

CONTACT

Volume 91, Issue 5
March 2010

Together



Missouri Child Advocacy Day

Tuesday, April 7, 2010



The Missouri Alliance for Children, Youth and Families has made the decision to move Child Advocacy Day 2010 back to April 7th (formerly the last Tuesday in January).

Make plans now to join Missouri PTA and Missouri's Alliance for Children, Youth, and Families in Jefferson City beginning at 9:00am in the Capital Rotunda.

The events for the day include:

- Recognition of this year's Child Advocate Award
- Workshops
- Exhibits showcasing services for children and families
- Meetings with legislators
- Networking with other advocates
- March to the Capitol and Rally

Items to Remember:

- You do not need to preregister.
- You may attend Child Advocacy Day free of charge.
- Parking is available in the Madison Street Garage for a fee. Free parking is available on the west side of the Capitol (down the hill).
- Call your Senator or Representative in advance to make a 15-minute appointment.
- Find the name of your senator or representative on the internet at

http://www.senate.mo.gov/lookup/leg_lookup.aspx

Business casual clothing is suggested.

Cover photo:

Scenes from the Liberty PTA Council's Legislative Town Hall Meeting.

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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 bi-monthly, six times a year. Subscriptions are \$7 per year.

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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.

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President's Message By Wendy Jackson, Missouri PTA President



March -- in like a lion, out like a lamb. This saying may hold true for the weather, but in PTA it does not. PTAs across the state are in the midst of the busiest time of the year. Nominating committees have met, and elections are under way. Not to mention the fact that MAP and Stanford testing is about to commence. Teacher appreciation week as well as many, many other things are still ahead. Don't let up now, keep the momentum going. I hope that you resolved to be involved. I know I reaffirmed my commitment to not only my children, but to all children.

The legislative session is just heating up; take the time to voice your opinions. They are elected by you to serve you. Now more than ever we need to let them know our priorities. The budget is in a never before seen crisis. But we cannot let up; children still need to be educated. We still have a job to do. We know there will be cuts in the education budget. Which cuts are going to be the easiest to heal from? What cuts will be too deep to overcome? If not you, then who? The children of Missouri need you! You can make a difference. Advocate for the students and parents in your community. Those same issues are probably in other communities as well. I believe that we all have to work together to make a difference/ change. Will you be someone who just talks about it? Will you be someone who speaks up about it? Will you be someone who motivates others as well to be an advocate to help better the lives of Missouri children and families?? I have chosen the later and through PTA as my conduit, I can effect change. I can make a difference and improve the lives of not only my children, but my grandchildren and their children.

Ponder this: a man or woman is driving when they receive a text message. For a split second they take their eyes off the road. In the blink of an eye that one little second could change their life forever. They could be in an accident; they could be injured or worse killed. They could

have injured or killed a person or family in another car. Have you ever stopped to think what could be sooo important that it could not wait till the driver could stop or arrive at their next destination?? Is it life or death??? It could be....

Missouri PTA has a resolution on texting, I hope that in some small way that a reader will read this article and somehow it will impact them. Maybe they will not pick up that phone the next time they receive a text while driving. Or maybe they have a teenager and they will sit and talk and set some rules with in regards to texting while driving. Or the next time they are in the car with someone who receives a text, they will offer to read it for them so that they are not distracted. If so, then I have done something. You never know, it could start a chain reaction.

Missouri PTA has a responsibility to encourage and work to promote education on the resolutions and position statements that you, our membership, have adopted. But we cannot do it alone. We need you! We need you to contact your elected officials. We need you to help promote programs to your school and communities. We need you to set an example. We need you to be the change that we wish to see! Will you help us??

Are you signed up to receive legislative alerts? If not, please sign up today. You can do so at mopta.org, go to the legislation tab and scroll down to sign up for legislative alerts. It will then take you to the page to input your email address. It is that simple. You will receive alerts that ask for you to contact your elected representatives from time to time when issues relevant to children and families arise. Please join us as we come "together" for Missouri children. The best thing about the March rains is that we will see the benefits of them in the future. In the beautiful green grass, the flowers, the trees and shrubs that come to life. I think that it holds true for PTA as well. The best thing about being in PTA is that in the future someone will see the benefits of all that was done, and enjoy a better world for our families.

*Did you know Wendy has a blog?
Follow it at www.missouripta.blogspot.com*

Who We Are

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 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

New Year and New Approaches

By Charles J. "Chuck" Saylor, PTA National President

Now, be honest, how many of you have already broken at least one of your New Year's resolutions? I resolved this year not to make a resolution that was easy to break!

I resolved 1) to learn to tie my bow-ties for myself; 2) work on improving my poker game; 3) play golf more often and 4) stop eating French fries (which will be tough) and 5) walk more (had to do something healthy besides stop eating the fries).

One easy resolution that we all should remember is asking one person to join PTA.

Membership campaigns should be a year-round effort. PTA has built its history, and reputation, on the many voices speaking as one for all students. Yet, we see so many that are not part of the family. Are your neighbors members? How about your school board members? Does your school have 100% teacher membership? If you're in a middle school, junior high, or high school, how many of your students are members?

I find it impossible to believe that we each do not know at least one person we can recruit that is not currently a PTA member.

I can hear it now. I don't have kids in school, why should I join PTA. Why not? When schools succeed, children succeed. When schools succeed, communities succeed. When businesses see this success they are more often willing to invest in that community. The tax base grows and everyone sees success, and that's just one talking point.

By the way, Mom, is Dad a member?

Please join us by helping secure one new PTA member as your New Year's Resolution. Good things will happen!



Missouri PTA Board of Managers



Treasurer's End-Of-Year Activities

By *Patty Buckholz, Missouri PTA State Treasurer*

As the school's second semester begins, it is time for the treasurer to start planning for the end of the unit's fiscal year. The unit's fiscal year is determined by its bylaws. Besides the monthly treasurer's reports, submitting state and national portions of dues collected to the state office on a monthly basis, depositing funds in a timely manner and paying approved expenses, the treasurer must start preparing the fiscal records for the Annual Financial Review (audit) process.

Here are samples of an Annual Financial Report and Annual Financial Review (audit) along with a checklist for the financial review committee.

Treasurer's Annual Financial Report

At the close of the PTA's fiscal year (as listed in bylaws), the treasurer should close the financial records and prepare the Annual Financial Report. The report should summarize the financial activities for the entire fiscal year.

The treasurer should give a preliminary annual report to the membership at the annual meeting, usually the last meeting of the year. This preliminary report is for information only and is not officially adopted. The report is finalized at the close of the fiscal year. The information reported should agree with the totals reported in the Annual Financial Review (audit).

The Annual Financial Report is presented for adoption by the general membership along with the Annual Financial Review (audit) at the first business meeting of the new fiscal year. Both reports are filed with the permanent financial records. Copies are also filed with the secretary's minutes after the association has formally adopted the reports.

Copies of the Annual Financial Report, Annual Financial Review (audit) and IRS tax form must be sent to the state office by December 1st of each year.

Treasurer Duties at Close of Fiscal Year:

- Be sure all state and national portions of dues have been collected and forwarded to the state PTA office.
- Balance the books to prepare for the Annual Financial Review (audit).
- Be sure that the PTA's books agree with the bank balance plus outstanding checks, outstanding deposits and any cash on hand.
- Prepare the Annual Financial Report covering the fiscal year.
- Submit IRS Form 990-N (e-postcard), 990-EZ with Schedule A, or any other reports required by the government.
- Arrange for transfer of all records, reports, and files to the new treasurer.
- Contact the bank to set up new signature cards so that the new treasurer will be authorized to sign checks without delay.
- Arrange for bonding as required by PTA.

SAMPLE ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT

Home Town PTA

ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT

Fiscal Year Ending _____, 2010

ACTUAL RECEIPTS

Membership Dues	625.00
(500 members at \$1.25 — local portion)	
Fund Raising (Total Gross Income)	3,300.00
(or any means used for money making)	
Balance brought forward	<u>850.00</u>
TOTAL RECEIPTS	4775.00

ACTUAL EXPENDITURES

Leadership Development	570.00
Membership Promotion	180.00
Programs	600.00
Reflections	420.00
District/Council Conference	300.00
State and National Conventions	500.00
Newsletter & Publicity	120.00
Bulletins/OC — Contact	200.00
Officer's Reimbursement	180.00
Chair's Reimbursement	150.00
Past President's Pin	40.00
Council Dues	50.00
Scholarship	200.00
Bonding/Liability Insurance	300.00
Supplies	150.00
Postage	<u>280.00</u>
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	4,240.00
Amount remaining for next year	535.00

RECEIPTS NOT BELONGING TO LOCAL PTA

State and National PTA Dues	1875.00
(500 members @ \$3.75)	
Founders Day Gift	<u>50.00</u>
TOTAL	1925.00

DISBURSEMENT OF MONIES NOT BELONGING TO LOCAL PTA

Dues sent to state PTA office	1875.00
Founders Day Gift sent	<u>50.00</u>
TOTAL	1925.00

Annual Financial Review (AUDIT)

The Purpose of an Annual Financial Review (audit):

- To certify the accuracy of the books and records of the organization, and
- To assure the membership that the association's resources/funds are being managed in a businesslike manner within the regulations established for their use.

The Annual Financial Review (audit) involves following financial transactions through records to make sure receipts are accounted for and expenditures are authorized. Such an examination and report are required to be done at the close of each fiscal year, at the change of treasurer, and at any other time deemed necessary.

The review can be conducted as a Financial Review (internal audit) by a PTA committee as defined in the bylaws, or as an External Audit conducted by an external professional auditor. Financial records should be put in order for the reviewing (auditing) process shortly before the end of the term of the treasurer's office or the end of the fiscal year.

Once the review is completed a report is prepared that reflects the total amounts of receipts and disbursements as reconciled with the bank statements and the balance on hand. This Annual Financial Review or the report of the professional auditor is presented at the first meeting of the fiscal year, along with the Annual Financial Report prepared by the treasurer, for adoption by the membership.

It is of note that the PTA books are essentially closed during the review process. The outgoing treasurer cannot pay bills after relinquishing the books; the incoming treasurer should limit expenditures to those of an emergency nature within an adopted budget until the review is complete. Deposits can be made during this time. The review should be completed as quickly as possible.

More detailed information can be found in the National PTA publication *PTA Money Matters, Quick Reference Guide, 2009-2010*.

Copies of the Annual Financial Report, Annual Financial Review (audit) and IRS tax form must be sent to the state office by December 1st of each year.

SAMPLE ANNUAL FINANCIAL REVIEW

Home Town PTA
ANNUAL FINANCIAL REVIEW
Fiscal Year Ending _____, 2010

Balance on Hand (date of last audit)	\$ _____
Receipts (from last audit to date of review)	\$ _____
Total Cash	\$ _____
Disbursements (from last audit to date of review)	\$ _____
Balance on Hand (as of date of review)	\$ _____
Last Bank Statement Balance	\$ _____
Checks Outstanding (List check numbers)(Amount)	\$ _____
Total Checks Outstanding	\$ _____
Balance in Checking Account	\$ _____

Date review completed: _____

We have examined the books of the treasurer of _____ PTA and find them to be:

correct

incomplete

substantially correct with the following adjustments:

incorrect

Date of report: _____

Financial review committee signatures: _____

Annual Financial Review Process (INTERNAL AUDIT)

The treasurer should deliver to the review committee the following:

- ✓ Checkbook and canceled checks
- ✓ Bank statements and deposit receipts
- ✓ Treasurer's book or ledger
- ✓ A copy of last year's Annual Financial Review (audit) Report
- ✓ Annual Financial Report
- ✓ Itemized statements and receipts
- ✓ Check requests/vouchers
- ✓ Copies of minutes that include the adoption of the budget and amendments to the budget
- ✓ Any other information requested by the auditing committee.

Annual Financial Review Procedure (Internal Audit)

- Start the audit with the records posted after the last Annual Financial Review (audit). Check to see if the amount shown on the bank statement corresponds to the starting balance recorded in the checkbook and ledger.
- Reconcile each month's bank statement with the canceled checks. Also, make sure that every check written is substantiated with a check request, receipt, bill, etc., showing reason for disbursement.
- Verify that all income and expenditures are allocated into the same categories that constitute the approved budget.
- Make certain that state and national portions of the membership dues have been kept separate from other receipts and forwarded immediately to the state office.
- Make certain that money collected for a specific purpose (special projects, Founders Day gift, scholarship funds, council dues, etc.) has been disbursed.
- Reconcile each deposit slip with bank statement and checkbook entries.
- Make sure additions and subtractions are correct in all instances.
- Check all cash receipt slips issued and verify with proper entry in ledger.
- Check each month's ledger entries for error, and crosscheck against checks issued and receipts posted. Cross-reference checkbook stubs with checks issued.
- If a check was issued and no check request can be substantiated, check to see if it was an approved budgeted item, such as council dues.
- Check treasurer's reports and Annual Financial Report for accuracy.
- After any errors have been corrected and the committee is satisfied that the financial accounts are correct, draw a line across the ledger where the review concludes, and sign and date the ledger using a different color ink: "Examined and found correct (name) (date.)"
- If all is in order, the review committee or auditor should prepare a statement and each member of the committee or the auditor should sign it. A sample statement might read, "The financial review committee has examined the records of _____ PTA for the period of (time covered) and found them to be correct. Balance on hand: \$_____. (signatures of committee)" (See sample)
- The financial review committee must also submit a report in the event that there are not adequate records available to conduct a proper accounting of the association's funds. A sample statement might read, "The financial review committee has examined the records of _____ PTA and finds that more adequate accounting procedures need to be followed so a more thorough financial review can be given." The committee should indicate the information that is needed.
- The review report must be officially adopted by the association and must be included in a complete annual report covering the association's entire fiscal year. If the report reflects that additional information and verification is needed, the treasurer should provide it.
- If the validity of the report is questioned, an independent certified public accountant should be hired.
- At any time during the process, the state PTA may be contacted for information or assistance.
- A copy of your Annual Financial Review must be submitted to the state office by December 1st.



Reading - Make Them Thirsty

By Mary Oyler, Immediate Past President, MOPTA, and School Librarian

There is an old saying: “You can lead a horse to water but you can’t make it drink.” But let’s add to that — “But, you can make it thirsty.” What does this have to do with reading? Our children are exposed to reading everyday — be it at school, in our homes, playing video games or using a computer. All of this is great, but are we truly raising children who enjoy reading or see the true purpose in reading a text for meaning and comprehension

Working in an elementary school library, I see the excitement on each child’s face when I read a book they truly enjoy or introduce them to an author or illustrator they have never heard or seen before. When they come to the library they know that there is an adult ready and waiting to help them as they search for the right book or find the special book they have been waiting for the past few weeks. I also see the disappointment when they want to read a certain book but don’t have the needed skills, and wish I could help each one of them.

My small contributions to a few children in one school can be multiplied a million fold if all adults take responsibility for the success of all children. Our society wants our children to succeed — to do well in school and reach their full potential as adults. To do this we must join together as a single force that works to make sure that all children are readers. Many times as parents or community members we don’t feel we have the qualifications to “teach” our children to read — but we are probably the first and foremost influence on the children of America when it comes to developing a thirst for good literature and knowledge. From the time a child is born, we have a responsibility to make sure that they are given every opportunity to explore the wonderful world of language. How can this be done?

For children to develop reading and writing skills families must provide them with opportunities to participate in conversations, read to them on a regular basis, have books in their homes, and let

them see us reading. Infants learn from listening, observing and following actions. Toddlers need to be asked questions and they need answers to all of the questions they ask. Preschoolers need to learn about letters, numbers and making sense of text. Kindergartners enter a whole new world of education but need to know that their families are a part of this world — encourage and reinforce what is learned at school. Elementary students need to be encouraged to create opportunities in your home for reading, writing and learning as a family. Even as our children reach middle and high school they need our encouragement to find their strengths and learn how to build on these as they develop plans for their future. All of these opportunities foster a belief in our children that reading and communication is important and makes them want to be an active participant in the process.

Educators know the important role reading plays in the success of all students — but, they must also be there to support the reluctant reader and encourage the reader starving for knowledge. High expectations must be set for all students and families must be encouraged to do the same. Educators must establish family literacy programs and encourage student and families to visit school and local libraries. They must help parents understand effective methods of helping their student at home by sharing information about reading comprehension strategies such as inferring, predicting, visualizing, and critical thinking; plus, help parents understand how to work with their children using phonics and other decoding methods. Along with this educators must work together to ensure that reading and writing are taught in all subjects.

As we work towards making all children “thirsty”, we must not forget the other members of our communities — grandparents, seniors and other concerned citizens, as well as various community organizations. All of these groups should become mentors to our children in their home, school, community center or church.

Providing or creating opportunities is the key for any of these programs to be successful. Communities must come together and make a commitment to the children that no child will be left without someone reaching out to help them reach their full reading potential — thus helping them be successful in school.

PTAs have many opportunities to help all of these groups as everyone works towards helping our children be successful. Reach out to parents with programs to help them feel comfortable as they work with their children. Enlist the help of educators as family reading nights or family literacy trainings are planned. Help schools, churches or community centers organize reading mentoring programs — help find volunteers, provide transportation and supplies.

Coming up in March and April are two days to celebrate reading in our homes, schools and communities. March 2nd is Dr. Seuss’ birthday and the NEA’s Read Across America program which focuses on the importance of motivating children to read and as well as helping them master basic reading skills. April 12th is Drop Everything and Read Day. National D.E.A.R. Day is the birthday of Beverly Cleary, author of many children’s book including the Ramona Quimby books. This is a day set aside for everyone in communities across the country to set aside 30 minutes to read. Both of these special days provide an excellent opportunity to start our children on that path to success through reading plus help them begin to quench that thirst.

Our children are our future — the more all of us do to help them become lifelong readers and learners — the better the future will be for all of us. Let’s make it everyone’s responsibility to make sure our children will be so “thirsty” as they venture into school and life that they will “drink” in everything possible and that everyone one of their potential’s will become a reality.

10 WAYS TO INCREASE YOUR PTA MEMBERSHIP

1. **DEVELOP** an information sheet to distribute to members and prospective members telling them what they get for their dues local, state and national.
2. **ASK** smaller businesses to allow you to take bags and return them with colorful drawings individually colored by children to promote PTA!
3. **INVEST** in an official PTA tablecloth. Make your PTA membership table immediately recognizable at all school functions and activities.
4. **CONTACT** new families as they move into your community and school. Welcome them with a personal call and invitation to join your PTA.
5. **ENCOURAGE** parents to become members from the very first opportunity. Set up a PTA table at kindergarten round-ups or secondary school orientations.
6. **OFFER** a door prize to members only at your PTA meetings — must be present to win!
7. **CONSIDER** distributing one special issue of your PTA newsletter to all residents in your school area. This is excellent public relations and can realize memberships and participation from those with no children in school.
8. **REQUEST** an exhibit space for PTA in store windows, library showcases, banks, etc.
9. **PLACE** a membership table at every entrance. Place tables strategically so people must pass by to enter activity.
10. **COUNCILS:** Approach local businesses for discount coupons for goods and services and provide reproducible pages for local units to give as a membership special privilege.

www.mopta.org

Membership Awards DON'T FORGET TO APPLY!

Deadline April 1st

Have your unit recognized for its great work by applying for our membership awards. It's easier than you think. Award applications were provided in the tool kit you received last summer and are also available on the state website, www.mopta.org, under "Forms/ Applications". Most take no longer than a few minutes to fill out, so what are you waiting for? *Applications must be postmarked by April 1, 2010.*

Outstanding Membership Campaign Grant

This award and a check for \$100.00 will be presented to the unit with the best overall membership campaign. Many of you did great things. Let us know how you did it — you may take the prize AND inspire other units to do the same!

Unit Membership Awards — Exclusive 100 & Silver Acorn

You can qualify for the Exclusive 100 Award in one of these three ways: 100% increase (membership must be doubled from previous year)

- 100 member increase over previous year
- 100% enrollment (memberships equal or exceed school's total enrollment as recorded by the school principal on the application)

Qualify for the Silver Acorn Award in one of two ways:

- membership total equals 75-99% of school's total enrollment as recorded by the school principal on the application
- membership total equals a 75-99% increase over the previous year's recorded membership total

100% Faculty Award/Golden Apple Award

Qualify for this award by having all Full-time Certified personnel within your school as your PTA members. Combined units count faculty for each school within the unit. Along with your unit award, your school principal will also receive a special "Golden Apple" award certificate for the school.

Students Make A Difference Award

This award is presented to the PTSA with the highest percentage of students as PTA members based on the school enrollment as recorded by the school principal on the application. You are required to differentiate between student and adult members on your roster.

Council Membership Awards

- **Oak Leaf Award** (2% membership increase within council's combined units membership totals from previous year)
- **Exclusive 100 Award** (increase of 100 members from previous year's recorded council's combined units membership)

Get those applications in and make your unit an Award Winner!

NPTA Member Benefits

- **BARNES & NOBLE.com** - PTA members will save 5% from this discounted online bookstore on books, music, DVD's and more.
- **THE HP ACADEMY STORE** - HP Academy offers exclusive education discounts & savings on HP's consumer computing and printing products. PTA members get an exclusive 10% off, plus free next day shipping on printing supplies.
- **MEDICALERT** - PTA members receive discounted memberships to the MedicAlert Kid Smart[®] program, a 24-hour child emergency ID and caregiver notification services. Emergency responders can access your child's medical history and records with one easy phone call.
- **METLIFE** - MetLife Auto & Home has special group discounts now available to PTA members.
- **SHARP ELECTRONICS** - All of the products on the Sharp Electronics/PTA Member Store site are being offered to PTA members at reduced pricing.
- **SOUTHWEST VACATIONS** - 5% discount on vacation packages of two nights or longer to any Southwest destination.
- **T-MOBILE** - 14% discount off your monthly service charges for new and existing T-Mobile subscribers, plus additional savings for new subscribers.
- **OneCause VISA** - OneCause, National PTA, and Capital One have joined together to bring you this free credit card fundraising program which allows you to contribute 1% of every purchase to PTA.
- **NEW!! PARENTING SCHOOL YEARS** - The NEW edition of *Parenting* that focuses on the day-to-day needs and interests of moms with school-age kids. Filled with real, mom-tested advice that's relevant to you as you navigate through the joys and challenges of the grade-school years. PTA members receive an exclusive subscription offer which includes:
 - 1 year (11 issues) for only \$9.97 - less than \$1 an issue
 - 77% savings off the cover price - that's like getting 8 issues FREE!
 - Special Bonus - \$1 of your subscription price will be given to the PTA
- **INTRODUCING!!! PTA REWARDS CARD** - **The world's largest discount program!** Loyalty Access Solutions has partnered with PTA to offer all PTA members an opportunity to save money by receiving discounts on more than 250,000 retail offers including over 400 of the world's most recognizable brand names.

Check out the Missouri PTA, www.mopta.org or National PTA, www.pta.org websites for further information on how your members access these benefits. Make sure the details on benefit access are provided only to your PTA members.

First Ever Emerging Minority Leaders Conference

By Paulette Baker, Membership Outreach Chair

People of Missouri and all over the nation can't help but notice how the makeup of the student population and families have changed. Today, minority students make up 42% of our nation's public school enrollment, almost twice the number reported 30 years ago.

Missouri PTA is responding to this growing diversity in our state by presenting its first Emerging Minority Leaders conference to recognize and reinforce the

importance of ethnic minority leaders in PTA's future growth. It is hoped that this conference will help leaders network and become more confident, and be stronger advocates for student achievement.

Missouri PTA is planning for 100 invited minority leaders to attend the conference, to be held on Saturday, March 20, 2010, at Webster University, located in the Kansas City, Missouri area.

Emerging Minority Leaders Conference

**"Destination Leadership V:
Where Leaders are Discovered"**
June 10-13, Memphis, TN

Registration will begin March 15.

For more information,
contact the
PTA Urban Development Department
at nemlc@pta.org.

Men Organized to Raise Engagement

By Jeff Rogers, Male Involvement Chair

This year was the first ever National Conference to raise male engagement with school-age kids. I was lucky enough to be chosen to represent Missouri as the Male Engagement Chairperson. The conference was held in Atlanta, Georgia in conjunction with the National Emerging Minorities Leadership (EML) Conference on November 6th thru 8th. The conference kicked off with a warm welcome from Chuck Saylor, the first ever male National PTA President. Chuck's welcome was followed by dinner and keynote speaker, Rev. Jessie Jackson. Rev. Jackson spoke on "The Responsibility of a Leader" and he tied his speech to the importance of the EML and MORE Conference.

I attended the "Getting Men through the Doors" session, which talked about the many ways to get men through the school doors and increase engagement with the PTA. We also discussed how increasing male engagement needs to be a deliberate effort on the part of the PTA and increasing male engagement doesn't happen by accident. It was hard to sleep the first night because of the great information shared during our first session and the inspiring speech from Rev. Jackson.

Saturday morning came early. We started off with breakfast in preparation for

our first keynote speaker of the day, Carey Casey, the CEO of the Kansas City-based National Center for Fathering. He gave a very inspiring speech on "The Importance of Fathers in Education and the Social Success of Children". I knew that fathers were important in the success of children but I was shocked by just how much a difference a male role model makes. Next on the agenda was Dr. Stephan Sroka who spoke about the "The Power of One: Making a Difference" and how one person has great power and can make a difference. The rest of Saturday was filled with discussion on the "ABC's" of male engagement, creating a work plan and hearing from some male involvement organizations that are part of the MORE alliance. The organizations included:

- WATCH D.O.G.S. (Dads of Great Students) - <http://www.fathers.com/>
- All Pro Dad - <http://www.allprodad.com/>
- Strong Fathers-Strong Families - <http://www.strongfathers.com/>
- National Compadres Network - <http://www.nationalcompadresnetwork.com>

The final day wrapped up all we had discussed with Byron Garrett, National PTA CEO. Mr. Garrett spoke about "Answering the Call" and that we had all been called to this conference for different reasons but we had one thing in common: We all had answered the call, and as we prepared to leave the conference, we should all be prepared for the long road ahead. It may be years before we see the fruits of our labors but we should know we can make a difference. We all left knowing we have a great deal of work ahead and we knew we had been part of something special.



"National PTA President Chuck Saylor (reclining) with the attendees of the MORE conference"

Go Green! *By Amanda Weber, Missouri PTA Student Representative*

"I know that you don't wanna hear it, especially coming from someone so young, but everything I read is Global Warming going green. I don't know what all this means." Miley Cyrus Wake Up America.

We all hear the news every night about global warming and going green, but what does it all mean? Did you know that global warming is affecting the polar ice caps? That polar bears are dying out because there isn't enough ice for them to live on since the earth is warming up?!? Then again some people don't believe in global warming, because if we had global warming it would be snowing in the spring or summer and it would be hot during winter. Say what you will, but the earth is calling out to us, asking for our help in saving the planet. There really isn't any way to stop global warming but there are many ways to GO GREEN. Yeah, there's the whole recycle thing, but do you really do it? You see all those recycle bins around, but ask yourself this: "Do I really use these bins all the time? Do I always recycle when I see the blue bins?" Do you realize plastic water bottles stay in landfills and can never to be broken down? But you can go a greener route and buy a refillable water bottle instead.

Many recording artists are going green with their CD cases. The Jonas Brothers, Demi Lovato and Miley Cyrus are prime examples of this. Their CD cases and the paper inside them are made of 100% RECYCLED plastic and 35% post consumer materials. Look for other artists doing this when buying your music. Do you have some old CDs you don't use? How about making a piece of artwork out of them? It's very simple and many craft stores have ideas for your used CDs.

Save water by cutting your shower by two minutes and don't let the faucet run when brushing your teeth. When needing hot water, place a container under the faucet to catch the cold water and then use this water for something later. How about remembering the PTS's?

- Plug it up- Plug the sink instead of having the water run

- Tap it up- Turn off the water when you're not using it.
- Stop the drip- simply turn off or fix those dripping faucets

If we did this for a whole month, we could save up to 400 million gallons of water — that's enough for 30 million showers a month. Talk about shower power! A few weeks ago, Disney's Friends for Change issued a challenge to all Disney fans to make a pledge to do a power shower, which is cutting back their showers by 2 minutes. The end result? They saved 120 million gallons of water — that's 6 glasses of water for everyone in the United States! So ask yourself, could you cut back your shower time if you knew what the end result would be?

Still don't think that going green is worth the time? If you don't want to save water, how about saving energy? Ever thought about buying light bulbs that are earth friendly? Sure they cost more than regular bulbs, but you're saving the planet by saving energy!!

- Switch it- Turn off the lights when you leave a room
- Pool it- Car pool to work or school
- Unplug it- unplug your cell-phone chargers when not using them

If a million people unplug their chargers when they are not in use, then those million people can save over 2 million pounds of CO2 a year! That's equal to the emissions of 200 school busses! If we all turn up thermostat by 2 degrees when it's hot out and lower it 2 degrees when it's cold, 350,000 of us can save 38,000,000 pounds of CO2. That is equal to taking 3,164 cars off the roads for a YEAR!

So next time you think going green isn't worth the time or money, just think about the results that come out just these few little extra steps of saving water and energy. One person can make a difference, but **together** we can start a chain reaction and help save and protect our planet..... "I'll try if you will."

DONATIONS

Thank you for your generous donations. With your continued support, we can do great things.

Building Fund

Inman PTA of Nixa
New Mark Middle School PTA
Show Me State PTA
Prairie View Elementary PTA

Founder's Day Fund

Hickman Mills Council PTA
Inman PTA of Nixa
Watkins PTA
Sunset Valley PTA
Ozark Council PTA
Prairie View Elementary PTA
Meadowbrook Elementary PTA

Scholarship Fund

Hickman Mills Council PTA
Inman PTA of Nixa
Pickett Elementary School PTA
New Mark Middle School PTA
Show Me State PTA
Sunset Valley Elementary PTA
Faxon Montessori PTA
Hazel Grove Elementary
Hyde Elementary PTA
Gateway Institute of Technology Jaguar PTA
Prairie View Elementary PTA
Meadowbrook Elementary PTA
Arrowpoint Elementary PTA

Have you seen "Money Talks?"

"Money Talks" is the first of a series of web-based officer training videos for Units available at missouripta.org. Hosted by Tina Zubec, past Missouri PTA president, "Money Talks" consists of four modules: Treasurer Responsibilities, Treasurer's Reports and Budget, Annual Financial Review (Audit), and IRS Form 990. The videos may be viewed as a set or individually. This project is intended to supplement the training provided at Conventions, Leadership Conferences, and Schools of Information.



The videos are made possible with the help of our sponsors, Money Minder Treasurer Software and AIM, Inc.

Legislative Town Hall Meetings

Councils around the state have held Legislative Town Hall Meetings in the past few months. Missouri PTA prepared four topics of discussion for these meetings: third party child abuse reporting; tax credits, deductions, and vouchers; simple majority for school bond issues and bonding indebtedness; and prevention of abuse, neglect, and maltreatment. These questions represent Missouri PTA's legislative agenda for 2009-10.

Grandview PTA Council held its first-ever legislative town hall meeting on December 1st, 2009. In attendance were Missouri State Representative Jason Holsman of the 45th District and Brook Balentine, a field representative from Senator Claire McCaskill's office. Balentine's appearance at the town hall meeting marked the first time that a representative of the federal legislature has attended a MOPTA town hall.

This meeting was also attended by Grandview Board of Education members Rachel Casey, Don Fisher, Ann Fisher, Allen Meyers, and Elliott Threant, as well as Grandview Superintendent Dr. Ralph Teran.

Springfield PTA Council's meeting was attended by State Representatives Bob Dixon, Sara Lampe, and Charlie Norr.

The Liberty PTA Council hosted Teri Barr, a representative from Senator McCaskill's office, Sarah Woodward, a representative from Federal Representative Sam Graves' office, along with State Senator Luann Ridgeway and State Representatives Doug Ervin and Timothy Flook.

Reflections State Showcase

3:00 p.m. on April 24, 2010
Leadership Conference
Hilton Kansas City Airport
Kansas City, Missouri

Missouri PTA Leaders Project

The Missouri PTA Leaders Project gives you the opportunity to be recognized for your leadership accomplishments and attending the April Leadership Conference is the perfect time to start! As a PTA leader, you already do the work by volunteering your time and talents and attending training provided at the local, state, and national level. Why not earn the distinction of becoming a "Certified PTA Leader"? How?

- Attend 10 different leadership training activities, programs, and opportunities listed within a two-year period
- Have your MO PTA Leaders Project Tracking Card signed and dated by a MO PTA Board of Managers member upon completion of each leadership training event (up to three lines per state convention or state leadership conference and up to two lines per regional conference or School of Information)
- When you have 10 training requirements completed, submit your MO PTA Leadership Project Tracking Card and application to MO PTA.

Once the certification process is completed, you have become a Certified PTA Leader and will be recognized at the state convention in October and receive a Leaders Project certificate and pin. New leaders are also recognized in *CONTACT* magazine. For more information about the MO PTA Leaders Project, please check the Tool Kit, contact the Vice President of Membership Services, Shelly Throckmorton (Shellyt@mopta.org), or access the Missouri PTA website at www.mopta.org.

Blue Springs Unit Achieves Goal With Track

By Jamie Conaty, former PTA President, Voy Spears Elementary

In September 2007, the PTA at Voy Spears Elementary had a dream: to put in an oval running/walking track at the school. A committee researched costs and logistics, but it looked like the dream would take many years of fundraising to achieve. Still, the PTA spread the word and help began to appear. A PTA parent offered the use of his business, making golf courses and other sport venues, at cost. A local business offered the asphalt at cost. Another PTA parent mentioned possible grant opportunities available through her family's foundation. VSE PTA applied for a grant through another PTA parent's family foundation and received the full amount needed, \$13,000.00.

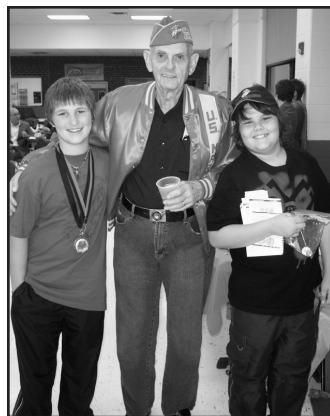
Two years later, the dream was a reality! The track was opened with a ribbon cutting and Family Fun Run. This was truly a group effort involving students, parents, teachers/staff, school district personnel, and the community — and all we had to do was ask! Don't be afraid to chase your Unit's dreams!



VSE Fun Run

Martin City Elementary PTA Honors Veterans

In November, the Martin City PTA hosted their 3rd Annual Veteran's Day Celebration. Six classrooms created decorations and letters to show their appreciation to those who have served our country. The Midwest Young Marines Colorguard attended to present the flag. Tom Fuller, U.S. Air Force veteran and grandfather of two Martin City students, explained the significance of each fold of the flag.



From left, Dalton Palmer, Glenn Compton (U.S. Marines veteran), and Shane Cherry

Shoal Creek Elementary PTA Promotes Reading

By Dalynn Hayakawa, President, Shoal Creek Elementary PTA

"Line Up For Literacy" was the theme. Shoal Creek Elementary School in Liberty was the place. Family involvement and fun were in order at this event.

For several years, Shoal Creek has been battling large student enrollment. This makes having all-school events difficult. However, the PTA felt it was time to set that aside and try it out. An open house set-up seemed the best choice, so people could come and go as desired.

All the activities were centered on a football theme. The decorations reflected this as well, with things like large football signs showing where each station was located and the crafts being things like pompons and pennants. A large white board was located at the entry and had each activity written on it as if a coach had drawn up a play.

There was a book walk where each book had a football or cheerleader subject. There was a voting station for each person to cast their vote for KU (Kansas University) or MU (Missouri University).

During the week before the event, paper with lines on it was sent home so kids could write a sports-related story to be displayed. Also, each teacher was encouraged to record their classroom's reading stamina so it could be displayed in a scoreboard-type format.

The computer lab was also open to anyone who wanted to play some literacy-related games. Even the local library was present to sign up anyone who wanted a library card.

High school football players and cheerleaders were guest readers. Every time someone walked into the library to hear the guest readers, they had to walk through the high school pompon squad spirit line, as if each person was being announced as a player on a team. The big hit of the night was the high school drum line, some 40 members strong, who performed twice throughout the evening.

The PTA felt the most important thing was that this event was cost-free to those who attended. Even hot dogs and chips were available at no cost. It was very rewarding to see everyone having fun and knowing the cost to put this together was under \$1000. Using resources that were available within the school district and the community was a key in keeping the cost down. And it was fun!!!

Missouri PTA Distinguished Service Award

As the school year winds to a close, consider recognizing and honoring an exceptional person for their service and dedication to your PTA. A Missouri PTA Distinguished Service Award recipient receives a letter of recognition from the state president, a certificate suitable for framing, and a lapel pin. The fee for this award is \$25.00, divided equally between the Missouri PTA Scholarship Fund and the Missouri PTA general fund. The Award form can be found in the Winter Packet or online at mopta.org at "Forms/Awards." Please allow two weeks for delivery of the items.

Short Takes

CREDIT CARD CHANGE

MO PTA is unable to accept credit card payments at this time. This includes payment for the upcoming Leadership Conference. We hope to offer this form of payment again in the future.

WE'VE MOVED!

Please note our main office in Columbia has moved. Our new address is: 2101 Burlington St. Columbia, MO 65202. The phone numbers will remain (800) 328-7330 and (573) 445-4161.

AWARD AWARDS!!

In the blink of an eye the deadline for many awards and grants will be here and gone before you know it. Get the recognition your unit deserves. The following awards and grants applications are due to the state office by April 1: Council Achievement award, Blue & Gold Seal award, Unit Achievement award, Newsletter award, Website award, Health & Safety grant, Membership awards, Student Safety award, Parent Involvement grant, and Outstanding Membership Campaign grant. Check your Tool Kit's Grants & Awards booklet or the MO PTA website, www.mopta.org, under "Form/Award Applications for information and applications. To be recognized, an application must be filled out. Most take no longer than a few minutes to fill out, so what are you waiting for? The postmark deadline is April 1st. *Don't miss out!*



COLUMBIA PTA UNIT

RECOGNIZED WITH GRANT

The National Center for Safe Routes to School has awarded a grant to Fairview Elementary School PTA to offer an eight-week pedestrian education to students. Congratulations!

FREE TIME AT BIG SURF WATERPARK

Big Surf Waterpark in Linn Creek (near Lake of the Ozarks) is pleased to offer their Alpha Program again in 2010! This program allows students from Kindergarten through 5th Grade to bring in their final report cards only once during May or June and get in FREE if they have an "A" or "A" equivalent in any subject.

MEET US IN THE VIRTUAL WORLD

Did you know MO PTA is on facebook? Add us to your "fan of" list!

LET'S MEET IN MEMPHIS!

National PTA Convention will be held June 9-15 in Memphis, TN. Look for your convention packet this spring!

PUT YOUR UNIT OR COUNCIL IN CONTACT

We want to spread the word about your unit or council. Please send event information to the CONTACT editor at avap@mopta.org.

Mark Your Calendar

March

- Women's History Month
- Music in Our Schools Month
- American Red Cross Month
- National Nutrition Month
- Parenting Awareness Month
- 1 Membership dues to state office
- 2 NEA's Read Across America
- 9-11 National PTA Legislative Conference
- 15-21 National Poison Prevention Week
- 17 St. Patrick's Day
- 20 EML Conference — Webster University, KC
- 30 Passover begins
- 31 New 2010-2011 Officers Form due to state office

April

- Alcohol Awareness Month
- Child Abuse Prevention Month
- Keep America Beautiful Month
- Mathematics Education Month
- 1 Award and Grant applications due to state office
- 1 Membership dues to state office
- 2 Good Friday
- 4 Easter
- 7 **Child Advocacy Day, Jefferson City Please note the date change from the previous January date**
- 13 Drop Everything and Read Day
- 18-24 National Volunteer Week
- 2 Administrative Professional's Day
- 22 Earth Day
- 22 Take our Daughters and Sons to Work Day
- 23-24 MO PTA Leadership Conference
- 30 Arbor Day

May

- Asthma and Allergy Awareness Month
- Hepatitis Awareness Month
- Mental Health Month
- National Bike Month
- National Physical Fitness and Sports Month
- National Teen Pregnancy Awareness Month
- 1 Membership dues to state office
- 2 2-7 National PTA Teacher Appreciation Week
- 3 5 Cinco de Mayo
- 4 National Teacher Appreciation Day
- 10 Mother's Day
- 11-15 Children's Book Week
- 12 School Nurses' Appreciation Day
- 16 Armed Forces Day
- 25 Memorial Day
- Missouri PTA Office Closed
- National Missing Children's Day
- 5 Resolutions Deadline
- 6 National PTA Mary Lou Anderson Reflections Arts Enhancement Grant Deadline

Looking Ahead

- June 9-15 National PTA Convention, Memphis, TN

Missouri Congress of Parents & Teachers
Missouri PTA
2101 Burlington St.
Columbia, MO 65202



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ADDRESS SERVICES REQUESTED

Missouri PTA Leadership Conference
April 23 24, 2010
Hilton Kansas City Airport
Kansas City, Missouri



Bring your entire board and get groovin' with all the great ideas and information your PTA/PTSA can use.

**Training, networking, team building, skills development and resource opportunities
Adults and students (middle school & high school) are encouraged to attend.**

Adult Registration: \$75.00 Student Registration: \$35.00

Reflections Student Showcase

Registration packets will be mailed to unit & council presidents in March.