

CONTACT

Volume 93, Issue 2
September 2011

Together





Missouri PTA Convention

October 14-16
Stoney Creek Inn
Columbia, MO

Think your unit can't afford to send officers to convention this year?

The truth is, now more than ever, PTA leaders **can't afford to miss convention**. Why? Because most of the challenges your unit is currently facing are ones that other units have been or will be dealing with. Missouri PTA has the experience to assist you and offer solutions tailored just for you.

Leadership, budget, membership, bylaws, Reflections, and bullying 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.

Plus, your ideas and input are valuable tools that other units as well as Missouri PTA need to hear! That is what makes convention so valuable—the exchange of ideas!

The members of your PTA deserve to have the most highly trained leaders possible and Missouri PTA's 2011 convention promises to give delegates that training as well as support and guidance.

Please plan to join us on October 14-16 in Columbia for our annual convention. ***Convention Registration and Hotel Reservation Deadline is September 23, 2011.*** If you have any questions, please call the state office or email pattyv@mopta.org.

Don't forget your membership card!

You must present your PTA membership card when attending Convention, so don't forget to bring it!

Cover photo:

Paige, Ellie, and Joey of Blue Springs head back to school.

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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



As president of Missouri PTA, I have had the opportunity to attend meetings of educational, social, and political natures. I have had the privilege of membership on committees that forced me to think outside of the box and stretched my mind out of necessity.

I have traveled throughout not only Missouri, but the United States. How can my mind be the same as it was before? This journey that we call a 'term of presidency' is just that, a journey. It has strengthened my beliefs. Some beliefs have had to change to fit my new knowledge and understanding. As my perception has increased of a great many things, I am still keenly aware of the needs that are still evident for PTA. Despite a long list of accomplishments in these last two years, I still feel frustration over the items that didn't make the list of successes. It denies me the right to feel fully satisfied. However, I must realize that Rome was not built in a day, and that nothing worth doing is not done without frustration, and time. As I leave office I take with me the knowledge there is not just another but a dozen, hundreds, who feel my same passion. These new leaders may not do as I have done. Just as times changed for me it will for them, these leaders will need to grow and adapt."

My wish for them is to be the best leader they know how to be. The depth of their commitment and the energy with which they exercise it will determine the success of this organization. As Alice Birney, one of our founders, once said when the PTA was new, "Let us have no more croaking as to what cannot be done; let us see what can be done, and above all, see that it is done." As a result of all of this, a united community was formed, in which group differences do not interfere with meeting the needs of every

child. A PTA where every member knows his opinion will be heard, regardless of whether you agree or disagree. A community that is aware of the PTA's efforts on behalf of every child, and a greater appreciation of diversity, its enrichment and its strength.

As my term concludes I leave with so many things, none greater than gratitude for the opportunity to serve our members, respect for those that have served before me, friends that I consider family, organization skills second to none, a keen awareness for where I have been, and the realization that there is still more to do.

Throughout my term as president you have seen the word "together" coupled with the Helen Keller quote "Alone we can do so little, but together we can do so much." I was keenly aware of the fact that I alone as president would not, or could not, do what needs to be done. That it would take all of us, from the executive board, the board of managers, our councils, our units, and our members to do what needs to be done to ensure that every child has the opportunity to reach their full potential, and to speak out for those who can not speak for themselves, our children and our future. I applaud you for all that you have done, and I ask that you remember that our work is not done. Just the same as it was 99 years ago when Missouri PTA was chartered, there are still children's issues that affect our schools, homes and places of worship. The need to secure adequate laws for the care and protection of youth is still evident today.

For those wishing to donate to the schools and families affected by the Joplin tornado, the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is recommending this organization, Missouri Kids helping Missouri Kids <http://dese.mo.gov/news/2011/documents/Kids4Kids.pdf>. Our thoughts and prayers are with Joplin.

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

What is PTA? And why?

By Betsy Landers, National PTA President



My answer to the first question is simple: PTA is you, it is me and it is every adult who loves and cares for every child. It is the foremost voice for improving the lives of children.

See, I came into PTA because of my love for my children. Like you, I wanted to provide for them a better future so they could grow up healthy and strong. Then I stayed in PTA because I found that I loved and cared about the futures of all children. I wanted as much for every child as I did for my own. If I don't help make a difference for children everywhere as I do for kids in my own neighborhood, then I haven't lived up to our creed of making life better for every child.

I know this is not true just for me. It is the reason why five million parents, grandparents, uncles, businessmen, teachers and other adults have united their voices into one. They want to keep the promise each of us makes to our children from birth: That their futures will be better than our present.

Like you, they know that our kids will not be able to compete for jobs in the global economy if they aren't given a high quality education.

Like you, they are dissatisfied with the levels of funding for schools and that per-pupil funding has not kept pace with levels on the mainland.

And like you, they are alarmed that far too many of our children are suffering from the ravages of obesity, diabetes and poor health.

As PTA members, we realize that when you bring caring adults together to tackle challenges with practical solutions, every child will have a brighter future. We understand that when we work with educators, businessmen and community leaders for the betterment of all children,

they will grow up happy, strong and well-educated. Then they will be able to open doors of opportunity to prosperity, both for themselves and for the neighborhoods and communities in which they live.

And we know this because of our success on behalf of our kids over the past 114 years.

When two of our founders, Alice McLellan Birney and Phoebe Apperson Hearst, saw children working in sweatshops and dying from the Whooping Cough, they rallied together other caring adults to help pass child labor laws and improve public health.

When another PTA founder, Selena Sloan Butler, saw how African-American children like her own couldn't attend a kindergarten in her own neighborhood in segregated Atlanta, she brought parents and teachers together to improve access and equity to education.

The mission Alice, Phoebe and Selena set out for every PTA member is simple and timeless. It has allowed PTA members to successfully tackle new problems that face new generations of our children.

When we saw how Polio crippled the lives and futures of millions, we worked together with caring adults and scientists such as Jonas Salk in order to develop vaccines and secure wellness for future generations.

When we saw southern segregationists bar children from school because of the color of their skin, we threw open the doors to civil rights leaders and others in order to secure equality of education for all of our boys and girls.

When children came to school hungry and malnourished, we threw open our doors and worked with farmers and national leaders to start the National School Lunch Program to provide hot, nutritious meals and keep kids focused on class work.

The benefits of our work for all children flow from our homes and schools into neighborhoods, communities, even across borders to the rest of the world. It

is why our kids eat hot, nutritious meals, no longer worry about dying from disease and can focus solely on learning.

Today, our PTA members continue to take on new challenges with powerful solutions—and open the doors to better lives for our kids.

Through our Urban Family Engagement Initiative, we are helping families in 15 cities—many of which are home to America's dropout factories—speak forcefully for improving the quality of education in their communities.

Our PTA Healthy Lifestyles grants helped more than 28,000 student and their families become healthier. Through Let's Fight Flu Together, we helped more than 500 schools immunize our kids from the flu so they wouldn't miss a day of learning.

We are bringing together business leaders, community groups, philanthropies and other institutions to make life better for our children. This includes our work with Nickelodeon to help parents get their kids ready for school.

Meanwhile we create resources for our schools and communities where there once was none. In 2009-2010 alone, our members generated more than \$1.3 billion dollars in fundraising and economic activity that would not have otherwise existed.

Think about what the futures of our children will look like once PTA and you work together. When caring adults like you join and work together with PTA, they are doing more than just joining the greatest advocate for children and families the world has ever known. They are opening the doors for each and every one of our boys and girls to grow up into happy, healthy, well-educated men and women.

Please know this: Our five million members are ready to help open doors to brighter futures for every child—both your own by birth and every kid in your hearts. Let's join together and open those doors for our kids today.

2011–13 Executive Committee Nominations

By Denise McCarter, Nominating Committee Chairman

The Missouri PTA Board of Managers elected the 2011 nominating committee at the March 2011 board meeting. The MOPTA Bylaws instruct the nominating committee to nominate qualified candidates for executive committee positions for the upcoming term, including the following: President Elect, Secretary, Treasurer, VP of Field Services, VP of Legislation, VP of Communications, VP of Membership and VP of Programs. The nominating committee is to include five members of the Board of Managers made up of two executive committee members and three members of the board. This year the nominating committee consisted of Barb Gilmore, Susan Rupert, Joanne Schwartz, Kim Weber and Denise McCarter. This committee has nominated the following individuals for the 2011- 2013 elected executive positions: Kim Weber (Columbia), President Elect; Linda Klender (Parkville),

Secretary; Shelly Throckmorton (Lee's Summit), Treasurer; Dorothy Gardner (Liberty), Vice-President of Legislation; Catherine Sweeny (Wentzville), Vice-President of Communications; Linda Wansing (Kansas City), Vice-President of Field Service; Susan Rupert (Turney), Vice-President of Membership; and Joanne Schwartz (Kansas City), Vice-President of Programs. The committee respectfully submits these candidates for election at the 96th Annual MOPTA Convention to be held in Columbia, MO on October 14-15, 2011.

All nominees have been contacted and agree to serve if elected. Turn to page 13 for the nominees' biographical information.

September is Childhood Obesity Month

By Dani Riley, Health & Safety/Juvenile Services Chair

In the last three decades, childhood obesity has tripled. Nearly 1 out of 3 children suffers from being overweight. By spending much more time in front of the TV, computer, or video games instead of outside playing, children are not getting in the exercise that they once got. As families become busier they tend to grab less nutritious meals on the run, eating out instead of making or choosing healthier meal options. Children ride the bus or parents take them to school instead of walking or riding their bikes. All in all children are not moving as they once did. A child is considered obese when he/she is 10% higher than what is recommended for their height and body type. Obesity not only has physical ramifications, but psychological ones as well.

Michelle Obama has unveiled the White House Obesity Initiative to tackle the problem, with the goal of solving the problem of childhood obesity within a generation. The First Lady's national campaign against childhood obesity called "Let's Move" is a comprehensive and coordinated initiative with many partners. The focus is to prevent childhood obesity. The campaign has four pillars: healthy schools, access to affordable and healthy food, raising children's physical activity levels, and empowering families to make healthy choices "For the first time, we want to tackle the obesity epidemic one child, one family, and one community at a time." Mrs. Obama said. "We want to marshal every resource- public and private sector, mayors and governors, parents

and educators, business owners and health care providers, coaches and athletes- to ensure that we are providing each and every child the happy, healthy future they deserve." Mrs. Obama has 5 steps for parents at home:

1. Keep a fresh bowl of fruit within your child's reach for a quick snack
2. Take a walk after dinner
3. Plan a menu for a week, get the kids involved in planning and cooking
4. Turn off the TV during dinner, have some family time
5. Talk to the principal about organizing a health team

Studies have shown that once a child is obese they seem to stay that way the rest of their lives. Check out letsmove.gov and see what our national leaders are starting. As PTA, let's get involved with this movement! Start by getting a health and wellness program started at our schools.

For more information about childhood obesity prevention, check out Pta.org for information and resources for the Healthy Lifestyles program.



Nickelodeon's Worldwide Day of Play – September 24

- Nickelodeon is inviting PTA members to join the Worldwide Day of Play on 9/24. Nickelodeon will suspend all programming to encourage everyone to get up, get out, & go play. Last year more than 100 PTAs planned their own events, & you can too! The event can be big, small, an hour long, or all day. All that matters is that kids play & have fun! To register and to download a planning guide, visit Nick.com/thebighelp.



All Pro Dads and iMoms

By Melissa Erickson, School Program Specialist, Family First



What if we told you we knew about a program that was FREE to PTA's and has a proven track record of growing membership? You would want to sign-up, right. Well, for over a year now Missouri PTA has been working with All Pro Dad and iMOM to do just that, start breakfast programs at schools that help parents and their kids connect and have meaningful conversations over a tasty breakfast. We would love to see more of our PTA schools start one or both programs. They are a great way to connect with families and show the value of PTA.

All Pro Dad's Day and iMOM Mornings are innovative breakfast programs you hold at your school where after a quick breakfast together parents and their children have an interactive discussion about such topics as, keeping a positive attitude, how they can team up for academic success, not judging others and much more. Best of all you can get all the materials you need to start these programs and host up to 10 meetings a year for FREE.

Missouri PTA President, Wendy Jackson, sent out a challenge last year to each PTA to start one or both of these programs at their school and more than 25 local units responded. We have heard nothing but good things from the units that have hosted and All Pro Dad's Day or iMOM Morning and we hope to hear from a lot more schools this year.

Go to www.allprodad.com or www.imom.com to learn more. If you decide to start a program use the promo-code PTA when you register and all fees will be waived for your school.

DONATIONS

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

Building Fund

Inman PTA of Nixa

Founder's Day Gift

Inman PTA of Nixa

Scholarship Fund

Inman PTA of Nixa
Red Bridge Elementary PTA

Reflections Changes!



As this issue went to press, Missouri PTA just learned of significant changes to the Reflections program that are being implemented for the 2011 – 2012 school year by National PTA. We are in the process of revising the Tool Kit that you received in your summer packet and will post it on the Missouri PTA website, in addition to mailing all unit presidents a hard copy. Please make sure that all Reflections chairpersons receive this information.

Questions may be directed to reflections@mopta.org or contact the Missouri PTA office at 1-800-328-7330.

**2011-2012
Reflections entries
due Thursday,
January 19, 2012,
no later than 4:30 p.m.**

Make sure to give yourself ample time to pack and ship to the office. Be mindful of the weather – it seems that every year some area in Missouri has inclement weather that week, so plan accordingly to ensure your entries aren't shipped late.



International Walk to School

International Walk to School Day is October 5, 2011. Start planning now by following these six easy steps to a successful event at your school!

1. GROUNDWORK/PLANNING

Collect Data – Has your school participated in the past?
Is your neighborhood a walkable one?
What is your level of parent involvement or volunteerism?
Are your principal and school district supportive of such an event?

Form a Committee – Include friends, parents, teachers, public officials and anyone interested in a healthier community.

2. RELATIONSHIPS/SPONSORSHIPS

School Sites – Most important is to get your principal on board with your event!
Parent Involvement!!!
Get teachers involved which will draw students to participate.
Recruit Student Council who will promote to their student peers.

School Districts – Invite your School Board members to participate in your event.
Ask your School District Superintendent to be involved.
Involve the Health & Safety Officer or School Nurse.

City/County Government – Invitations to the following will help to promote your event into the community: elected city/county leadership; public health agencies; transportation departments; public affairs; the local media and law enforcement who can also be asked to supply extra patrols during your event.

Community Organizations – Include these organizations in your event: hospitals; non-profits for children and health; health care organizations and your chamber of commerce.

3. YOUR THEME

Make it as FUN as possible!

SIMPLE is best.

Engage the students in your school.

Unify your efforts keeping with your message and vision.

4. OUR PLAN

Theme/Décor – This year's International Walk to School Day theme is: HIKE IT! BIKE IT! LIKE IT! or involve your PTA membership theme or your mascot – JAGUARS ON THE MOVE!

Logistics – Create a walking map through Google to distribute to participants.

Promotion – PTA meetings; Back to School Night; flyers, school website; school “all calls”; assemblies; school marquis; banners; morning announcements and local media.

Encouragement/Giveaways – Create a classroom trophy for the class that has the highest percentage of walkers to keep for the year in their classroom. Bags for each participant that may contain: a sticker, an orange, a reflective arm bracelet and a booklet about healthy living. Students can make posters to carry as they walk to school.

Education – Include age appropriate curriculum during the month of October that coordinates with your event.

Week 1 - Reading/Writing about walking words and healthy living

Week 2 - Art or Math to measure distances

Week 3 - during lunch include information about healthy meal choices

Week 4 - Provide information about traffic and/or bike safety rules

5. TOOLS

Register your school event at www.walktoschool.org You will find additional event ideas and promotional materials on this website. www.saferoutesinfo.org

Issue a press release to the local paper one week before the event and then again one day before the event.

6. FOLLOW UP

What was your participation? How can you improve for next year?

Don't forget to send thank you notes!

If your community is more non-walkable, identify a location near your school that parents and/or buses could drive to and park and walk together from there. Maybe there is a public park nearby that could be utilized as a meeting location.

Whether your concern is safer and improved streets, healthier habits or cleaner air, Walk to School Day events are aimed at bringing forth permanent change to encourage a more walkable America—one community at a time. So make this October a “WALKTOBER” at your school!

Family-School Partnerships

By Ava Payne, CONTACT Editor



PTAs play an important role in promoting family engagement in schools and communities. The National PTA Standards for Family-School Partnerships can be used by PTAs as a framework for thinking about, structuring, and assessing family engagement. The beginning of the school year is the perfect time for your unit or council to think about these standards as you plan and implement your programs.

Standard 1: Welcoming all families into the school community—Families are active participants in the life of the school, and feel welcomed, valued, and connected to each other, to school staff, and to what students are learning and doing in class.

Standard 2: Communicating effectively—Families and school staff

engage in regular, two-way, meaningful communication about student learning.

Standard 3: Supporting student success—Families and school staff continuously collaborate to support students' learning and healthy development both at home and at school, and have regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills to do so effectively.

Standard 4: Speaking up for every child—Families are empowered to be advocates for their own and other children, to ensure that students are treated fairly and have access to learning opportunities that will support their success.

Standard 5: Sharing power—Families and school staff are equal partners in decisions that affect children and families and together inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs.

Standard 6: Collaborating with community—Families and school staff collaborate with community members to connect students, families, and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.

Look for more information at pta.org

Resolutions

By Angel Davis, Resolutions Chair

Each fall the MOPTA Legislative Department decides on its legislative priorities for the Missouri Legislative session that begins in January. These legislative priorities are set based on what MOPTA and its legislative department deems are the most vital issues facing education and our children in the upcoming legislative session. In order for MOPTA to advocate for or against any issue, including our priorities, we must have an official stance. These stances are debated and passed at our annual convention in the form of resolutions.

This year there are three resolutions that will be presented at the MOPTA 2011 convention for delegate approval. The first resolution being presented deals with the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's (DESE) recommended class sizes. This resolution asks DESE to not increase and work towards a decrease in the recommended and desired standards for class sizes. It also encourages lawmakers to adequately fund schools to make this possible.

The second resolution being presented deals with distracted driving. This resolution, which has been brought by the MOPTSA student delegation, focuses on bringing more attention to the dangers of using hand-held devices while driving. It also asks legislators to work towards enacting more stringent laws regarding driving while using hand-held

devices. While at convention, find the youth table for information about the dangers of distracted driving. Also you can sign the pledge to not drive while using hand-held devices and set an example for others.

The third resolution being presented is the "Improved Infrastructures Around Schools" resolution. This resolution encourages PTAs to work with their school districts and local governments to improve the areas around schools; these improvements can include adding crosswalks, bike lanes, sidewalks and extra lighting. Infrastructure improvements encourage a healthier lifestyle by making routes to schools safer for walking and bicycling.

There will be a resolutions briefing Friday night during the annual convention. The resolutions briefing is a time to ask questions about the resolutions and to review the resource materials.

These three resolutions will be presented to the delegation during the general session at convention. Please make sure to educate your delegates on these issues. It will be the decision of the delegates at the MOPTA 2011 Convention whether these resolutions become official stances of MOPTA.

If you have any questions about these resolutions before the convention you may contact MOPTA Resolutions Chair, Angel Davis, at angeld@mopta.org

CLASS SIZE PROPOSED RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Smaller class size, particularly in the early grades, is one of the few educational strategies shown to increase learning and narrow the achievement gap; and

WHEREAS, Smaller class size in the middle and upper grades are linked to higher student achievement and lower rates of dropouts and disciplinary referrals; and

WHEREAS, Teachers with smaller class sizes experience better working conditions and have a better chance to succeed; and

WHEREAS, The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's "2011 Missouri Accreditation Standards for Public School Districts" minimum class size standards are as follows; K-2 (25 students), grades 3-4 (27 students), grades 5-6 (30 students), and grades 7-12 (33 students); therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Missouri Congress of Parents and Teachers (Missouri PTA), its units and councils, encourage school districts to maintain smaller class sizes in all grades; and

be it further

RESOLVED, That the Missouri PTA, its units and councils, encourage the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to maintain or decrease the minimum and desired standards of class sizes; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Missouri PTA, its units and councils, encourage the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to develop a written master plan of significantly reducing class size recommendations by at least fifteen percent (15%) of the "Missouri Accreditation Standards for Public School Districts" within the next five (5) years by the beginning of the 2017 school year; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Missouri PTA, its units and councils, urge the Missouri State Legislature to adequately fund public schools in order to make these reductions in class sizes possible.

(Submitted by MOPTA Resolutions Committee)

IMPROVED INFRASTRUCTURE AROUND SCHOOLS PROPOSED RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Parents cite safety issues and traffic concerns as the number one reason for not allowing their children to walk or bike to school; this concern is substantiated by the fact that between 2008 and 2009 Missouri experienced a rise in pedestrian fatalities and in 2009 one pedestrian was killed or injured every 6.7 hours, and improvements in traffic control and infrastructure design could greatly reduce such risks to pedestrians and bicyclist; and,

WHEREAS, Health experts and health programs recommend walking and bicycling to school as an effective strategy to fight childhood obesity; and,

WHEREAS, School districts faced with a 10% increased cost in fuel since the beginning of 2010, and restricted scope in reimbursement funds from the state no longer offer transportation for students living less than a mile from school, and due to recent budget deficits some schools have eliminated bus transportation; and,

WHEREAS, Several infrastructure programs and grants exist that are

designed to improve local neighborhoods and parks; in addition, most local governments already include capital funding in their budgets for infrastructure improvement; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Missouri Congress of Parents and Teachers (Missouri PTA), their units and councils, work directly with school administrations and local officials to bring attention to unsafe walking and biking routes to schools; and be it further

RESOLVED, That Missouri PTA, their units and councils, encourage local governments to seek out and apply for state and federal infrastructure grants; utilizing funds to build and improve infrastructure, including but not limited to sidewalks, crosswalks, bike lanes, crossing signals, traffic signals and street lighting.

(Submitted by South Valley Middle School PTSA, Liberty, MO)

Are you Distracted?

By Amanda Rupert, Missouri PTA Student Representative

According to recent studies, approximately 6000 people were killed due to distracted driving and half a million more were injured.

Last fall, while sitting in our student workshops, the students decided that we were going to write a resolution about distracted driving. At the spring Leadership Conference, Student Representative Amanda Weber and I, along with student attendees Tana Anderson, Tiffany Brooks, Meagan Gardner, A.J. Geffoy, Payton Kearns, Shaylee Oldham, Madison Perry, Arno Prinsloo, Nichole Provin, John Michael Rupert, and Steen Remington, researched and wrote this resolution. We were led by Student Involvement

Chair Mark Kempf.

All of the students feel very strongly about this resolution. We all feel it is important that while driving, you should be focused on the road and not worried about texting, answering the phone, doing your make up or even playing the trumpet.

This fall the students ask that you support the resolution by coming to convention and voting in favor of it. By showing that you are in favor of it, the students are asking that you sign a pledge saying you will not drive distracted. When you sign the pledge you will receive a small gift as a reminder.

DISTRACTED DRIVING PROPOSED RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, The number one cause of distracted driving is the use of handheld devices; drivers using a handheld device are four times more likely to cause a crash serious enough to cause injury, and in one year, accidents or near misses caused by distracted drivers affected 38% of Americans; an estimated one million drivers talk on their phones, whether handheld or hands free, while driving; and

WHEREAS, More than 80% of all drivers admit to hazardous behavior including changing clothes, painting nails, shaving, eating, or steering with body parts other than their hands; in addition, 9 out of 10 teen drivers say they have seen people driving distracted; and

WHEREAS, According to recent studies, in one year approximately 6,000 people were killed due to distracted driving and half a million more were injured; when accidents resulting from distracted driving occurred, 16% were fatal and 20% caused injury, and using a phone while driving, whether handheld or hands free, delays a driver's reactions as much as having a blood alcohol level of 0.08%; and

WHEREAS, Adult drivers are just as likely to text and drive as teens; out of 2,252 adults surveyed, 27% admitted to texting on the road and 61% admitted to talking on the phone while driving, and deaths due to distracted driving have surpassed the number of deaths due to drunken drivers; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Missouri Congress of Parents and Teachers (Missouri PTA), its units and councils, urge the Missouri State Legislature to create and promote the enforcement of laws that restrict the use of hand-held and portable communication devices while driving; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Missouri PTA, its units and councils, urge the Missouri State Legislature to require the Department of Transportation to promote and provide educational resources on the dangers of distracted driving; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Missouri PTA, its units and councils, urge adults and students when driving to serve as an example by refraining from driving distracted; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Missouri PTA, its unit and councils, collaborate with school districts, the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and other organizations to promote awareness and education of distracted driving in the community.



10+ WAYS to UNLEASH the POWER of YOUR MEMBERSHIP CAMPAIGN!

1. **CLEAR COMMUNICATION:** Tell your unit's PTA story in terms of definite goals and achievement; not bland general statements.

2. **BE INFORMATIVE:** Use your newsletter to explain that dues are not a fundraiser but their membership is an important part in the powerful PTA voice.

3. **TRACK YOUR SUCCESS:** A giant thermometer in the hall, a large jar filled with jellybeans on the office counter or numbered happy faces in the windows are just examples of great ways to publicize your progress. Make it visible, don't give up and celebrate when you reach your goal.

4. **LOCAL NEWSPAPER:** Provide news articles about the goals and activities of your PTA. Include information about the important advocacy role PTA plays and how the reader can become a part of that ... JOIN!

5. **LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS:** Contact those serving your community with the opportunity to be members in their school's PTA.

6. **NATIONAL BENEFIT PROVIDERS: ALWAYS...ALWAYS...ALWAYS** be sure to promote these exclusive discounts along with any local incentives you may be

offering. Provide details on how to access the benefits only to your PTA members not to the school as a whole.

7. **SCHOOL EMPLOYEES:** Encourage membership by placing a PTA sticker on members' mailboxes &/or having a thank you drawing for just those employees who join.

8. **TRAINING:** Encourage your officers & chairman to attend available trainings, i.e. State Convention in October!

9. **UTILIZE PTA RESOURCES:** National PTA & MO PTA are here to serve you. Check out the websites www.pta.org or www.mopta.org or call MO PTA at 1-800-328-7330.

10. **ARE YOU READY FOR SOME FOOTBALL?** What about softball or soccer? It is fall sports season in your community - your PTA membership table should be there!

11. **COUNCILS:** Ask your schools superintendents and other in the central administration departments to join PTA. Many education employees don't work at a specific school site.

12. **COUNCILS:** Have your own membership contest and recognition. Look at the state awards for ideas.

Early Bird Awards

The Unit that sends the **HIGHEST MEMBERSHIP** based upon last year's **TOTAL MEMBERSHIP** to the state office **POSTMARKED ON OR BEFORE SEPTEMBER 23, 2011** will earn the **EARLY BIRD AWARD** and be recognized at the Missouri PTA Convention in Columbia in October.

THREE (3) WINNING CATEGORIES
Early Childhood/Elementary/Special Ed.
Middle School/Jr. High/Combined Unit
High School

NO APPLICATION NECESSARY
Get those dues in by September 23, and **YOU MAY BE A WINNER!**



NPTA Member Benefits

- **METLIFE** - MetLife Auto & Home® has special group discounts now available to PTA members.
- **SHARP ELECTRONICS** - The PTA/Sharp Electronics member store offers valuable discounts to PTA members.
- **T-MOBILE** - 14% discount off your monthly service charges for new and existing T-Mobile subscribers, plus additional savings for new subscribers.
- **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

Make sure the details on benefit access are provided only to your PTA members.

Check out the National PTA, www.pta.org website for further information on how your members access these benefits. Click the "Member Benefits" tab and then the "Exclusive Member Benefits" section.

Missouri PTA Unit Benefit:

NEW!! PRIDE FUNDRAISING - Pride Fundraising will help your PTA with the professional resources and know-how necessary for hosting healthier, more profitable Fun Runs, Bike-a-thons and Walk-a-thons. Missouri PTA units can save \$100 when you use Promotion Code "MOPTA" when registering for an event license. For more information please visit our custom landing page at www.PrideFundraising.com/MOPTA. Be sure to request a **FREE** sample and information packet while you are there.

National PTA Convention Wrap-Up

By Donna Petiford, President-Elect

This year's National PTA Convention was held in sunny Orlando, Florida at Disney's Coronado Springs Resort and Conference Center. It was nice to enjoy the sunshine between workshops and we even got a glimpse of Mickey and Minnie (Mickey Mouse was an official registered convention delegate!)

One new feature of convention was the addition of educational tracks that addressed important areas of concern for PTA members. The handouts from these workshops are available online at www.pta.org for a limited time after convention.

New national PTA officers were elected. We experienced the candidates' speeches and even a run-off election. We were proud to witness our very own Missouri PTA past-president, Kathy Nevans, elected to the National PTA Board of Directors; we took part in the debate surrounding the approval of a National PTA dues increase; and we took part in a call-in to our Washington, DC elected officials regarding the need for family engagement in the reauthorization of ESEA. Needless to say these were high impact general meetings.

Our Missouri PTA delegates to National PTA convention understand and appreciate what a great opportunity it was to attend this convention. Here are some highlights from their reports:

"The 2011 National PTA Convention in Orlando was a thrilling experience for me. Not only did I receive lots of tips and clues on how to run an individual unit but also, and somewhat more unexpectedly, I finally began to appreciate our most important strength: advocacy.

When President Chuck Saylor instructed delegates to call their state senator and representative and ask them to support the Family Engagement Act, right then, immediately, it impressed me. There were roughly a thousand plus people in that room that lit up the switchboards in DC, for the sake of education. Witnessing our PTA delegates all pull out their cell phones and let their voices be heard was inspiring. Our role as PTA members takes on many different avenues. But what we

all need to understand is, the base and cornerstone of our organization is its mere power to influence change for our child's educational experience.

However, this muscle we can flex that impacts change will grow weak if we don't continue to use it. For me, what hit home was that while our fundraising and student enrichment projects are certainly important, our understanding and having the courage to see the even bigger picture, is likely our most untapped and underrated ability." *Erin Pottberg, appointed National Council of States Representative and delegate.*

"The information and experience of attending a National PTA Convention can sometimes seem overwhelming. I am impressed by what everyone achieves and accomplishes with their volunteer efforts. I am also impressed by what is yet to be done. If I can glean one new idea that will impact change or change a process that helps everyone achieve more in less time with less money, I will have deemed my attendance a success. I also find it very important to understand firsthand how our National PTA is conducting business and moving forward. I look forward to putting these ideas and skills to use in my current and future position with Missouri PTA." *Donna Petiford, Missouri PTA President-elect, ex-officio delegate.*

"National Convention is a wonderful opportunity to meet PTA representatives from across the country. To be part of an event that brings together hundreds of people bonded by the common thread of children is powerful. The level of enthusiasm, commitment and determination is unbelievable. Workshops are a great venue for sharing ideas and brain storming for solutions. The topics I attended included the basics of the nominating committee, membership ideas that are inclusive and that reach new segments, and creatively involving youth in PTA's goals, advocacy and vision." *Susan Rupert, Membership Emphasis Chair, elected delegate.*

"National PTA offered six different "workshop tracks" you could take advantage of if you chose: (1) Best Practices & Innovation in Family Engagement, (2) Advocating for All Children, (3) Improving Health and Wellness, (4) Engaging All Students and Families, (5) Leadership Development, and (6) Building Capacity of Your PTA. I did not choose to select workshops based on a "track", but chose workshops based on my interests & offices held on a state & local level." Some of these included:

Just Between Friends (JBF) This workshop was an overview of training for JBF and an introduction to new features, such as tracking for Reflections, Three for Me, and volunteer participation management, customizable calendars for each household and a new systems and features training video on the JBF website.

Attend and Achieve: Implications for Family, School and Community Engagement National research & experiences in both Maryland and Indiana lead to a discussion on partnering with families to address chronic school absence. Attendance is important at all levels in school. Chronic school absence has adverse affects on a child's education such as lower student achievement and increased dropout rates. One way to combat this problem is for PTAs to work together with school districts in order to improve monitoring levels and identify specific students with chronic school absences.

They've Got New Members! Why Don't We Have Any? Indiana and Oklahoma delegates discussed how they increased membership in targeted areas such as men, preschool and special needs parents, and college education majors. *Shelly Throckmorton, VP of Membership (elected delegate).*

Our national PTA Convention was a great opportunity to get together with other members of our PTA family throughout the nation and share what we know and learn more about the work ahead of us as we work together on behalf of every child.

National Council of States Meeting

By Erin Pottberg, Missouri PTA Meetings Coordinator

I was thrilled to be asked to represent Missouri PTA at the annual National Council of States (NCS) meeting in Orlando this year. My recent work at a childcare facility that connects to a Title 1 preschool was going to come into play as the topic for this meeting was bridging the gap between pre-k and k-12.

Speaker Ross Weaver, Director of the Quality Assurance Division, Office of Head Start, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, addressed attendees and gave background information about Head Start and the need for parent groups, like PTA, to help reach out to parents of very young children. He cited many studies, provided by Harvard Family Research Project, that backed his stance on increasing family engagement.

Elizabeth Rorick, National PTA Acting Director of Government Affairs, then addressed the representatives about National PTA's position with regards to how PTA can improve and assist Head Start. She also spoke about the importance of family engagement and gave some examples of programs that are making a difference.

One program was Tools of the Mind in Denver, Colorado. It is an early childhood program that is designed to help track and regulate preschool and kindergarten children's social, emotional and cognitive behaviors. It has been implemented into 15,000 pre-k classrooms nationwide and closely tracks the young child's developmental progress. Another program that stands out is Bank Street College of Education. This New York City College offers master's degree programs and requires its students to take classes related to family engagement.

Ms. Rorick summed up her presentation with recommendations that PTA supports, with regards to the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, later amended and reauthorized as the No Child Left Behind Act. The first recommendation is to include the following definition of "Family Engagement" in section 1118, Title 1 as; a shared responsibility of families and schools for student success, in which schools and community-based organizations are committed to reaching out to engage families in meaningful ways, and families are committed to actively supporting their children's learning and development. This shared responsibility is continuous from birth through young adulthood and reinforces learning that takes place in the home, school and community."

The second recommendation reads: "Recommendation: Include strategies to improve and support early learning outcomes.

Supporting the literacy skills of family members, as well as their children, allows them to meaningfully engage in improving their children's early literacy which is critical to academic achievement.

The National PTA stands in support of improving the language and literacy skills of youth through family literacy strategies that align developmental milestones and standards with appropriate outcome measures.

The National PTA also supports partnering with families and community-based organizations to improve alignment, collaboration, and transitions between early learning programs and programs for school-age children in preschools, and in kindergarten through third grade."

Lastly, representatives from each state were asked to team up with those at their table, to discuss and find ways to help National PTA meet the following goals.

- Help support family well being.
- Help support effective parent-child relationships.
- Help support parents being a child's first teacher.
- Help build parent connections to peers and the community.
- Help identify and engage parents as advocates.
- Help support effective transitions from Head Start to K-3.

All the work and ideas that our group came up with were turned in and will be used to help steer National PTA with implementing these goals. One of the better ideas to come from our group was to visit local county health departments and distribute literature to parents about early childhood programs. We also thought to submit literature to hospital maternity wards, about the importance of early childhood education and a list of resources to new mothers.

National PTA again has demonstrated to states how to go about addressing an issue that effects children. The NCS meeting was an educational experience as to how ideas from across the country will be used to create policy. Soon you should expect to see these ideas come to fruition.



It's not all work at National Convention! Missouri PTA Regional Director Lou Hibdon, President Wendy Jackson, and Meetings Coordinator Erin Pottberg spent some downtime at the Magic Kingdom.



Follow Me! Like Me! Tweet tweet!!

By Dorothy Gardner, Vice-President of Communications

So your unit is thinking about jumping into the world of social networking. After all it seems everywhere you look people are talking about Facebook or Twitter. Perhaps this would be a great way to interact and inform your membership. Well it is! Setting up an account for your unit can be a wonderful tool. But before you jump in head first – STOP! Don't make one more mouse click before you have a well thought out plan for how your unit intends to use and upkeep your social networking site.

Before we even get into specifics about setting up an actual site, let's talk about the rules of engagement when it comes to social networking.

Content is key. What you choose to write and when you choose to post matters. Make sure your content fits the platform. Do you want to post a reminder of the upcoming carnival? Facebook and Twitter are great places for such a post. Is it your desire to disseminate the minutes from your last unit meeting? Email, newsletters or websites would be much better communication avenues. Think about when the majority of people login before you post. While it might be convenient to catch up on all your PTA tasks late at night, will anyone else even be online to see your post? Remember, information flows through social networking sites in a continual steady stream. Something posted at 9 p.m. might be buried under new news by 10 a.m. the next morning.

Quality matters. As with all news, information needs to be timely, relevant and engaging. You might be busting at the seams to tell your members about all the great things planned for the entire school year right now but instead only focus on current events. Social networking is geared towards the here and now. Very rarely do users scroll down through multitudes of past posts to find information. While you want to keep your page active, refrain from posting just to post. Only post information relevant to your focus. Make sure your content is correct and you are knowledgeable about your policies before posting.

The audience matters. Social networking is a two way street. Simply blasting out information will not engage your audience. Give your audience the information you

want them to have and also listen to what they have to say. While you absolutely are not expected to tolerate hateful or bullying behavior, don't be afraid of comments that are simply negative. This might be an excellent opportunity to dispel misinformation or let members know why something did not go the way it was intended.

Now for the nitty gritty of setting up a site. Currently the two most utilized platforms are Facebook and Twitter.

Facebook is the 2nd most visited site after Google and 50% of users visit daily. Users are able to follow their favorite "brands". Setting up a site is fairly simple but it is important to set up the right kind of site. Sites are categorized in a certain way to allow for search ability.

First off avoid setting up your unit page as a personal profile page. While this might seem easy and familiar, especially if you already have a page, this route will rob you all the tools available for an organization. However, you will need a personal page connected to your PTA page for administrative purposes. While it might be tempting to use the personal page you already have, a wiser choice would be to set up a generic personal page for the unit president that could change with each incoming president. For instance, I have my own personal Facebook page but I also have a generic one for the VP of Communications. When I move out of this position, the incoming VP will simply change the name, username, password and email address for that personal page. It is to this page the MOPTA's organization page is attached.

Once you have the Administrator's personal page set up, adding an organization is fairly simple and straightforward. Click on "create a page" and pick "Company, Organization or Institution" from the provided list. The rest is pretty much fill in the blanks with your information. How open you would like your Facebook page to be depends on what permissions settings you pick. You can choose whether or not users can post on your wall, add pictures or upload videos. If you are having problems with a user you have the ability to send them a warning or, if necessary, ban them from the page. Another useful feature of the organization page is the Insight feature. In-

sight allows you to view statistical information about how your page is being utilized. Graphs map such details as how many users are actively following your page and when they tend to view posts. All of these features are great, but my personal favorite is the ability to allocate administrative permissions to more than one individual. Quite frankly it is really hard for me to post all the information I would like to get out all the time. At the state PTA level, not only does the VP of Communications have administrative permissions, but so does the President and the Public Relations chair. Working together we can make sure the page stays active.

Twitter is a more streamlined type of social networking. Think of a tweet as a text message sent out across the Internet. Users post short 140 character messages. While you are limited as to the amount of content you post, it is a great way to send out quick information to followers. Twitter also has a built in unique feature called hashtags. Tweets can be linked together by inserting a word or phrase with a # at the beginning. For instance during the recent NPTA convention, tweeters could insert the hashtag #PTAcon2011 to link up with other such posts. If I wanted to see what everyone was saying under this topic all I needed to do was search under that particular hashtag and it brought up all the tweets. As with Facebook you can control who sees your tweets. You have the ability to send your tweets out to the world or restrict them only to followers you have approved. Once again my recommendation if you are going to set up a Twitter page would be to avoid using your own personal account. Instead set up one just as your unit. This way the account can easily be passed on to future unit leaders.

Whether or not your unit decides to jump into the social networking universe it completely up to you. Some love it and others hate it. But the fact remains that social networking is here to stay and a powerful communication tool if used correctly.

Stop by and visit me during the networking portion of our upcoming MOPTA convention. I'll be there with my computer fired up and ready to share social networking options, tips, tricks and hints.

Communications Made Easy with Just Between Friends

You know how important communications are to growing your membership, engaging current members and retaining membership. That's why Just Between Friends, the official PTA communications and membership management system, has built a robust communications module.

There's no need to pay for email services because Just Between Friends is offered free to PTAs and parents in your school communities. And, unlike email services and listservs, with Just Between Friends when you send out notices and deadlines, you can send automatic reminders.

Just Between Friends has an email template library for you to choose from. Plus, you have the ability to insert your PTA logo, our state PTA logo and your school colors. It's as easy as browsing for your images, uploading them and selecting colors.

Need to attach forms, flyers or newsletters to your email? That's simple with Just Between Friends. When you send emails you can attach files of the most popular formats.

Sending emails about events and deadlines using Just Between Friends? Events and deadlines automatically appear in the recipient's email in-box, on their personal start page and on their customizable calendar. So, your single email reaches them three times. You'll never have to hear, "I didn't see that email!" again.

In June, Just Between Friends presented a workshop and several labs at the 115th National PTA Convention and Exhibition and showed how easy it is to communicate using the system. If you didn't have an opportunity to attend the convention, please visit www.LearnJBF.com where you can discover how to use the communications module. Don't delay – you can begin communicating efficiently today!

If you're not using Just Between Friends, it's easy to get started. Visit www.JustBetweenFriends.com/PTAquickstart to enter your unit. If you have questions, click on **Contact Us** and a Just Between Friends Customer Support Representative will promptly help you.

MSIP5

By Dorothy Gardner, Vice-President of Communications

The Missouri School Improvement Program (MSIP), originated in the 1950s which lays out the means for reviewing and accrediting Missouri's 522 school districts. Currently finishing its fourth cycle, MSIP has recently been reviewed and revised by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). Designed to align with DESE's plan to position Missouri's education system into the top 10 ranking among states by 2020, a newly revised MSIP5 was created. When the revised edition was introduced, many around the state expressed concerns over various proposed changes. In an effort to take into account these concerns, last April state education officials voted to postpone the process in order for stakeholders to voice their opinions. Five Regional Advisory Committees made up of educators, school board members, parents, business people and DESE members met across the state during the months of June and July to hear an overview of the program, discuss concerns and make proposed changes to MSIP5. Due to our ongoing relationship with DESE, Missouri PTA was asked to find PTA parents who would be willing to actively partake in the committee discussions. Several parents stepped up and volunteered to take part in this endeavor.

The committees set out with a clear focus: identify issues requiring additional information, clarification or correction; provide specific feedback to DESE and the State Board of Education about the proposed MSIP5; advise DESE in developing a recommendation for the State Board of Education's consider-

Mark Your Calendar

September

National Preparedness Month

Baby Safety Month

- 1 Dues to State Office
Deadline for Advocacy Through Leadership Awards (Individual/Unit/Council)
- 5 Labor Day
Missouri PTA Office Closed
- 11 Grandparents Day
- 15 Deadline for Certified PTA Leader Application
- 17 Constitution Day
- 23 Deadline for Early Bird Membership
Fall Begins

October

Breast Cancer Awareness Month

- 1 Dues to State Office
- 14-16 Missouri PTA State Convention in Columbia

November

PTA Healthy Lifestyles Month

- 1 Dues to State Office
- 8 Election Day
- 11 Veteran's Day
- 17 National Parent Involvement Day
- 24 Thanksgiving

ation at its August 2011 meeting; and share accurate and timely information about the MSIP.

At the conclusion of the three meetings several main concerns were identified. First, a majority of committee members felt it was important to maintain resource and process standards in the wording of MSIP5. Many also had concerns over 'report only' measures, feeling if the information was not intended to be utilized for accreditation it should not be included in the revision. Another very hot topic revolved around the number of proposed summative assessments – how often and what sort of testing should be utilized. In addition, stakeholders felt it was also important to make sure the needs of special education, gifted and career technical education students were acknowledged within the newly revised MSIP.

PTA has long believed in the importance of bringing together the educators, parents and the community when making decisions regarding matters concerning education. Each of these groups contributes unique points of view. The Regional Advisory committee provided a great opportunity for just that sort of collaboration. Educators, parents and community members spent time looking together toward the future of education in Missouri.

If you would like to read more about the work of the Regional Committee meeting or find out more about MSIP in general visit <http://dese.mo.gov/qs/MSIP5.html>. Online you can find the proposed changes between the fourth and fifth cycles and read all the Regional committees concerns and recommendations.

2011 Election of Officers for Missouri PTA

Missouri PTA elects officers at the state convention during odd numbered years. 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 – Kim Weber has been nominated for the office of President-Elect. Kim has 16 years of PTA experience in Columbia in the Heritage region. She has held most elected officer positions at the local unit and council levels as well as numerous chairmanships. She has served Missouri PTA as Regional Director, Vice President-Department of Communications, Vice President-Department of Field Service, and most recently, as Secretary. While not advocating and displaying a passion and drive for parent involvement, she is the Surgery Pharmacy

Coordinator at Boone Hospital Center.



Vice-President and Director of Communications – Catherine Sweeny has been nominated for the office of Vice-President and Director of Communications. Cathy is from Wentzville and brings 25 years of PTA experience. She has served with the Board of Managers in the positions of Regional Director and most recently as Information Technology Chair. Cathy has extensive experience at the local level with PTA as well as working with a variety of non-profit organizations. In her personal life Cathy works as

a Field Applications Specialist working training doctors on cutting technology for cures for diseases as well as development of better crops.



Vice-President and Director of Field Services – Linda Wansing has been nominated for the office of Vice-President and Director of Field Services. Linda has been a PTA member for 18 years, serving multiple unit and council committee positions and as a local unit president for 10 years and as a council president for two years. She has served Missouri PTA as a Pony Express Regional Director for the past three years. She also is a National PTA Training Capacity Building Initiative trainer. Linda serves on numerous committees in her school district and is

very involved in youth sports. She and her husband, Craig, have four children: Ryan, 23; Heather, 22; Kelsey, 18; and Michael, 13. She is the Preschool Director/Teacher and Director of Communications at Gashland United Methodist Church.



Vice-President and Director of Legislation and Advocacy—Dorothy Gardner has been nominated for the office of Vice-President and Director of Legislation and Advocacy. Dorothy has 12 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 officer and committee positions at the local level. Currently she is serving as the president of the SVJH PTSA. During her time on the state board, Dorothy has served as a

Regional Director, *CONTACT* Editor and most recently as Vice Presi-

dent - Department of Communications. She and her husband have two children - one a High school senior and one in 8th grade. In her spare time Dorothy is the owner Structure Inc. a company specializing in structural and architectural photography, and co-owner of Gardner Construction Company Inc. a general contracting company.



Vice-President and Director of Membership Services – Susan Rupert has been nominated for the office of Vice-President and Director of Membership Services. Susan has ten years of PTA experience, having served as president, treasurer, and vice-president of membership on the unit level. She has served Missouri PTA as a Pony Express regional director and membership emphasis chair. Her favorite unit position has been

as student member chair, working with student members on their projects to allow them to develop their leadership abilities and learn about volunteerism and advocacy. Susan and her husband, John, have two children, John Michael, an 8th-grader, and Amanda, a high school junior. Her family is also very active in the Scouting community. Susan lives in Cameron and is an elementary school secretary in the Cameron School District.



Vice-President and Director of Programs—Joanne Schwartz has been nominated for the office of Vice-President and Director of Programs. Joanne has nine years of PTA experience, serving in multiple committee posts and as a unit president. She currently is council president in the Hickman Mills C-1 School District. Joanne has served Missouri PTA as a Three Trails Regional Director for the past four years. She and her husband, David, have two boys. She is an

Attendance Clerk at Ruskin High School.



Secretary – Linda Klender has been nominated for the office of Secretary. Linda has been involved in PTA for nine years. Linda has held unit officer positions and is currently serving as Park Hill Council President. She has served Missouri PTA for the past six years as a Regional Director and the Procedures and Bylaws Chairman. She lives in Kansas City with her husband, Mike, and their son, Tom, a high school freshman. She is a Registered Nurse, specializing in Pediatrics.



Treasurer – Shelly Throckmorton has been nominated for the office of Treasurer. Shelly has been involved with PTA for 16 years in numerous positions at the elementary, middle, high school and council levels in Blue Springs in the Three Trails Region. She has served Missouri PTA the past two years as Vice President & Director of Membership Services and the three years before that as the Membership Emphasis Chair. In both positions, she continually strived

to develop new innovations to inspire and reward local units for their membership growth. In addition to PTA, Shelly is co-owner of the family business and has a long history with Girl Scouts.

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A strong advocate for the education and well-being of every child**