

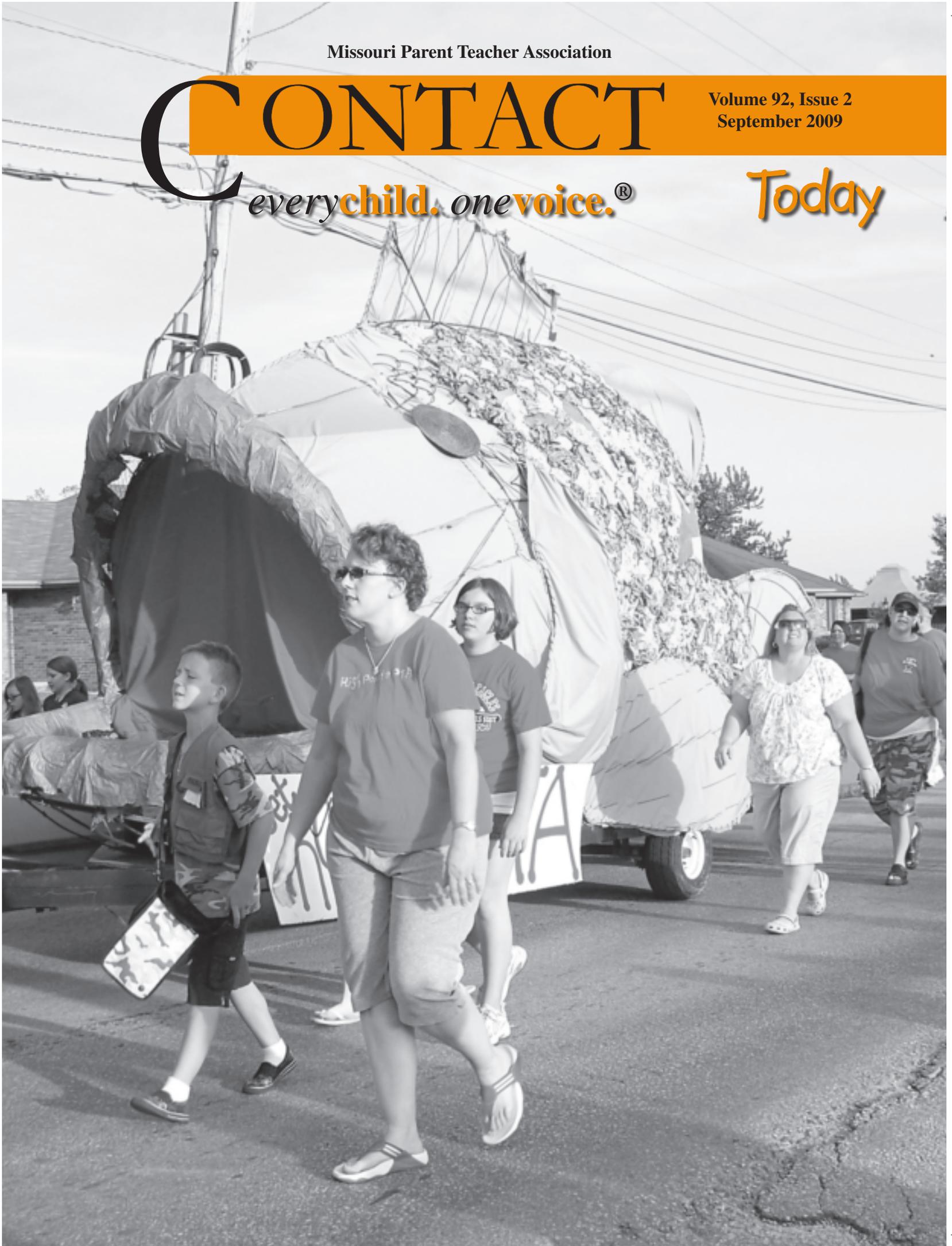
Missouri Parent Teacher Association

CONTACT

Volume 92, Issue 2
September 2009

everychild. onevoice.®

Today



educate · motivate · vaccinate
Let's Fight Flu Together!

*Let's fight flu
together!*



The *Let's Fight Flu Together!* program provides PTA and school leaders with information, resources, and support to host an influenza (flu) vaccination clinic at their school or another site in the community.

Last year, 83 children died from influenza-related diseases. Children are attacked by the flu more frequently than any other age group! *Let's Fight Flu Together!*

National PTA and Flu Busters have joined together to fight the spread of influenza through a program designed to educate, motivate, and vaccinate - children, families, school staff, and other members of the community.



Call 1(866)782-3014 or visit <http://www.flubusters.com/pta.html> for more information.

**Missouri PTA
Report of the 2009 Nominating Committee
July 11, 2009**

The Nominating Committee met on Saturday, July 11, 2009, in Liberty, Missouri. All members of the committee were present. After due deliberations the committee has submitted the following nominees for consideration; all nominees have consented to serve if elected. Turn to page 12 for nominees' biographical information.

President-Elect	Donna Petiford
Vice President of Legislation & Advocacy	Stephanie Miller
Vice President of Membership Services	Shelly Throckmorton
Vice President of Field Service	Pat Brune
Vice President of Programs	Jennifer Casey
Vice President of Communications	Dorothy Gardner
Treasurer	Patty Buckholz
Secretary	Kim Weber

Nominating Committee Members:

Donna Petiford
Patty Buckholz, Chair
Dorothy Gardner
Mark Kempf
Shelly Throckmorton

Cover photo:

Front Cover - Nixa Council
PTA's Hooked on PTA Float

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CONTACT Staff

President/Publisher Mary Oyler

Editor Dorothy Gardner

Graphic Designer Olivia Gill

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

President's Message *By Mary Oyler, Missouri PTA President*

"Many things we need can wait. The child cannot. Right now is the time his bones are being formed, his blood is being made and his senses are being developed. To him we cannot say 'Tomorrow'. His name is today."

Gabriela Mistral

Almost two years ago, I shared this quote in my first message as president of Missouri PTA. I can hardly believe that two years have gone by so quickly. What a wonderful term this has been – I have had the opportunity to work with excellent advocates for our children – not only on your state board but with many local leaders and members as well as educational leaders across the state and to each of you I say 'Thank You' for all you do.

Legislation passed to declare the second week of September "Parent and Family Involvement in Education Week" in Missouri. We passed a resolution titled "Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Management in Schools" and watched Missouri Legislators pass legislation that requires each school district to adopt a policy on allergy prevention and response with priority given to addressing potentially deadly food-borne allergies. Not only are we making a difference in Missouri but our resolution was adopted by the national PTA and will now become a priority at the national level. Many of our school districts have passed levy and bond issues with the help of their PTA advocates over the past two years insuring that our schools will have a much better opportunity of providing quality teachers and safe environments in which our children may learn.

Missouri PTA has worked hard to train local leadership and provide the materials and support needed to lead local school communities into an era where Family-School Partnerships are a reality Today – not a dream for the future. Communities where: families feel welcome; communication is regular and meaningful; everyone is supporting student success; families are empowered to speak up for all children; families and schools share the decision making; and there is effective collaboration between the schools, families and the community. When parents, teachers,

administrators and community members work together Today to make sure that all of these components are in place in school communities, there is no doubt that our children will succeed.

Missouri PTA is working to develop partnerships and collaboration with various groups across Missouri to further the cause of the importance of parent and family involvement. As these partnerships develop, we will be able to provide our units with many more tools to help families and children succeed. Stepping into this new era is exciting and I am looking forward to watching your new leadership move forward.

James H. Shelton, Assistant Deputy Secretary for Innovation and Improvement with the Federal Department of Education, spoke at the national convention and urged all parents to make themselves aware of the federal stimulus money coming into our states for education and to make sure that the money goes towards a clear and coherent plan to help our schools succeed. He also stated that parents are the most powerful force in America and that, "We will not allow our children to fail." I challenge each of you to continue your advocacy to make this statement true Today and far into the future as we work Together to make every child's potential a reality.

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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or 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, MO PTA 800-328-7330

2009 Convention - Join Us There

Think your unit cannot afford to send officers to convention this year?

The truth is, now more than ever, PTA leaders cannot afford to MISS convention.

Why? Because most of the challenges your units are currently facing, are ones that Missouri PTA has also dealt with and can offer tailored solutions.

Conflict resolution, budget, membership, Reflections, and leadership are just a small representation of the topics that we will cover in workshops. If you have questions about a specific issue, there will be someone at convention who can answer it.

Besides that, your ideas and input are valuable tools that other units (in addition to Missouri PTA) need to

hear! That is what makes convention so valuable - the exchange of ideas.

For units that have not been to convention in a few years, a DVD was sent to your President in the "Call to Convention" packet. That DVD shows a snippet of what happens at convention. Be sure to watch it and share it with your members because they also are invited to come to convention and take advantage of the countless parenting and education resources available.

If you are serving in a leadership role with your PTA, please consider that the members of your unit deserve to have the most highly trained leaders possible. Missouri PTA's 2009 convention will provide that training as well as support and guidance.

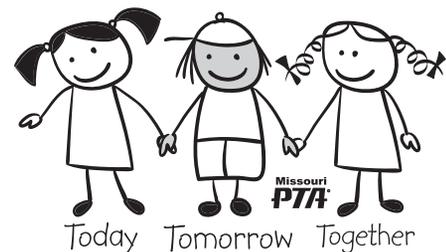
Please join us on October 23-25, 2009

in Springfield for our annual convention and take advantage of this extraordinary opportunity to serve your PTA. If you have any questions, please call the state office or email ErinP@MOPTA.org.

Plan and be sure to budget funds to attend convention TODAY.

Bring your ideas, inspiration and questions to Springfield TOMORROW.

We'll work to find solutions that will enhance the lives of our children better, TOGETHER.



KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



As the National PTA CEO, **Byron V. Garrett** possesses the same vision and passion that drove the PTA founders to speak up for every child for the first time. Throughout his career, he has been an agent of progress—valuing people of varying perspectives and backgrounds, and promoting the idea that everyone has an obligation and opportunity to serve the best interests of our youth.

Formerly, Garrett served as a columnist for the Arizona Informant and author of several books including *The ABC's of Life*. An accomplished speaker, Garrett is one of the most compelling voices of our time, having delivered presentations all across the U.S., Europe, Africa, and the Caribbean. He has also been a guest on the "Dr. Phil Show," and been featured in a number of publications, such as the Wall Street Journal, USA

Today, and Jet. In 2009, *Ebony* named Garrett to its "Power 150," an annual list of "The Most Influential Black Americans."

Our National PTA CEO will captivate you with both his personality and passion for the PTA cause. Have you ever wondered if all the work, time and effort you put into your own PTA ventures were worth it? Be sure to catch Garrett's power presentation. Find out why we need 'and then some's' and leave feeling proud and excited to be apart of PTA.

Join Byron Garrett Friday 8:45 - 9:30 on October 23rd at our "Ask PTA" Town Hall Meeting.



Janette E. Fennell is the founder and president of KidsAndCars.org, a national nonprofit organization that works to prevent

injury and death to children in non-traffic events. Janette learned that being locked in a car trunk was a horrific ordeal; but her second ordeal was convincing the powerful auto industry and Federal government that trunk entrapment was a significant problem. Her four-year successful crusade to make car trunks escapable is an excellent case study in the power of survivors to change public policy. While working on the issue of trunk entrapment, she learned about many other dangers children are exposed to when left alone in or around a motor vehicle.

Ms. Fennell is sought out as an expert in the non-traffic field and has appeared on programs such as Good Morning America, Dateline, Oprah, NPR, the TODAY Show, CNN, and NBC Nightly News.

DON'T FORGET...

Early Bird Awards

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

These awards go to Units that send in the HIGHEST MEMBERSHIP based upon last year's TOTAL MEMBERSHIP to the state office **POSTMARKED ON OR BEFORE October 2, 2009.**

Be a Winner!
Get those membership dues sent in.

YOU MAY BE A WINNER!

Join the PTA **TEAM.**

Leaders Project

Do you qualify for the Leaders Project award? All applications must be postmarked by September 15th to meet this year's deadline. All awardees will be honored during our annual convention. So dig out those Leaders Project cards and get them sent in today!

Box Tops Moves to Office Supplies

Avery products has joined the Box Top for Education revolution! Check the back of all your Avery office and school supplies for Box Tops. Every Box Tops adds up to \$\$\$ for your school.



Parenting Magazine and PTA

Starting in September, Parenting magazine will be partnering up with PTA for a new Parenting School Years edition. Through a Mom Congress initiative and input from PTA this edition of Parenting Magazine is designed to inform and inspire parents. Look for articles from current issues facing parents to tips on speaking up. Parenting Magazine has also signed up to be the media sponsor for the 40th anniversary of the Reflections Program. In addition for every new subscription to Parenting School Years by PTA members \$1 will be donated back to National PTA.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW UNITS!!

Parkview High School PTSA

Staley High School Falcon Booster Club PTSA

Holy Cross PTA

Hogan Preparatory Academy PTSA

Indian Trails Elementary PTA

University Academy Upper School PTSA

Park Hill Early Childhood PTA

Ethel H. Lyle Academy Lower PTA

Sunset Valley Elementary PTA

Bell Prairie PTA

Kellybrook PTA

National Resolutions

In addition to Missouri's Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Management in Schools (see page 5), the following resolutions were adopted during the National PTA convention: Dangers of Alcoholic Energy Drinks, Child Trafficking and Education on the Dangers of Tobacco Use and Secondhand Smoke. Passing a resolution is just the first step. It is up to us to move forward by increasing awareness and informing our members, local & state leaders and the community at large as to our positions. Visit www.pta.org for more information on these and other national resolutions.

MADD Website

MADD will launch this fall a new web site feature to increase membership by reaching out to parents who might not otherwise seek out MADD resources on their own. The intention is to open up meaningful dialogue and develop ongoing communication. The new web site features include: online forums to talk to other parents, ask the expert online, effective strategies for your community. Visit madd.org to sign up and receive updates on parent initiatives. Be part of the solution!



Membership “Philosophies” OR THINGS TO CONSIDER

By Shelly Throckmorton, Membership Emphasis Chair

- Have you shared PTA Purposes and Mission with members & potential members? Or does your PTA “story” end at the school doors?
- Do you take advantage of PTA’s reproducible materials to maintain contact with members?
- Is the PTA logo prominently displayed in your communications with your members and community?
- How do you thank members?
- How often does your PTA communicate with members each year without asking for something?
- Do your members realize they’re automatically members of Missouri PTA and National PTA when they join your local unit?
- How do you decide budget priorities (i.e. where PTA \$ is spent)? Do members have input?
- What have you and your PTA done for your members lately? Do they know about it?
- What is your membership renewal rate – what percentage of last year’s members re-join, excluding those who’ve left the school?
- Why don’t members renew? How do you know?
- Can you cite a position taken, or resolution adopted, by your council, state or National PTA in the last 12 months? If not, how can your members know where their association stands.
- When does your membership recruitment and retention program end? (There is ONE correct answer that is not a month.)
- Does your PTA unit send at least one delegate to the annual Missouri PTA and/or National PTA conventions? Do you have a delegate who attends your local council meeting (if applicable)? Is your unit represented at the annual district meeting?
- How does your PTA determine topics of interest for meetings, workshops, seminars and programs?
- What drives your PTA income – the amount of membership support or the amount you take in from fundraising?

Do you have answers for all these questions? If not, now is the time to start incorporating these “philosophies” into your unit’s activities. Remember...by using some of the answers to these questions, you also provide the opportunity for your members to understand they belong to a larger community of people concerned about their children’s education. As members of the largest volunteer child advocacy association in the nation, we provide parents and families with a powerful voice to speak on behalf of every child and provide the best tools to help their children be safe, healthy, and successful - in school and in life.

NPTA Member Benefits

- **BARNES & NOBLE.com** – PTA members will save 5% from this discounted online bookstore on books, music, DVD’s and more.
- **MEDICALERT** - PTA members receive a 20% discount for the MedicAlert Kid Smart® program, providing 24-hour child ID and caregiver notification services. In an 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.

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.

10 WAYS TO INCREASE YOUR PTA MEMBERSHIP

1. *START* your membership drive early. Set a realistic goal and don’t give up until you pass the goal!
2. *HOLD* a “Membership Kick-Off” event - make it festive and fun!
3. *SPONSOR* a PTA “open house” before school opens in the fall to visit classrooms, meet teachers and join PTA.
4. *MAKE* a list of some of the things members get with their PTA membership and use as a handout or poster.
5. *ASK* the Chamber of Commerce to encourage local businesses to display posters for joining PTA as school begins in the fall.
6. *HAVE* a “new parent coffee get-together” for parents of kindergarten and first graders to deal with first day trauma and an opportunity to join PTA.
7. *INCLUDE* information that goes home to parents at the beginning of school that includes last year’s PTA accomplishments along with this year’s goals and plans.
8. *USE* every talent available to promote membership. Ask a journalist to help with letters and articles, an artist for posters, sketches and logos, businesses for access to a copy machine, etc. Put a “Help Wanted” ad for talent in your newsletter.
9. *PRODUCE* a calendar for members with PTA and school activities clearly displayed.
10. *COUNCILS*: Ask the superintendent for a spot on the agenda of a principals’ meeting. Emphasize membership and strength in numbers district wide.

Conducting a Meeting

By Dr. Leonard M. Young, Professional Registered Parliamentarian

One of the most frequent questions I receive as a Professional Registered Parliamentarian is, “How do I plan a meeting correctly and what should be included in the agenda?”

Unit and council presidents will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their meetings if they simply follow a standard basic outline for planning and conducting a meeting. The following is based on guidance given to presiding officers in *Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised* (10th Edition).

1. CALL TO ORDER

(Start on time. The president checks to be sure that a quorum is present. Raps once with gavel, says: “*The meeting will come to order.*” Wait quietly for order.)

2. OPENING CEREMONIES

(Optional. May consist of Invocation, Flag Ceremony, etc.)

3. INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

(Chair introduces guests from most important to least important, if any. Optional.)

4. ROLL CALL

(Rarely used. Some organizations have a roll call of officers. Secretary calls roll and it is recorded in the Minutes. Optional.)

5. READING AND APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

(Minutes, not printed and distributed, are read by the Secretary, and are approved by general consent, the motion being assumed by the chair, either as read or printed or as corrected.)

6. REPORTS OF OFFICERS

(The President or Vice President may make a report from time to time in relation to administrative duties.)

A. Correspondence

(Secretary reads first from whom the letter has come. Summarize information when possible. Any action required, taken immediately; example-resignation.)

B. Treasurer’s Report

(At regular meetings, very brief. After questions, it is filed. At annual meeting, very detailed and already audited. Auditor’s report is adopted, not the Treasurer’s report.)

7. REPORT OF EXECUTIVE BOARD

(Read by Secretary, generally for information only. Contains all action taken by the Board. If recommendations included, Secretary makes motion to implement, and action taken immediately.)

8. REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

(Made in order listed in bylaws. Chair calls on only those with reports to make. If recommendations included, chairman or reporting member makes motion to implement, any action taken immediately.)

9. REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES

(Called upon in order they were appointed, and only those prepared or required to report. Recommendations handled as in ITEM 8. If committee makes its final report, its work is completed and it goes out of existence automatically.)

10. SPECIAL ORDERS

(Items of business postponed from a previous meeting or earlier in the current meeting by a 2/3rds vote are special orders and are taken up before other general business. Also matters required by the bylaws to be taken up at a specific meeting such as election of officers are special orders.)

11. UNFINISHED BUSINESS AND GENERAL ORDERS

(Chair announced this item; does not call for it. Consists of business left unfinished at previous meeting or business postponed to this meeting

by a majority vote, if the organization meets at least quarterly.)

12. NEW BUSINESS

(Chair calls for new business. This is the members’ opportunity to bring before the organization items in which they are interested. Must fall within the objects of the organization as provided in the bylaws. The main motion is used to introduce items of new business.)

13. PROGRAM

(Chair calls upon the Program Chairman who presents the program; the chair does not turn the meeting over to this chairman, merely assigns him the floor. Chair remains in control of meeting from call to order to adjournment. Optional)

14. ANNOUNCEMENTS

(Optional)

15. ADJOURNMENT

(Chair asks: “*Is there further business to come before the assembly?*” If there is, it is handled. If not, the chair says: “*There being no further business to come before the assembly, the meeting is adjourned.*” The chair does not need to call for a motion to adjourn from the assembly. He simply declares the meeting adjourned when there is no further business.)

Missouri’s Resolution is Adopted by NPTA

By Denise McCarter, Missouri PTA Resolutions Chairman

On June 28, 2009, the National PTA adopted the resolution “Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Management in Schools”. This resolution originated within Missouri State PTA and was adopted at the Missouri State Convention in October of 2008. Missouri PTA is very proud to have brought this important issue into the national scope of PTA.

Food allergies are a growing concern in our schools. The prevalence of food allergies among children in the United States has increased substantially with the incidence of peanut allergies doubling over a recent five-year period. An anaphylactic reaction can be life threatening, and parents, schools and PTAs need to be aware and educated about the prevention and treatment of anaphylactic reactions. To see the resolution in its entirety, visit www.mopta.org or www.pta.org.

If there is an issue that you are aware of that may need to be addressed by Missouri PTA, please consider writing a resolution. There are resources and instructions on the Missouri PTA website or you may contact denisem@mopta.org. In 1897, PTA was founded on the principles of advocacy for children and continues to focus on the well being of children and youth. You can make a difference in the lives of Missouri’s children by becoming involved in the resolution process of Missouri PTA.

Missouri PTA delegates attend the 2009 National PTA convention



Be An Advocate

FROM THE 2009 NATIONAL PTA LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE WITH ADDITIONAL STATE INFORMATION

Added by Donna Petiford, Missouri PTA, VP Legislation & Advocacy

What is advocacy?

PTA defines advocacy as supporting and speaking up for children—in schools, in communities, and before legislative bodies and other organizations that make decisions affecting children.

What an advocate does

A child advocate works with policy makers (at the federal, state, and local levels) to ensure sound policies that promote the health and well being of all children.

How to advocate

Ways for PTA leaders and members to influence policy:

- Join **Missouri PTA Legislative Network** to keep up on state policies and respond to state legislative action alerts <http://www.mopta.org> (LEGISLATION tab)
- Educate members of Congress and their staff on PTA's federal public policy priorities
- Educate state decision makers and their staff on Missouri PTA Resolutions and Position Statements
- Serve on school boards or attend board meetings
- Work with schools to develop parent involvement policies
- Attend a school district meeting about healthy lunch choices or budget cuts
- Work with education officials to implement PTA's National Standards for Family-School Partnerships
- Write a letter to the editor about the importance of parent involvement in children's education
- Write articles of information about PTA legislative issues for your PTA newsletter
- Attend federal policy workshops at National PTA Convention or National PTA Legislative Conference
- Attend Advocacy and Legislation workshops at Missouri PTA Convention, Leadership Conference, Regional Conference or School of Information
- Attend Resolution Briefing at Missouri PTA Convention

- Attend a Missouri PTA Legislative forum in your area (or contact Missouri PTA about hosting a legislative forum in your area)
- Host an elected official at your school
- Work on a committee within your PTA to develop a resolution to be submitted to Missouri PTA Convention delegates
- Distribute National PTA, Missouri PTA and local school district information to your members and discuss policy issues at your PTA meetings

Advocacy Resources Available on the Worldwide Web and From Missouri PTA

- **National PTA Takes Action Network:** http://www.pta.org/take_action.asp
 - *PTA Takes Action: Federal Policy Update*
 - *PTA Public Policy Agenda*
 - *PTA Takes Action Alerts*
 - *PTA Resolutions and Positions*
 - *Advocacy 101*
 - *Advocacy Toolkit*
 - *Advocacy Guidelines*
 - *Advocacy Resources (PTA Policy Issue Cards; Targeting Decision Makers; Tips for Effective Advocacy; Coalitions)*
- **National Legislative Conference: PTA.org/national_legislative_conference.asp**
- **National PTA E-Learning:** http://www.pta.org/e_learning.asp *E-Learning-Effective Advocacy for Your Child-* This course that will guide you in taking action on issues that affect your child and school community (username and password are on the back of your current PTA membership card).
- **Federal Legislative Bills:** <http://thomas.loc.gov>
- **US Department of Education:** <http://www.ed.gov>
- **Government Guides and Information Pamphlets:** <http://www.gpo.gov>
- **Missouri General Assembly:** www.moga.mo.gov
- **Missouri PTA Legislation tab:** www.mopta.org
- **Missouri PTA Toolkit-summer mailing**
- **Missouri PTA Legislative Handbook-winter mailing**

What does an advocate look like?

Well all have various levels of understanding when it comes to advocacy--everything from novice to expert. Before you go any further, clear your mind of any pre-conceived, complicated ideas you may have about advocacy.

Just start with this question: whom do you know that is an effective advocate?

The most effective advocates many of us know are children!

Why are children effective advocates? Because they:

- are not afraid to ask for what they want.
- are persistent.
- are able to appeal to your emotional side.
- give you a variety of options to negotiate.
- will try to make it seem as if it was your idea all along!

Therefore, all of us know how to be advocates--we have been doing it throughout our lives!

Examples of PTA Advocacy in Action

PTA had a voice in government even before its (predominantly female) members could vote. The National Congress of Mothers was a leading voice in lobbying for child health and safety issues. Their efforts were instrumental in establishment of:

- the Children's Bureau of the U.S. Public Health Service
- the passage of the 1906 Food and Drug Act, which revolutionized our nation's food industry, and
- the enforcement of child labor laws.

Some of PTA's most significant gains in legislation as a result of lobbying and advocacy involve child labor laws, public health services, school meals programs, the juvenile justice system, mandatory immunizations, and child vehicle safety seats, among others.

Consider adding a legislation chair to your board this year. It's never too late to appoint a valuable new member to your board; chairs do not have to be elected. Just pick someone who likes to stay up-to-date on current events and is passionate about helping children.

From the National PTA E-Learning Course *Effective Advocacy for Your Child* http://www.pta.org/e_learning.asp

Yes You Must File a 990 Tax Form

By Pat Brune, MO PTA Treasurer

The IRS changed its' 990 tax law last year so now **EVERY UNIT** must file a 990 regardless of your what your gross receipts were. So you need to look in your bylaws to find out when your fiscal year ends. Then you have 5 months and 15 days after the close of your fiscal year to file a 990 with the IRS. And treasurers this is a duty of yours. If you are leaving office please fill out the 990 form before you turn the books over to the new treasurer. It's much easier for you to fill these forms out then for the new treasurer.

If you unit grossed less then \$25,000 in annual receipts they can file the 990-N (e-postcard) electronically. This means that you never took in more then \$25,000, not what you have in your checking account. If you have given a monthly report at each meeting and completed your annual financial report then you have all the numbers you need to file out this form. And the total for revenue will be below \$25,000.

Steps for filing the 990-N (e-postcard): go to <http://epostcard.form990.org> website and choose Step 1: Register as a new User. This will give you a login ID. Click 'next' and select 'exempt organization' and enter your EIN (Employer Identification Number). You can find this on old tax forms or on the local unit information sheet sent to your president over the summer. Click 'next' and on this page you will create a password and fill in your information. Please use the schools address and not your own. Once this is completed you will receive an email containing an activation link. Open your email form epostcard@urban.org. Click on the link in the email to activate and use you login ID and password. Your login and password will appear. Print this off and keep in a safe place.

Step 2: Create your Form 990-N (e-postcard). Fill in your fiscal year - Beginning and ending dates. (*If you have ever changed this in your bylaws but never filled out a new IRS form to let them know, you will be informed that they have a different fiscal year. You will then need to complete a form

and send in a copy of bylaws with your new dates. This may take a while but once this is complete you can finish filling out the 990-N.) Answer 'No' to has your organization terminated or gone out of business. 'Yes' to Are your gross receipts normally \$25,000 or less. Then it asks for your PTA's legal name (from Bylaws) and your EIN number again. The next page is Organization Address and Principal Officer Information. DBA means doing business name. If your PTA goes by any other name then the legal bylaws name. Use your schools address as the organizations mailing address. Then fill in current officers names and addresses. And if your unit has a website enter it.

Step 3: Submit your Form 990-N (e-postcard) Click the 'submit filing to IRS' after checking to make sure everything is correct before you send. It will take you to 'Congratulations, your Form 990-N (e-postcard) has been submitted to the IRS'. Once the IRS receives and processes your e-postcard (usually within 30 days), you will receive an email indicating whether your e-postcard was accepted or rejected. If accepted, you are done for the year. Copy this page and send to the Missouri State PTA office by Dec. 1st. If rejected, the e-filing receipt email will contain instructions on how to correct the problem. At the bottom of this page you can either click 'log out' or go to 'filing status page'.

PLEASE COPY YOUR EMAIL FROM THE IRS THAT STATES THEY HAVE

ACCEPTED YOUR E-POSTCARD. This is your record and you need to make copies for the treasurer's, president's and secretary's books. Also send a copy to the Missouri State Office with your audit (annual financial review) and annual financial report (year end report) by Dec. 1st to be a unit in good standing.

Form 990-EZ has a few changes for this year. The dollar thresholds for the Form 990-EZ filers have been raised to allow many more organizations to file a Form 990-EZ. Several new lines have been added that reflect the revision of Schedule A for Forms 990 & 990-EZ. Several unstructured attachments have been replaced by schedules or eliminated.

The gross receipts and total assets amounts for Form 990-EZ filers have been raised. You may file a 990-EZ for 2008 tax year (filed in 2009) if gross receipts are less then \$1 million and total assets are less then \$2.5 million. They have also replaced Schedule A with a new Part VI and schedules. This new form is a lot easier.

If you have any questions regarding either of these forms please fill free to contact me.

Pat Brune
Missouri State Treasurer
816-880-0412
patb@mopta.org



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Doing PTSA Well

By Mark Kempf, MO PTA Student Involvement Chair

People want information about PTSA. Actually, people need information about PTSA. People need to know things like why does PTSA exist; why do we want to include students; how do we best involve students on our boards; how do students get involved with PTSA. Obviously, there is a lot of information needed about PTSA.

In an attempt to provide our members with some of this information, I began my research with the National PTA website, pta.org. Unfortunately, while the National PTA web site is overflowing with great information for PTA unit, there is surprising lack of information available concerning PTSA and the involvement of students. Apparently here in Missouri we are on the leading edge of recognizing and truly respecting the benefit of including student leaders in our PTSA activities.

Here in Missouri PTA, we believe that students are a valuable resource to our PTSA

units. We believe that when given the opportunity student leaders are capable of providing insight into what is going on in our schools that we would not see ourselves. We believe that student PTSA leaders deserve the same quality of leadership training that all of our members receive. We believe that the "S" in PTSA really does stand for students as a real and integral part of our efforts to work towards the goals of PTA.

The students I have spoken with at recent PTA training events often speak of the same difficulties, most of which boil down to "How do we get the adults to include us". The students express concern that meetings are held at a time when they are unable to attend, such as during the school day. The students express concern that they are included on the board roster, but with no real duty or responsibility. The students also express concern that their input is seldom heard, or even asked for.

If we are making decisions and plans for our children's school, who better to let us know what is really going on, and what the needs and wants of the student population than members of that student population. If we refuse to hear them, how do we know we are truly addressing the REAL needs?

Since MOPTA and its PTSA units are apparently on the leading edge of PTSA involvement, let's do this right. I challenge all of our PTSA units to take a serious look at how you are involving the students in the business of your unit. Are your student leaders given a REAL voice? Are your student leaders given a fair opportunity to take advantage of leadership training opportunities? Let's show National that we truly recognize the advantage our student leaders are capable of providing to our PTSA units. We'll make them take notice.

Hope to see you all, and especially your students, at the MOPTA fall convention.

Regional Directors...WHAT ARE THEY?

By Linda Wansing, RD Pony Express Region

Has your PTA ever set out to accomplish a terrific program and wondered if you have covered all your bases? Have you ever looked at your treasurer's report and wondered what exactly you needed to include on the report? Have you ever just had a question regarding some aspect of PTA?

If you have ever found yourself in one of these situations, do not worry. Your Regional Director is only a phone call away. Missouri PTA has divided the state into regions. Within each of these regions, you will find individuals who are there to assist you in your day to day activities with PTA. These individuals are commonly referred to as RD's - (Regional Directors).

RD's are located throughout the state and are assigned to Councils and Units within their territories. Regional Directors work closely with individual units to help answer questions they have regarding operations. An RD can answer your questions regarding your unit, what is happening on a state and national level, and help guide you toward the goals your unit has set out to accomplish. If your RD does not know the answer to a specific question, they know where to turn to find the answer for you.

You will see RD's throughout the state attending Council Meetings and Unit Meetings; they will be seen at legislative rallies and school board meetings, along with attending the Missouri PTA meetings, conferences and convention.

Your RD will contact the unit president at the beginning of each school year to let them know who they are and how to reach them. Your RD is there to assist you. They WANT to help you. Get to know your RD.... you will be glad you did!

Note: A list of Regional Directors and the area they cover was included in the Summer Bulk Mailing and is located on the MO PTA website, www.mopta.org.



Back to School Tips

By Peggy Preston, Missouri PTA Health/Wellness and Safety Chair

The beginning of a new school year is a very exciting time for the whole family. Making sure that kids get off to a good start is a priority for parents. A positive attitude and organization can be two keys to a successful year. In addition, the Kidsource website (www.kidsource.com/kidsource/content4/back.school.check.up.html) shares that the beginning of a new school year is a good time to:

*Review immunization records - Prudential HealthCare provides parents with tips and helpful guidelines on childhood immunizations available at www.prudential.com/healthcare. The site includes a childhood immunization schedule to see when each shot is required, an immunization record to keep track of shots received, and a true/false quiz to test your knowledge.

* Meet with the school nurse. If your child has a chronic condition like diabetes or asthma and needs to take medication during school hours, it's important to discuss your child's medical history. Give the nurse contact information for the pediatrician and/or family doctor. Plan a timetable for your child to take their medication and set up a reminder system so they won't forget.

* Stress the importance of routine physical activity with your child. Talk about sports they might be interested in during the school year or other ways to stay physically fit like simply joining a health club or gym. But don't forget to set a good example - exercise regularly yourself or with your children.

* Make sure your child eats a balanced diet. This consists of breads, cereals, pasta, and low-fat baked goods, fruits and vegetables, dairy foods (milk, cheeses, etc.), lean meats, poultry, fish, and low-fat snacks such as pretzels, graham crackers, or animal crackers instead of corn chips or potato chips. Keep healthy foods and snacks around the house. Be a good role model by eating the foods you want your child to eat. Don't forget to help your child get into the routine of eating a well-balanced breakfast, the most important meal of the day.

The National Association of School Psychologists website (www.nasponline.org/resources/home_school/b2shandout.aspx) suggests that you include clearing your schedule at the beginning of the school year. To the extent possible, postpone business trips, volunteer meetings, and extra projects. You want to be free to help your child acclimate to the school routine and overcome the confusion or anxiety that many children experience at the start of a new school year. You might consider making lunches the night before school together and setting the alarm clock with your child. It's always a good idea to send a

note to your child's teacher to let him/her know that you want to be a partner in your child's success.

Of course, you will want to join your local PTA and invite others to do so as well. It's a great way to get acquainted with other parents and staff members while working together to help out where needed. It's a great way to say "I care" for all the children in the school, too.

Annual Festival Gets "Hooked on PTA"

The Nixa PTA Council found a creative way to bring community attention to the school district's PTA units by creating a colorful float for the annual Sucker Day parade in May. A brainchild of council president Wendy Jackson, the float won first place and accolades from the many parade-goers. The Nixa PTA Council has nine units - five at each of the K-4th elementary buildings, one each at the two 5th-6th buildings, a junior high PTSA, and a high school PTSA. Volunteers from several of the units including children "built" the float by stuffing paper and sewing fabric on a wire-frame fish borrowed from the Bass Pro Shops. A sign proclaiming "Hooked on PTA" gave more recognition to the volunteers who walked with the float in the parade singing a special song written by the PTA Council secretary, Peggy Preston. Nixa Junior High PTSA vice president Julie Ross reported that the PTSA students she brought had a great time participating with the other walkers. President Jackson said, "We are so proud of our great PTA units; they do so many wonderful things for our students each year." She believed that the best part of this project was the way parents and students from various units worked together and had fun while doing it. The PTAs and the school district work closely together as well. The Nixa PTA Council is also a member of the Nixa Chamber of Commerce.



“Beauty Is...” a Successful Reflections Year!

By Toni Wiechmann, Reflections Chair

“Beauty Is...” is the Reflections theme for the 2009-2010 school year and with all of the back-to-school events and plans, there are several things to keep in mind when planning your Reflections year:

1. The 2009-2010 Reflections Tool Kit has an extensive set of rules required by National and Missouri PTA. Even though there are many requirements, please make sure your students have access to those that apply to their intended art category. Units can post the complete rules in a central location at the school and then direct students and parents to the Missouri PTA website to view or download the Reflections information themselves. This will help eliminate copying every tool kit page for every student participating. It is not a good idea to summarize the rules in a generic way; the students and parents need to read every part of the art category requirements so they avoid missing vital instructions and possible disqualification at the state level. Many of our disqualifications are the result of not having or not reading the rules.

2. Be a Unit in Good Standing! Talk to your unit President/Board to make sure your unit is completely in good standing and this is something that takes time to do, so give your Board sufficient time to complete if needed. Our rules state that each unit must be in good standing and the deadline for that, with respect to the Reflections program, is the day the artwork is due at the state office...Friday, January 15, 2010. We download a list of all units in good standing on that date and disqualify all entries from units that have not met this requirement.

3. Talk to your unit/building principals and teachers to promote the Reflections program. Many aren't aware of this program or how it can benefit what their classroom curriculum is already doing. But avoid suggesting that Reflections is an assignment for the students in class. Doing so creates similar artwork from one unit and does not encourage individual creativity. If your teachers and administration are supportive in promoting your own program, this will be the biggest benefit to the success of your program.

4. As the unit Reflections chair offer to host an informative Reflections program workshop at your next unit or council meeting as soon as possible. Inviting parents, teachers, students, and staff to attend will increase the exposure to the program but also bring in more attendees to your meetings. Be sure to make this an interactive, question and answer type of session!

5. Encourage your students to participate in selecting future years' themes. In our tool kit, there is a form for units to copy and send out to students so that they help determine Reflections themes. Reflections is truly a student driven, student oriented program, and we want their ideas!

6. Missouri PTA listens to you! This year we are allowing each unit to submit 3 entries for each grade division that the unit represents, and in every art category. Now, for example, if your unit is a K-6 school, you can feasibly send in 3 Primary, 3 Intermediate, and 3 Middle/Junior pieces of artwork for all 6 art categories! Yes, that's a lot of potential artwork from one unit coming in for state competition but it is also more opportunity for students to excel and we all do this for the students! Missouri PTA has opened the floodgates for all of your students' artwork!

7. Please pay attention to the details. One of our biggest rule violations we have seen recently is in the Dance Choreography and Film Production categories. The tool kit states that the DVDs must be saved in a file format, not as a DVD movie. Entries that arrive at the state level saved as a DVD movie are disqualified. Missouri PTA does not have the time, or technology, to convert those entries not in compliance to the correct format. Nor is it fair to other artists who have followed the rules correctly, to alter the submissions of those who have not. Missouri PTA has however, requested that National PTA review its policy regarding this but the requirements for this year are as stated in the 2009-2010 Reflections Tool Kit. Many rule changes over time have come about due to changes in technology, so please watch carefully every year for changes in all categories

but especially those involving any type of electronic or computerized equipment.

8. As the Reflections Chair, you are responsible for making sure the Student Entry Forms and all other required paperwork is submitted correctly and in its entirety. At the state level, we see forms with missing information including parental signatures and missing Reflections Chair or unit information, and we have artwork submitted with missing forms. With the hundreds of artwork received and the many pieces of paperwork we see, Missouri PTA does not have the time to call each unit or student to complete missing information. And we need to reach you if we do have questions so include your complete contact information on every form.

9. The deadline for all artwork is Friday, January 15, 2010. Your unit must ship (or make other “travel” arrangements for) Reflections artwork so that it has arrived in our Missouri PTA office by 4:30pm on this date. We have a deadline that we must send in our state finalists to the National PTA office and our window of time has decreased over the last few years. Rather than shorten the deadline for the units, we have kept your timeframe approximately the same, but we now have our state Reflections committee working on that same weekend in Columbia to start the state judging process. If your unit's artwork isn't here by Friday afternoon, it cannot be included in the preliminary judging that occurs before the artwork is sent for final judging. We cannot add it in later and we will send it back to you if it's late. So remember, this isn't a “ship by” date/time; it's an “arrive by” date/time!!

10. Please call or email the Missouri PTA office with any questions or you can email me directly at toniw@mopta.org. We want you to have a successful Reflections year!

“BEAUTY IS...”

Member's Only Section of MoPTA Website

By Scott D. Jennings, Vice President, Communications

The best resource to find out information about PTA in Missouri, www.mopta.org, has recently gotten better with the introduction of a new Member's Only Section that was introduced at the Missouri PTA Leadership Conference in May.

As implied by the name, the Member's Only Section is a place where only Missouri PTA members can access certain Missouri PTA information that is typically mailed out to local and council PTA presidents throughout the year. By making this information available to all Missouri PTA members, it is hoped that more people will have access to the tools necessary to become more effective leaders.

Any Missouri PTA member can access the Member's Only Section by using the Members Login area that pops up on the home page. Just enter the username and the password that is on the back of your national PTA membership card at the Members Login. Once you have logged in, you can access the information in the Members Only section by accessing the PTA Members Section icon that is at the top of the home page.

In the Member's Only Section there are five headers – Tools, Programs, Workshops, Most Recent Mailing, and MoPTA Bylaws. As a current and future leader, you can utilize the information in these sections to your benefit.

Again, this is just another service that Missouri PTA is making available to our members. We hope that you use it and it benefits your leadership endeavors at the local and council levels. After all, your efforts are the vital link to success in your local PTA and we want to make your experience the best it can be.

The Member's Only Section is just one more way for that to happen.

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Mark Your Calendar

SEPTEMBER

- National Preparedness Month
- Baby Safety Month
- 1 Dues to State Office
- 1 Deadline for Advocacy Through Leadership Award
- 6-13 Missouri Parent & Family Involvement in Education Week
- 7 Labor Day
- 7 Missouri PTA Office Closed
- 11 National Healthy Lifestyles Grant Deadline
- 13 Grandparents Day
- 15 Deadline for Certified PTA Leader Application
- 17 Constitution Day
- 21 Convention Registration
- 21 Convention Hotel Reservation Deadline
- 22 Fall Begins

OCTOBER

- Breast Cancer Awareness Month
- 1 Dues to State Office
- 2 Deadline for Early Bird Award
- 2 National Custodial Workers Day
- 7 Walk to School Day
- 12-16 National School Lunch Week
- 17-25 Red Ribbon Week
- 18-24 America's Safe School Week
- 18-24 National Character Counts Week
- 19-23 National School Bus Safety Week
- 23-25 **Missouri PTA State Convention in Springfield**

NOVEMBER

- PTA Healthy Lifestyles Month
- 1 Dues to State Office
- 11 Veteran's Day
- 19 National Parent Involvement Day
- 26 Thanksgiving

DECEMBER

- Winter Packet & Legislative Handbook Mailed to Units
- 1 Dues to State Office
- 1 AIDS Awareness Day
- 1 Audit Report (Annual Financial Review) Due to State Office
- 1 Copy of IRS 990 or 990-N to State Office

2009 Election of Officers for Missouri PTA

Missouri PTA elects officers at the state convention during odd numbered years, an election is due this year. In accordance with the state bylaws a nominating committee was formed and it gathered information on all qualified members. The committee weighed the facts and after deliberation submits the following slate of officers for your consideration. All nominees have agreed to serve if elected.



President-Elect Donna Petiford has been nominated for the office of President-Elect. Donna is from Springfield and brings eleven years of PTA experience. She has served with the Board of Managers in the positions of Regional Director, State Legislative Chair and most

recently as Vice President of Legislation and Advocacy. As vice president Donna has worked with closely with Missouri legislators including testifying before the Missouri House and advocating for Missouri's children with US congressmen in Washington. Donna has extensive experience at the local level, most recently as president of Springfield Council, which works with 51 units in the Springfield School District. In her personal life Donna is on hiatus from the banking industry.



Vice President-Dept of Field Service Pat Brune has been nominated for the office of Vice President-Department of Field Service. Pat has been in PTA for 15 years, has held numerous local and council offices in Platte City Schools, Pony Express Region.

She has been with the Missouri PTA Board of Managers for eight years as Regional Director, State Bylaws and Procedures Chair and most recently as Treasurer. As Treasurer, Pat has had to assist units through the maze of new IRS 990 forms and other financial hazards. With this distinct background in field service, bylaws and treasurer Pat seems the natural go-to person to assist regional directors, units and councils throughout the state. By day Pat is a dental hygienist.



Secretary Kim Weber has been nominated for the office of Secretary. Kim has 14 years of PTA experience in Columbia in the Heritage region. She has held most elected offices as the unit and council levels, including president and secretary. She has served Missouri PTA

as Regional Director, Vice President-Department of Communications and most recently as Vice President-Department of Field Service. In this last VP position Kim has supported all of the regional directors and anyone in any unit or council who asked and has served as co-chair of the Leadership Conference. While not solving PTA problems she is the Surgery Pharmacy Coordinator at Boone Hospital Center.



Vice President-Dept of Legislation & Advocacy Stephanie Miller has been nominated for the office of Vice President-Department of Legislation and Advocacy. While Stephanie's tenure in PTA has been a relatively short four years, much of

her work has centered on legislative issues. She has served Missouri PTA as Regional Director and State Legislative Chair. As Legislative Chair she worked diligently with regional directors to organized Legislative Conferences all around the state. Stephanie is from Springfield and has a background in education and horse training.



Vice President-Dept of Programs Jennifer Casey has been nominated for the office of Vice President-Department of Programs. Jennifer comes from Blue Springs in the Three Trails Region and brings nine years of PTA experience to the office. She has had

numerous local positions including president at two units. She has been with Missouri PTA in the positions of Membership Emphasis Chair and Vice President-Department of Membership Services. As vice president, Jennifer has been instrumental in the state wide training and implementation of National PTA's OMDR requirement of National PTA. She has also been co-chair of the Leadership Conference the past three years. Jennifer and her husband own two local businesses, and she also serves on the Blue Springs Board of Education.



Treasurer Patty Buckholz has been nominated for the office of Treasurer. Patty has 22 year of experience in PTA in the Hickman Mills School District in Kansas City. In addition to too many chairs to remember, she has served as president for four local units and her

council (for two terms 8 years apart), and has served as treasurer multiple times for three units and the council. Patty has served on the Missouri PTA Board of Managers as the State Procedures and Bylaws Chair (4 years), Secretary and Administrative Assistant. She is a registered nurse and works in two elementary schools.



Vice President-Dept of Membership Services Shelly Throckmorton has been nominated for the office of Vice President-Department of Membership Services. Shelly has been involved with PTA for 14 years in numerous positions at the elementary, middle, high

school and council levels in Blue Springs in the Three Trails Region. While serving Missouri PTA these past two terms as Membership Emphasis Chair Shelly brought several innovations to inspire and reward units for their membership growth. In addition to PTA Shelly is co-owner of the family business and has a long history with Girls Scouts.



Vice President-Dept of Communications Dorothy Gardner has been nominated for the office of Vice President-Department of Communications. Dorothy has ten years of PTA experience and is from Liberty in the Pony Express region.

She has served as president of her council and has held many other positions at the local level. She has been with Missouri PTA as both Regional Director and editor of the *Contact* magazine. In her spare time Dorothy is CFO and co-owner of their family business.

PTA GIVES BACK

Each year we strive to pick one service project in order to give back to the community. This year donations will be collected for the Family Violence Center, Inc. A list of needed items can be found in your Call to Convention or at www.familyviolencecenter.org.

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- A well-informed leader is a more effective leader.
- Your input is needed as we make some by- law changes.
- Exhibitors will be on site to show you their ideas to help your unit. .
- Keynote speaker Janette Farrell has a critical message to share with us that can save lives.
- Registration price covers 4 meals, workshops, general meetings and convention tote bag.
- The installation of our new Missouri PTA President Wendy Jackson as well as a tribute to outgoing President Mary Oyler.



Today Tomorrow Together

Pre-Convention activities & workshops will take place Friday evening!

For more information visit MOPTA.ORG