were able to achieve 100% faculty membership. Each business member that joined was highlighted with a framed certificate in the front hallway.

To increase their student membership, every student that joined received a "get out of homework pass" and an invitation to attend a special PTSA sponsored "pre-mixer" party before the two mixers scheduled during the year. Teachers were given a list of student PTSA members in their class and they were able to leave 15 minutes early to attend the parties. At the fall "pre-mixer", a purple (school color) chocolate fountain was set up with marshmallows and other items to dip along with slushies provided by the local Quik Trip. The spring "pre-mixer" party featured ice cream sundaes with a myriad of toppings available.

## Leaders Project Applications due September 15th!

### Will YOU be in the Class of 2007?



# Parent Involvement – A New Way of Leading

By Barb Gilmore, Missouri PTA Parent Education and Involvement chair

What does “parent involvement” really mean? Who should it include? Those parents or caregivers just starting out with young children in kindergarten have a long and

wonderful experience ahead but who says you need to stop helping children or that you can't go back at any time in your life to enrich the lives of children with your experiences. Parents, kids, schools, and communities are the ones who benefit from everyone being involved.

After reading the ideas from the four areas below, you'll see that *a new way of leading* shifts the focus from what schools should do to involve parents to **what parents, schools, and communities can do together** to support student success.

Here is *a new way of leading and building family – school partnerships for student success*:

## **Involvement programs that link to learning improve student achievement**

Student learning improves more when parent and community involvement is high. Activities to promote learning might be *family nights on math or literacy, family/teacher conferences that involve students, or family workshops on planning for college.*

## **Speaking up for children protects and promotes their success**

It can't be said often enough that research findings show parents or significant adults that are active in their child's educational experience in the home and the school contribute to a student's success academically and socially in school education. The more families advocate for their children, the longer their children stay in school. Families or significant adults should *become knowledgeable about the operations of schools and the laws that govern those operations, be confident about their ability to work with schools, expect only the best from their children and for their children, and join PTA.*

## **All families can contribute to their children's success**

Regardless of race/ethnicity, class or parents' level of education, student success improves with family involvement. School staff/administrators along with parents, must buy into believing that by working together great involvement can happen! If parents and school staff do a few of the following, we can promote children's academic success by *teaching the importance of education and find out what your children are expected to know, sending children to school ready to learn, making parent involvement a priority and removing barriers for involvement, sharing decision-making power, and working to understand differences.*

## **Community organizing gets results**

Community members, businesses and organizations can improve learning. These partners could *provide expanded learning opportunities, build broad-based support for increased school funding, and provide quality after-school programs if needed.*

To reflect the shifting focus from what schools should do to involve parents to **what parents, schools, and communities can do together**, and the recent updated research, the National PTA has updated its National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs. Listed below are the new, renamed standards.

## **PTA's National Standards for Family-School Partnerships**

### **Standard 1: Welcoming all families into the school community**

Families are active participants in the life of the school, and feel welcomed, valued, and connected to each other, to school staff, and to what students are learning and doing in class.

### **Standard 2: Communicating effectively**

Families and school staff engage in regular, meaningful communication about student learning.

### **Standard 3: Supporting student success**

Families and school staff continuously collaborate to support students' learning and healthy development both at home and at school, and have regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills to do so effectively.

### **Standard 4: Speaking up for every child**

Families are empowered to be advocates for their own and other children, to ensure that students are treated fairly and have access to learning opportunities that will support their success.

### **Standard 5: Sharing Power**

Families and school staff are equal partners in decisions that affect children and families and together inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs.

### **Standard 6: Collaborating with the community**

Families and school staff collaborate with community members to connect students, families, and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.

So be a part of *A New Way of Leading* to build even better family-school partnerships! For more information about programs that promote family-school partnerships, contact Missouri PTA or visit [www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org).

## 10 Ways To Increase Your PTA Membership

1. PUT your button machine to work – proudly wear an “I joined \_\_\_\_\_ PTA!” button.
2. SET up a PTA booth at sporting events, music events, and other community activities.
3. PLACE an ad in your local newspaper promoting PTA and membership. Ask a local business to sponsor the ad.
4. OFFER special coupon incentives with membership – one free popcorn, one book at the Used Book Fair, 25 cents off movie night admission, etc.
5. PLACE a PTA sticker on mailboxes of all staff members who join PTA.
6. PREPARE a phone directory of students (with parental permission). Distribute free or at a reduced price to PTA members.
7. THANK your members and list their names in your newsletter. Add names as new members join.
8. SHOW your goal and track your membership success for all to see. Use a giant thermometer in the hall, a large jar filled with jellybeans on the office counter, or numbered happy faces in the windows, etc. Make it visible, don't give up, and celebrate when you reach your goal.
9. EXPLAIN that dues are not a fundraiser. Use your newsletter to keep members informed when funds are raised and how they are used.
10. COUNCILS: Ask your schools' superintendent and others in the central administration departments to join PTA. Many education employees don't work at a specific school site.

# Resolutions to be Considered

The following resolutions will be presented for delegate discussion and approval at the Missouri PTA State Convention in October.

## THIRD PARTY CHILD ABUSE REPORTING RESOLUTION (proposed new resolution)

WHEREAS, In Missouri, one of every four children experiences abuse of some kind, including neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional or verbal abuse, medical neglect and educational neglect; and WHEREAS, The Missouri Division of Family Services offers protection by law from civil liability to any individual who reports child abuse or suspected child abuse to them, unless that person filed a false report, acted in bad faith, or acted with ill intent; and WHEREAS, Under current Missouri law when suspected abuse of a student by a school employee is reported to a school administrator by a third party, the third party reporter may be held civilly liable for actions of the school administration toward that employee; and WHEREAS, Under current Missouri law, a third party who observes a school employee abusing a student or suspects a school employee of abusing a student during school hours or school-sponsored activities may choose not to report such behavior to school administrators out of fear of serious legal and financial consequences; and WHEREAS, If a school employee's actual or suspected abuse of a student(s) is not reported to school administration, the abuse may continue or escalate; therefore be it RESOLVED, That the Missouri Congress of Parents and Teachers, its units and councils, support legislation that gives immunity from civil liability for any action taken by school authorities as a result of a third party making a report to a school administrator of child abuse by a school employee, unless that person filed a false report, acted in bad faith, or acted with ill intent; and be it further RESOLVED, That the Missouri Congress of Parents and Teachers, its units and councils, collaborate with school districts to: promote awareness of child abuse; create usable and efficient abuse reporting procedures and policies; make such procedures and policies known and available within their districts; and protect and support a third party who notifies school administration of a school employee's abuse or suspected abuse of a student during school hours or school-sponsored activities.

*Submitted by the Lee's Summit PTA Council/ Recommended for Consideration by the Missouri PTA Board of Managers*

## PHYSICAL HEALTH AND FITNESS

(substitute resolution)  
WHEREAS, Almost one third of all children age 6-19 are considered overweight or at risk for being overweight;  
WHEREAS, There is a 70 percent chance that an overweight adolescent will be overweight or obese as an adult;  
WHEREAS, Obesity is associated with diseases such as type 2 diabetes, heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, depression, breast cancer, and arthritis;  
WHEREAS, The health of tomorrow's adults depend, in part, on the eating patterns of today's children; and upon regular vigorous physical activity;  
WHEREAS, Ninety-two percent of elementary schools do not provide daily physical education classes for all students for the entire school year;  
WHEREAS, Studies published in Pediatric Exercise Science show that physical education programs have been linked to stronger academic achievement, increased

concentration, improved math test scores, as well as improved reading and writing test scores;

WHEREAS, Schools are required to incorporate a Wellness Policy into their districts encouraging physical activity and healthy choices; be it therefore

RESOLVED, That the Missouri Congress of Parents and Teachers and its units and councils support and assist their local school districts in the development and implementation of Wellness Policies and fitness programs for elementary students to include: physical training, health and nutrition education, and lifestyle changes to improve the health and educational performance of these students; and be it further

RESOLVED That Missouri school districts, through the support and assistance of their local PTA units and councils, are encouraged to provide before and after school programs for students and their families to aid them in the development and maintenance of their physical and emotional health.

*Submitted by the Missouri PTA Resolutions Committee/Recommended for Consideration by the Missouri PTA Board of Managers*

# Voy Spears Cultural Arts Program

The Voy Spears Jr. Elementary cultural arts program introduces student to specific pieces of art, explains how the pieces were created, and by whom. Each presentation is formulated to provide a cultural lesson within an art historical context. The lessons combine oral presentations, slideshows, videos, book, and coordinating art projects. Each project is presented with a 15-20 minute open discussion with the students about the artist or the artistic style, followed by a 30 minute hands on art activity designed to enhance what the children have learned in their discussions.

The program was created to supplement and support the art classes our school already offers. The hope is that the program will develop an appreciation for the visual arts in each of the students through the use of a well-rounded curriculum. The curriculum broadens the student's knowledge of other cultures such as African, European, and Native American. The goals of the program are to bring a better, broader understanding

of the arts and the history of art to our students. In learning the background, historical time reference, and the materials used for various artistic mediums, students receive a more thorough education regarding cultural arts.

The collaborative partner is Brenda Shehan. She has an in depth knowledge of many artistic mediums including mosaic, paint, and sculpture. She works with the PTA-created committee, who is funded by the PTA and led by parent volunteers.

Throughout the three years of this successful program, it has unified the students, faculty, and the parents for a common purpose to supplement and support the arts already presented in the school's curriculum. The students have ownership as they walk by the permanent masterpieces that they have helped to create; these are now beautifying their school. They have been exposed to 13-15 artists, styles, and/or projects.

# Report of the 2007 Nominating Committee - July 8, 2007

The Missouri PTA Nominating Committee met on Monday, July 8, 2007 in Blue Springs, Missouri. All members of the committee were present and, after deliberations, submit the following nominees for consideration. All nominees have given consent to be elected.

President Elect: Wendy Jackson  
Secretary: Pat Wehmeyer  
Treasurer: Pat Brune  
Vice President of Legislation & Advocacy: Donna Petiford

Vice President of Field Service: Kim Weber  
Vice President of Membership: Jennifer Casey  
Vice President of Programs: Barb Gilmore  
Vice President of Communications: Scott Jennings

### 2007 Nominating Committee Members:

Scott Jennings, chair  
Pat Brune  
Jennifer Casey  
Wendy Jackson  
Tammy Linson

## President Elect

### Nominee: Wendy Jackson

Wendy Jackson has served on the Board of Managers since 1996, first as the PAFLE Chairman, followed by membership emphasis chair, regional director, vice president of programs, and vice president of membership services. She currently serves as vice president of field service.

Wendy has been active in PTA for the past 16 years. She has served at the local level in multiple offices and chairmanships. She has

also served at the Council level as a vice president, treasurer, and many chairmanships. She currently is the Nixa Council of PTA's president.

Wendy is employed in their family custom cabinetry business in Ozark, Missouri. She and husband Doug live in Nixa. She has two children Doug and Jordan, a daughter-in-law Cheri, and a grandson Hunter.



## Treasurer

### Nominee: Pat Brune

Pat Brune has served on the Board of Managers since 2001. She was a Pony Express regional director for four years and she has been the State Procedure and Bylaws Chair for the past two years. In the past 13 years she has held many positions in PTA in two states at the local level. Pat has been president, vice-president, and held several chairmanships. She has been president, first and second vice president, and secretary of her local council. She has been treasurer of her church's day care and the music parent association at her children's high school. Pat is a dental hygienist and lives with her husband Bill south of Platte City. She has two children – Gwen, a freshman at Missouri State University and Will, a junior at Platte County R-3 High School.



## Vice President of Communications

### Nominee: Scott Jennings

Scott Jennings has been actively involved in PTA for the past 11 years and has served in various PTA positions. At the local unit level, he served two years as treasurer and two years as president at CA Burke Elementary school. He served as vice president at Ervin Middle School. Currently, he serves as secretary for the Hickman Mills High School PTSA. At the council level, Scott has served the Hickman Mills Council of PTAs as treasurer, first vice president, school board rep, and legislative chair.

For the Missouri PTA Board of Managers, he served one year as health & safety chair, two years as public relations chair, and most recently two years as resolutions chair. He has been recognized for his PTA involvement by receiving a Missouri Life Membership. He has also earned the Missouri PTA Leader's

## Secretary

### Nominee:

### Pat Wehmeyer



Pat Wehmeyer has served on the Missouri PTA Board of Managers since 2004. She began as a Heritage regional director and has also served as meetings coordinator and 2007 convention chair. Pat has served her local units since 1991 as Council representative, bylaws chair, and membership chair. At the Council level, she was elected president in 2004 and vice president in 2006, and served on various Council committees. The Columbia Council of PTAs recognized Pat for her service in 2006 with a Missouri Distinguished Service Award. Pat is a Certified PTA Leader through the Missouri PTA Leaders Project. She has over 25 years of administrative professional experience primarily in the education field. She is a Certified Professional Secretary. Currently, Pat is a human resources assistant at Columbia Public Schools. She also assists her husband Glenn with the family construction business. Pat has three children: Jerod and wife Abby, Doug and wife Honey, and Megan (13). She is particularly fond of her three grandchildren, Dawson, Madilynn, and Rylee.



Project and twice has earned the Advocacy through Legislation (AtLaw) award.

In addition to his advocacy efforts with PTA, he has served on the school board in the Hickman Mills C-1 School District in for five years. He is currently executive vice president of the Hickman Mills High School Booster Club.

Scott is employed as a Directional Media Consultant for RH Donnelley yellow pages. He has been married to his life and PTA partner Lisa for 23 years. They have one son Andrew who will be a senior at Hickman Mills High School and has served on the Missouri PTA Board of Managers as a student representative.



## Vice President of Field Service Nominee: Kim Weber



Kim Weber has served on the Missouri PTA Board of Managers since 2002 and is currently serving as the Missouri PTA vice president and director of communications. Previously, she was a Heritage regional director. Her local involvement has included president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, volunteer coordinator, and membership, hospitality, and fundraising chairs as well as many others in her children's elementary, middle, junior, and high school years.

Kim has served the Columbia Council of PTAs as treasurer, vice president, and

fundraising chair. She has also served on several Columbia Public School Board committees and task forces. Kim was recently appointed to serve on the City of Columbia Steering Committee for Volunteer Service and Improvement.

Kim is a Certified Pharmacy Technician in the Surgery Department at Boone Hospital Center in Columbia. Kim and her husband Phil have five children - Andy, Matt, Leah,

Stephanie, and Amanda and three grandchildren Jordan, Wyatt, and Ashlyn.

## Vice President of Membership Services Nominee: Jennifer Casey



Jennifer Casey has served on the Missouri PTA Board of Managers since October 2005. She served as the membership emphasis chairman prior to the position she currently holds as vice president and director of membership services. Over the last eight years she has served her local school district PTA as president, vice president of membership, vice president of volunteers,

Reflections chair, and numerous other chair and committee positions. She is currently the president of Moreland Ridge Middle School PTSA.

Jennifer resides in Blue Springs with her husband Bruce and her daughter Taylor. She is a full-time mom who enjoys serving the community.

## Vice President of Programs Nominee: Barb Gilmore



Barb Gilmore has been involved on the state level as a regional director for two years, on various committees, and currently serves as Parent Involvement & Education chair - a position she has held for 4 years.

Her service with the Liberty Council of PTA includes school representative, various committees, president, and the current first vice president of scholarships. At the unit level, she has been on numerous committees and served as chair and vice president

for several including fundraising and bylaws. She has also served as President at two different schools in the Liberty district, currently serving on the district's Wellness Committee.

Barb has been active in PTA along with her husband Mike for 13 years. Barb, Mike, and their two children Jace (17) and Andrea (14) reside in Liberty.

## Vice President of Legislation/ Advocacy

### Nominee: Donna Petiford



Donna Petiford currently serves as the Missouri state legislative chair and she has served on the Board of Managers for four years (previously as an Ozark regional director). Donna is active in local PTA work including vice president of organization and development for Springfield Council of PTAs and Kickapoo High School PTSA treasurer. Having been involved with PTA for 11 years, she has had the opportunity to volunteer in a number of school and council activities including office volunteer, homeroom parent, Council news editor, Council secretary, PTA Clothing Bank, and several reading programs at her daughter's school and throughout the district. Donna has a degree in Business Administration from Drury University and 16 years of banking/consumer lending experience. She stated that, "I value the experiences and knowledge gained by representing all children in our state's capital. It has been a challenge at times but it has been truly rewarding to speak up for our children's health and safety and for our public schools."



**Delegates Will Vote on This Slate of Officers  
at State Convention, October 12 - 14**

# Missouri Hosts Outstanding National Convention!



**Missouri PTA  
Host State Committee  
Thanks the Following  
Companies,  
Organizations,  
and Individuals  
for their contributions to  
our National Convention  
efforts:**

- Assurant
- ExpressTees
- Cardinal Glennon Hospital
- Starbucks – Osage Beach
- Drury Hotels
- Kansas City Chiefs
- Hazelwood School District
- Missouri PTA
- National PTA
- 1904 Worlds Fair Society
- Pat Brune
- Jennifer Casey
- Elaine Gerstenberger
- Catherine Sweeny

## NPTA Convention

The 111th annual National PTA Convention and Exhibition was held on June 28 – July 1 at St. Louis. There was a total of 1270 attendees representing 53 congresses, including 891 delegates. The Missouri host committee chair Peggy Richey and 120 committee members were very busy welcoming delegates and making the convention the best ever. Highlights of the convention include the first ever Parent Expo, networking and training opportunities, keynote speaker Craig Scott of “Rachel’s Challenge”, World’s Fair Dessert Party, and election of the 2007-2009 officers and board. Jan Harp Domene was elected president and Chuck Saylor was elected as PTA’s first ever male president elect. PTA members from San Diego invited participants to attend next year’s convention in their home city; the dates are June 21 – 23.

**Thanks to  
All Missouri Volunteers**  
for helping make the PTA National  
Convention in St. Louis a wonderful success!



# Speak Up! For Children and Youth

By Donna Petiford, Missouri PTA state legislative chair

For more than a century PTA has changed the lives of children and youth across our nation for the better—speaking with a unified voice on behalf of young people’s education, health, safety, and well being. Times and issues may have changed but advocating for children and youth remains a critical responsibility of all PTA members.

If your unit or council has not been involved in legislative activities in the past, there is no better time to start than now. Missouri’s children and youth deserve your time and efforts as advocates for them. Your representative government needs to hear the issues and concerns for your child, the children in your school, the children across your district, and the children across Missouri.

Each PTA unit and each PTA council should have an active legislative committee. The Missouri PTA Toolkit has information for your legislative chair that includes the responsibilities of the council/unit PTA president, the legislative chair’s responsibilities, information regarding resolutions, and the application to join the JC/DC member-to-member network. Also included in the Toolkit is the application for the Missouri PTA Advocacy through Legislation award (AtLaw). AtLaw recipients are recognized annually at our state convention and although the application deadline (September 1) has passed for this year’s award, now is the time to start tracking your legislative activity for next year’s convention award. The AtLaw application is the blueprint for successful advocacy for yourself, your unit, and your council.

We encourage all PTA members across the state to participate in a Regional Kids First Rally. These rallies will be held at the beginning of each legislative session (January – March 2008) and plans are currently underway to bring legislators and PTA members together in their own backyards to openly discuss issues concerning our public schools. If your unit or council would like to host a Regional Kids First Rally, please contact the state office ([office@mopta.org](mailto:office@mopta.org)) for more information.

We must not sit back and assume others will speak on behalf of our children and us. We must be active. Our children deserve our

best efforts. Add your voice and “SPEAK UP” to make a better Missouri for our children.

## Advocacy Training Available Online!

To reach as many members as possible, National PTA is proud to present e-learning, a computer-based training program. Advocacy courses available through the e-learning program include:

- Effective Advocacy for Your Child
- Writing and Proposing PTA Resolutions

To begin your advocacy training, go to the National PTA website ([www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org)) and follow the links to Leadership Resources and Leadership Training. To logon, just use the user name and password provided on the back of your PTA membership card.

# Start the Art Week

Because kids have a right to arts education, PTA in conjunction with Americans for the Arts will launch Start the Art Week during the week of October 8 as part of National Arts & Humanities month. Start the Art Week is a national initiative to inspire students to participate in the arts and keep arts in schools. Parents, teachers, and arts advocates across the country are encouraged to embrace, sponsor, and support the arts during the week-long celebration. For more information, go to [www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org).

# Don't Miss It!

Missouri PTA’s annual State Convention is fast approaching (October 12 – 14) and plans are underway for some exciting activities for students. Be sure to attend the student gathering on Friday, October 12th from 4:30 to 6:00 p.m. for dinner. This will also be a great time to setup the Health Fair with friends – old and new. There will be special workshops just for students on Friday and Sunday. The Health Fair will be held on Saturday from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in Expo Center. What a great time to hang out with friends, learn something new, and help others become more aware of health-related information. The registration deadline is **September 10th**; invite a friend and be prepared for lots of fun!

# Mark Your Calendar

## SEPTEMBER

*National Five a Day month*

- 1 **Advocacy through Legislation Award (AtLaw) applications due**
- 1-7 National Childhood Injury Prevention week
- 8 International Literacy Day
- 10 Swap Ideas Day
- 15 **Leaders Project applications due**
- 21 **Early Bird membership awards deadline**
- 24 Family Table Day

## OCTOBER

*Positive Attitude month*

- 3 Walk to School Day
- 7-13 National Fire Prevention week
- 8 Start the Art Week begins
- 12-14 **Missouri PTA Annual Convention (Columbia)**
- 15-19 National Health Education week
- 18 Lights On After School
- 19-21 **Emerging Minority Leaders Conference (Dallas, TX)**
- 21-27 National School Bus Safety week
- 27 Make a Difference Day

## NOVEMBER

*National Adoption month*

- 1 National Family Literacy Day
- 8 National Parents as Teachers Day
- 12 Veterans Day (observed)
- 12-18 Children’s Book Week
- 18-24 National Family Week
- 19-25 Better Conversation Week
- 20 Universal Children’s Day

## Looking Ahead

### APRIL

- 25-26 Leadership Conference (location: TBA)

### JUNE

- 21-23 National PTA Convention (San Diego, CA)



# STUDENT CHALKBOARD

## Let's Start a PTA Chain Reaction

*By Andrew Jennings, senior at Hickman Mills High School and Missouri PTA youth representative*

On April 20, 1999 two armed students charged into Columbine High School leaving 13 dead and 24 injured. At the 2007 National PTA Convention in St. Louis, MO, the keynote speaker was Craig Scott. Craig's sister Rachel Scott was the first person to die in the tragedy. Craig was caught in the student library during the melee and shared his experiences.

The biggest part of what Craig shared with the audience was about who his sister was and the impact she had on the students and staff at Columbine High School. She stood up for people who weren't always the most popular. She befriended them and tried to make them feel welcome and part of their school in a good way.

Rachel's family, including Craig is part of a movement called "Rachel's Challenge" that encourages people to incorporate many of the things that his sister stood for and believed. He detailed five things and challenged the PTA audience to incorporate them into our lives. These five things are things that Rachel did and made her special to the many, many people her short life touched. Those five things are:

1. Eliminate prejudice by looking for the best in others.
2. Dare to Dream - Set Goals - Keep a Journal.
3. Choose your influences - input determines output.
4. Kind Words & Small Acts of Kindness = HUGE impact.
5. Start a CHAIN REACTION with family & friends.

As a student beginning my senior year in high school, I believe students, teachers, and parents could learn a lot and make a big impact in our schools if we were to put into action the five things mentioned above. If we could touch a small number of people every day in our schools the way that Rachel

did, we could start a chain reaction of positive things in each of our schools.

What Craig Scott spoke about has made an impact on me and I will try to do a much better job being a positive force and role model to my fellow students. Most of the things that Craig Scott and "Rachel's Challenge" stands for are things that PTA has stood for through the years and it is my hope that more people will get involved in PTA to continue the momentum.

We can help start a "PTA Chain Reaction" to help all students in our schools. Rachel Scott would have wanted it that way. And, as another school year is starting, now is as good time as any to start.

## "I Can Make a Difference By..."

The National PTA Reflections program has been in existence since 1969 and has made a significant impact on students ever since. This call to entry program invites students in grades pre-school through twelve to submit entries in the following art areas: literature, musical composition, photography, visual arts, dance choreography, and film/video production. The theme for the 2007 – 2008 Reflections program is "I can make a difference by ..."

All the necessary criteria and rules for this program are included in the Toolkit,

[www.mopta.org](http://www.mopta.org)

which was mailed to unit presidents in July. Recruit a volunteer to chair this program right away! This person could be a parent, grandparent, school volunteer, or faculty/staff person. Make sure he/she receives a copy of the rules. You will want to make sure your budget includes a line item for this program. Although expenses are minimal, the chair may want to recognize the students who participate with either ribbons or certificates. There are many ways to include the Reflections program in your unit for your students.

After reading through the criteria and rules, we encourage you to phone the Missouri PTA Reflections chair for assistance and suggestions. You may contact this person through the Missouri PTA office at 1-800-328-7330 and/or [office@mopta.org](mailto:office@mopta.org). There will also be a workshop offered at the Missouri PTA Convention in October that will help the Reflections Program chair get started. This information and more can be obtained by contacting the Missouri PTA office and/or by researching our website at [www.mopta.org](http://www.mopta.org).

## Do You Know... Mary Oyler?



When Mary Oyler's son Patrick was in kindergarten, a call went out for room mothers and she responded. The head room mother for his grade level didn't follow through after the Christmas

party so Mary started organizing the rest of the room mothers to ensure that there would be a Valentine Party. She was then appointed to the board as membership chair. The next year, the president resigned before the year started and she was elected president.

Mary's local service has been outstanding – serving on the Westridge Elementary PTA Board, the Raytown South Middle School Board, the Raytown South High School Board, and the Raytown PTA Council Board. She has also served as a unit president, treasurer, vice president, Reading is Fundamental chair, membership chair, legislation and bylaws chairman, fundraiser, and historian. On the council level, she has served as president, treasurer, membership chair, legislation and bylaws chair, merchandise chair, secretary, vice president – parent involvement, newsletter editor, and hospitality chair. She has also served on district bond committees and the district technology committee.

Mary is very qualified as she begins her

term as your Missouri PTA state president on October 14th. She has served on the Board of Managers for the past eight years, serving as Three Trails regional director, treasurer, convention arrangements chair, vice president/director of communication, and president elect. She believes that the “most rewarding was my second term as the Raytown PTA Council president. During that year I served on our district's technology committee helping to make decisions about the future of our district concerning huge steps in increasing the accessibility of technology for our students and teachers. This led to my participation on the steering committee for the bond and levy issue to make considerable upgrades in the technology in our district as well as to air condition our buildings. The night the \$40,000,000 bond issue passed I truly felt the purpose of PTA. The feeling of knowing that you have worked toward making a difference for the children of your community for many years to come can not be replaced by any other accomplishments.”

Mary has received the Missouri Life Membership Award, the National Life Membership Award from her local unit and council, and the Leadership Award and the AtLaw award from Missouri PTA. She has also received all of the adult leader recognitions awards from her local Girl Scout Council as well as an adult award from her local Boy Scout Council.

Mary's role models include Mr. Boston, an English teacher whose goals was to teach his

students to stand up for what they believed was right – to be sure that they could defend their belief – but, to also be able to listen with an open mind and be able to admit when they were wrong. Mary considers this to be the most important lesson she has learned in her life. She also has some PTA role models – including many of the outstanding volunteers she has worked with over the years. She believes that past state president Tina Zubeck's example of how to lead has shown her what a servant leader is and how much can be accomplished when you help others become the best leader they can be. Also, Kathy Nevans has given her the freedom to grow and learn over the past two years. With the excellent examples set by these women, her hope is that she can fill their shoes and continue to help Missouri PTA produce excellent leadership.

Mary's husband of 32 years Wayne has always been supportive of her volunteer work and willing to help whenever asked. He's spent many nights working on little tedious projects she's brought home. They have three children – Pat (31), Katie (29), and Sean (19) and seven grandchildren ranging in age from 11 years to two years old. This includes a set of twins – the three year olds. Mary and Wayne have lived in the same house since they were married and all of their children attended the same elementary, middle, and high school. Starting this fall, her daughter's oldest will be going to the same school his mother attended.

Mary enjoys reading – especially historical novels and children's literature, especially to her grandchildren. Cooking is also one of her favorite pastimes. She has always enjoyed sports – especially watching her youngest son Sean play baseball and soccer – his excellent sportsmanship and coaches always made the games enjoyable.

Besides her work in PTA, Mary believes that she has the perfect job. She works in an elementary library – spending her days with children and books. Watching their faces as she reads to them or listening to them tell her about a favorite book is always a highlight of her day. Mary sums up her job as “like being a grandmother to all the children in the building – they come to see you for a short period of time, you read or share experiences with them and then they choose something precious to you to take home and enjoy.”

## The Bottom Line: Why Not?



By Peggy Preston,  
Missouri PTA  
CONTACT editor

I just can't think of one good reason for everyone who cares about children to not be involved in their lives and education. I work days. Not every

PTA activity or opportunity happens during the day. Not enough skills. Our PTA isn't asking for highly talented folks; they ask for parents who care enough to work. Too busy.

So let's be honest. We make time for the things that matter to us. Too shy. There are plenty of behind-the-scenes things that need to be done. The bottom line is that KIDS ARE WORTH IT!

This is why I'm a firm believer in the National PTA “Three for Me” program. If every adult made a commitment of three hours anytime during the year for children, there would be no shortage of volunteers. The “Three for Me” program doesn't specify the when or where that the volunteering occurs. The important thing is to volunteer for the benefit of the children of all ages. So, my question to you is, why not?

# How May We Help You?

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**Helen Maupin**

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Missouri PTA

# 92nd Annual Convention



Date: October 12-14, 2007

Place: Holiday Inn Select  
Columbia, Missouri

### Registration Info

#### • Convention Package

(includes Registration Fee, Friday Kick-Off Luncheon, and Saturday Evening Banquet)

- Adult \$130.00
- Student \$100.00

#### • Registration (no meals)

- Advanced \$80.00
- Student Advanced \$50.00
- On-Site \$90.00
- Student On-Site \$55.00

#### • Convention Meals

- Kick-Off Lunch \$25.00
- Sat. Banquet \$40.00

#### • Hotel Room Rates

- Two Double Beds (single/quad) [plus applicable taxes] \$89.95

#### Advanced Registration Deadline:

September 10, 2007

Missouri PTA  
www.mopta.org  
800-328-7330

*You are the reason we **Believe** in the **POWER** of **PTA**.  
Come take advantage of the energy Convention activities will  
spark in your leadership team. Bring several members of your  
Board and general membership. Jump start the training of the  
next generation of leaders.*

*Everyone attending will be inspired to **Believe!***

### Highlights

- Motivational Speakers and Entertainment
- Over 40 Workshops offering new ideas, improved skills, recharged energy
- Silent Auction
- Exhibit Hall
- Awards Presentations
- Networking Opportunities
- Debate of Resolutions and Bylaws Amendments
- Student Service Project designed especially for delegates and conference attendees
- Election of 2007-09 State Officers
- **Rachel's Challenge** –  
Rachel Scott was the first person killed at Columbine High School on April 20, 1999. Her acts of kindness and compassion coupled with the contents of her six diaries have become the foundation for one of the most life-changing programs in America. This inspiring program will be our featured keynote on Friday evening!



Missouri Congress of Parents & Teachers  
Missouri PTA  
2100 I-70 Dr. S.W.  
Columbia, MO 65203

ADDRESS SERVICES REQUESTED

The Call to Convention was mailed in July! Each unit/council president should have received one. Please share with you members! If you missed yours, contact Missouri PTA at office@mopta.org or 800-328-7330 or visit www.mopta.org