

## Happy New Year to all!

I love anything new! It's fresh ground, new territory and a brand new starting point. I'm inspired this year by the dedication and participation of each and every member of Ninth District PTA. In December, I attended a meeting of a council that was once struggling. At this meeting, the superintendent of schools thanked the board and especially the council president for taking this council to new heights. Outstanding leadership had made this happen. Through training, follow-up on non-reporting units and diligence, this happened. Every council can

make this happen, and I challenge each and every president of a unit and council to make this happen. Ninth District PTA will sponsor a Winter training on January 7 beginning at 6:30 p.m. at the San Diego County Office of Education, Rooms 401 and 402. This training will be for all unit and council officers. More details are in this newsletter. Please attend. After my 15 years of experience as an officer and all of the training I have attended, I still find that I learn something new every time! This training will be beneficial to both new and experienced officers.

And speaking of leadership, January is the month to elect the unit's and council's nominating committees. Are you recycling members from past years, or are you finding new leaders who have successfully chaired or served on committees and may want to go up a level and serve on the executive board? Now is your chance to expand leadership in your PTA and obtain fresh faces and ideas to continue the success of your PTA! Our role as leaders is to find those people who will replace us. Ninth District PTA's goal is to serve our units and councils. Do not hesitate to ask for help; that is why we exist! Have a happy and healthy 2010 and make it your new year's resolution to invite more members into your PTA. All you have to do is ASK! What better way to find the future leaders of your PTA!

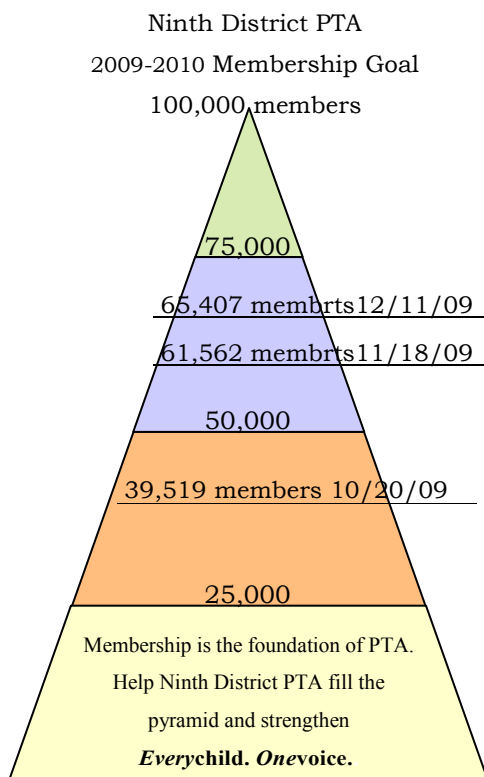
**Carolyn Johnson**  
 President

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### Fiscal Reminders

#### Due soon check your bylaws:

Mid-year audits

#### Past due but still must be forwarded through channels:

- Minimum membership to reinstate good standing status with California State PTA
- Insurance payment \$202 for units and Workers' Compensation Report
- Tax returns need to be filed, better to file late than not to file at all.

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## Where to find next year's Executive Board

January not only kicks off a new year, but it is also the beginning of the search for new leaders for next year's PTA Executive Board. PTA bylaws state that the nominating committee must be elected at a general meeting at least two months before the election meeting. So now that the nominating committee is elected, what are some tips for finding people to consider for office?

First, advertise to your membership that the PTA is looking for volunteers for next year's Executive Board. Include brief descriptions of the types of positions that are available, including average hours needed to take on that position. This type of "search" is the opportunity to reach out to ALL PTA members. Be sure to include a reliable way for a prospective volunteer to contact someone for more information. Give all prospects to the nominating committee and be sure to have them follow up!

This "all call" is probably not going to work! The PTA inbox will not be flooded with prospective new volunteers, but it gets the idea out there, and the opportunity is at least being broadcast to the

entire PTA community. Nothing screams "clique" louder than not bothering to broadcast the need for new people.

The nominating committee should survey the current board to create accurate job descriptions for the positions in the PTA. Accurate descriptions, along with expectations of time commitment are important in recruiting and *keeping* volunteers. The nominating committee should speak with current leaders to be sure they are in a position that suits them and the PTA best! PTA positions are for a one year term – a member may serve one additional year, but the nominating committee is not obligated to fill a position with the current member!

Finally, everyone should be participating in "active recruiting". It doesn't just happen for a week in January when you call all immediate friends and beg them to participate. Every event PTA has is an opportunity to talk to, not only the people volunteering, but also those attending. Get the board out in the "crowd" to ask people what they think about the event. If someone says, "Oh, it's great, but have you thought about \_\_\_\_\_". This is the

opportunity to rope them in! "No, we hadn't thought of that – can I get your name to pass on to the committee for future planning?" If someone is doing a great job handling the cash register at the book fair, talk to them about possibly becoming a financial officer for PTA. Remember to let them know that training is available! When you are doing specific recruiting, if the answer is no, ask if there might be a better time to call or perhaps a different opportunity might suit them better. "Healthy" PTAs have a good mix of people from all areas and communities at the school – not just the President's neighbors or parents from the same soccer team. Taking the time to recruit in advance, rather than frantically begging just to fill spots on the roster, will go a long way toward helping PTA have a long list of potential leaders.

### Shawna Straw

Chairman of Council Presidents

## A Leadership Check List for the New Year

The great thing about a new year is that it can be a fresh start. Fix what you can, get caught up and do things better this year. Hopefully this comes after a little rest and time with your family over the holidays.

Use this checklist to make sure you are on track for 2010.

Five PTA things to do in January to make 2010 a great year:

1. Check your list of things to submit: insurance should have been paid, membership updates, workers' compensation report, audits, budgets, current board lists etc... Have all these things been submitted through channels? Remember if you didn't turn something in on time--do it now--if you need help, ASK!

2. Elect your nominating committee. January is usually the time to elect your nominating committee, so the members of the nominating committee can do their work and post a slate of officers in February for a March election.
3. Update your bylaws. Our new electronic bylaws should make it easier to update your bylaws, and if you do it now, it's a great time to review and change.
4. Resolve to improve communication. Communicate with your membership, school administration and each other. Good communication can solve a lot of problems and build a strong board and PTA.

5. Review your goals for the school year. Check to see if you are on track. Adjust your course if you need to, and keep doing great things for children and families.

Happy New Year--make it a great one!

### Carol Green

Leadership Vice President



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## Fiduciary Responsibility

Congratulations! You have been elected to serve on your PTA board.

**The board has a legally defined fiduciary responsibility to uphold the trust that has been placed in the officers.**

This means that you and your board must act:

- In good faith, understanding and abiding by the bylaws of the organization;
- With the care an ordinary prudent person would exercise under similar circumstances; and
- In a manner the individual reasonably believes to be in the best interests of the organization.

**The board is responsible for protecting the assets of the PTA.**

This means that each officer is obligated to ensure:

- Compliance with all laws;
- The assets are used to serve the interests and needs of the beneficiaries (the children);
- Continuity of the organization for years into the future;
- The organization remains transpar-

ent; and

- You are carrying out the purpose you have been given.

**What are the assets of the PTA?** These fall into several categories:

- **Money** – Include all accounts when reporting balances and transactions. Use the clear and concise rules, found in the *Toolkit*, for managing and handling money.
- **Property** – anything purchased with PTA funds, such as office supplies like officers binders, carnival games or equipment, storage items, computers, paper goods, etc.
- **Inventory** – spirit wear such as T-shirts or hats, left-over gift wrap or cookie dough, paper scrip, etc.
- **Volunteers** – the most important asset of the PTA. Make sure to find a job for everyone who volunteers. If someone volunteers and is never called, they are probably not going to volunteer again.
- **Ongoing concern** – This means the board must make decisions that will protect the future of the PTA. The

decisions you make must serve the needs today as well as preserve assets for tomorrow. You have an obligation to *not* encumber future boards as well. Each board may only make decisions directly affecting its term of office.

- **Reputation** – Everything centers on the reputation of your PTA, so guard it as the organization's most important asset. Who will donate to the PTA if it has a bad reputation? Who will volunteer to help? Mistakes and rumors will damage the PTA's good name. Theft, or even the rumor of it, can destroy the PTA altogether. Take your position seriously in order to protect the assets of the organization and to be a good role model for upcoming parent leaders. What you say and how you act is important.

This is why we consider ourselves **“Professional Volunteers.”**

California State PTA [www.capta.org](http://www.capta.org)  
*The Communicator* October 2009

## Secretary—The Mid-Year Audit

January is audit time for most PTA's -- are you ready?

The secretary's book should have been kept current and be ready to hand over to the auditor after any December meetings. Check the book to see that:

- Minutes of all meetings since the previous audit are permanently bound.
- Minutes are signed by the person who took and prepared them.
- Minutes have been marked with the date of the meeting at which they were approved.
- Treasurer's reports for the corresponding meetings (originals, signed by treasurer) are permanently bound.

Your treasurer should also be checking for completion, and may ask you to sign something that was missed.

The secretary's book will be returned to you once the audit has been completed. At that time, you will also be advised of any errors made and whether action is needed.

If the audit requires action, clearly record the action in the minutes when it occurs. Further detail, including auditor recommendations, or the fact that something was missing, is not necessary.

**Example:** Janet Smith moved to ratify check #3241 dated September 12, 2009 in the amount of \$51.00.

***Motion Adopted***

Be sure to determine whether action is required at the unit/association level.

If you have been keeping an accurate, timely secretary's book, the audit should be a snap!

**Karen Keene**

Secretary

## Legislation

I would like to be able to discuss ways to advocate, to improve the quality and nutrition of the food served in our schools, to have more counselors for our high school students, or to simply explore why schools seem to break the education code by not providing our kids with the mandated physical education time, but at this time our advocacy voice must be used to ensure that public education is funded as the priority it must be for the future.

Hopefully, we will be able to tackle those topics sooner than later.

We need to focus on money since we simply can not generate enough in this economy. The latest report from the Legislative Analysts Office estimates a \$21 billion deficit over the next eighteen months. It is hard to understand that amount of lost money. \$21 billion, not millions, but billions of dollars. We saw most school districts in San Diego and Imperial Counties struggle to make difficult cuts last year after deep budget cuts from the state; this year, we will see more difficult decisions.

What can we do? There is no money. The state can barely pay its employees. Legislators and state officers are actually taking pay cuts. The voters of California do not support raising revenues via taxes on a statewide basis. There are plenty of economists that would make strong arguments illustrating how statewide tax increases would stifle our economy and put us in a deeper hole.

### What can we do?

**Educate** yourself about the facts. How did we get into this? What could we have done to prevent it? What can we do now? For some guidance please contact your council president or legislative vice presi-

dent. Visit your state legislator's webpage to find out his/her thoughts about the budget and budget reform. Review the legislative section of the California State PTA website. Visit your local school district's website as well as the County Office of Education website. Visit Edsource (see link below) to learn about California's current education finance system and most critical issues. Visit Next10 (link below) to learn more about California's budget, and where the money goes. Take their budget challenge! View the *California Schools, First to Worst* video by John Merrow, a history of California public schools.

**Mobilize** by joining the PTA Facebook pages. Both the National, State and Ninth District PTAs have pages you can join to stay connected and informed. You can also visit their websites. Get one more person to join your PTA. There is strength in numbers, especially when we are educated.

**Participate:** Attend unit or council PTA meetings. Join Facebook discussion threads. Write a blog. Attend the legislative web conference held monthly, check the Ninth District PTA website or Facebook page for details. Attend the California State PTA legislative conference in February to learn more about advocacy and lobbying. Attend your local school board meetings or the board meetings for the County Office of Education.

**Advocate and Lobby:** With no money, Californians are going to have to advocate and lobby vigorously for the appropriate types of reform. It is not an easy task, but it is rewarding and meaningful. Major changes are being discussed because they have to be. School districts may have total control of their funds next year (except

for funds from the Federal Government). This would be a dramatic change from the current environment. There is great controversy over this rumored change—many in favor and many against. Do you know where you stand? Do you know why?

**What not to do.** Nothing. Wait for someone else to do something. Become irrational and offensive to all you talk to without providing real solutions.

**We must work together** and help our legislators find real answers. We can no longer vote and hope that our legislators make things better. We live in a democratic country, and we need to participate civically in order to be sure our best interests are represented. As a community of PTA members, we are looking to protect the interests of children and families in San Diego and Imperial Counties. Please help us by getting connected.

### Jon Nalbandian

Legislation Vice President

Resources:

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

[www.capta.org](http://www.capta.org) join Legislation Alerts and Sacramento Updates

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

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Ninth-District-PTA/102425300138> this link works if you have a Facebook account

<http://www.edsource.org/>

[www.sdcoe.net](http://www.sdcoe.net)

[www.icoe.k12.ca.us](http://www.icoe.k12.ca.us)

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

[www.lao.ca.gov](http://www.lao.ca.gov)

<http://www.sacbee.com/capitolandcalifornia/> join capitol alerts, view state em-

**Common Sense Media** is an allied agency of California State PTA and has great information for parents including an e-newsletter, media use hints and reviews on a variety of media materials.

Common Sense Media has a great resource for parents that are involved at their child's school. It's called *Your School Profile*, and it lets parents and educators at a school connect to keep track of media education happenings at school, discuss media issues, and share ratings and reviews of media titles. As with all Common Sense resources, the tool is free to use, and it gives parents one more way to feel connected to their child's school and to the other parents in their community.

## Woo Hoo! It's time for the California State PTA Convention!

**April 29 to May 2, 2010 in Sacramento**

**Special Dinner Event:** We are so excited about this year's convention and hope you are too. After several years of mixers and light refreshments for our district event at convention, the Ninth District PTA Convention Committee has reserved a banquet hall for Saturday, May 1, 2010, for a Ninth District PTA delegate dinner event. We don't want you to choose between *eating* and: sharing what you have learned, asking questions about how what you've learned applies to your unit, and learning from fellow unit, council and district officers. This is a legitimate PTA expense, and we hope and expect to see every delegate attend. This year, with no State evening event planned, individual councils will still have a night for a separate council event, if they wish. The theme is jewel inspired and it will be delicious, fun and fabulous.

**Registering:** This Observer should arrive in your email inbox at the same time the California State PTA Convention registration book arrives in your PTA President's home mailbox. Online registration book copies will be available at [www.capta.org](http://www.capta.org) as well. Convention registration and hotel registration will open February 1<sup>st</sup> through that website. Convention has so much to offer, we are expecting to see most units and all councils in Sacramento. Check page 66 of the California State PTA Toolkit to find out how many voting delegates your PTA

may send; however you can also send non-voting delegates.

There is much to do while you are there. State convention in Sacramento offers a unique opportunity to participate in planned activities that support public education. Top notch, inspiring speakers will remind us why we volunteer and encourage us to do more. Debates and votes determine the direction of California State PTA. Delegates will see and hear the live performances from entries of the state Reflection award winners. Hundreds of exhibitors share their ideas, programs and products in the exhibit hall. Daily workshop sessions offer dozens of choices for officer training and ideas that can refresh and renew your association.

### Planning for Convention Expenses

Convention expenses vary for each unit, council and district and should already be in your association's budget. Be sure to discuss which costs (and at what rate) your unit will reimburse in advance.

**Meal allowance** For example, Ninth District PTA uses a per diem of \$10 for breakfast, \$15 for lunch and \$25 for dinner. Convention area food is not cheap. If your association does not provide a per diem, delegates must submit receipts to be reimbursed. If you would like to offer a per diem, you must make a motion to approve this prior to convention.

**Mileage** at Ninth District is reimbursed at \$0.40 per mile. If a delegate chooses to drive in a car, mileage is reimbursed up to the cost of an economy airfare. One option is to rent a car with unlimited mileage. The cost of the rental car is usually comparable to the price of economy airfare. You may book airfare as soon as your association votes on your delegates.

The dollar amounts listed are for Ninth District PTA delegates and are found in the Ninth District PTA standing rules. It is recommended that each association address this need and vote to place their allotted monies in their associations standing rules.

Include the costs for registration (plus \$20 district fee per delegate and optional \$15 district shirt and \$40 district dinner event), airfare, and per diem in convention budget. The district Hawaiian shirt will be the same as 2009, and is a great way to connect with other local delegates. Be sure to discuss whether any other costs, such as internet connections and PTA Store purchases will also be reimbursed by the unit. Refer any convention questions to Karen Fleck at 619-562-2142 or [kandpfleck@cox.net](mailto:kandpfleck@cox.net)

### Karen Fleck

Executive Vice President

#### Ninth District PTA Convention Orientation

Tuesday, April 20, 2010 at 7:00 p.m.

San Diego County Office of Education Room 401/402

#### Mark Your Calendar—January 7, 2010

Ninth District PTA Free Training

Basic PTA training and PTA problem solving

6:00 pm—8:30 pm

(6-6:30pm-check in, 6:30-8:00pm- training classes, 8:00-8:30 individual help for those who attended the classes)

Rooms 401/402 San Diego County Office of Education

Start the year right-brush up on PTA basics-get help with your PTA problems. Start the new year with all the tools you need to advocate for children and families.

## Do You Have a DADS Club?

About three and a half years ago, I sat in a fantastic workshop presented by a few dads from my own little San Diego bedroom community here in Rancho Penasquitos. The three men were from different backgrounds, and yet their topic du jour for the Ninth District PTA leadership conference was a very organized and galvanizing one—namely, “how to start a Dads Club.” I took this class on a whim, and I have since been so very grateful that I did.

I had seen, as a typical mom-habitué on my boys’ elementary school campus, dozens of dads, older brothers, cousins, grandfathers and other male family members hanging out day after day after school. But few of them volunteered in the classroom, came to the events held after school or even during the school day. And despite the fact we had two male presidents, fewer still were integral parts of our PTA unit board or Education Foundation.

I knew something could be done about this, and I was inspired by the leadership conference workshop I took those many years ago when those dads showed me how. The best practices of these Dads Clubs seemed foolproof, and I set out to see just how tried-and-true they were. It all started with a “Lunch With Dad Day,” a regular day set aside by the school administrator and chairperson. With the principal’s permission, I advertised the third Friday of every month as designated just for fathers and any other male mem-

ber of the family who wanted to come and eat with their child during lunch. The turnout was phenomenal. All of a sudden, we had a strong male presence that built a foundation, which was later used as a springboard to build our *DADS Club*.

The male involvement webpage on [www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org) states:

Studies show students perform better when mothers and fathers are both involved in the education of their children. Men and women think differently and bring different perspectives and skills to school and PTA activities. School communities and PTAs thrive when both men and women participate. Yet men remain a largely untapped resource.

I know that it’s sometimes perceived as easier to get fathers and other male role models involved in students’ lives at the elementary school level, but there are niches on middle and high school campuses as well. Science field clubs, music and drama organizations and sports boosters always need male counterparts. In reality, it’s just a matter of ingenuity and getting the dads onto the campus itself. Three years later, my own DADS Club now has its own momentum, and has an elected board, with its own minutes, a Foundation and PTA representative, and a wonderfully dedicated president who works tirelessly to hone the leadership

skills and ingenuity of the men that show up monthly to the meetings and run the events, which range from Movie Nights and DADS Club Book Club meetings to Golf Tournament Fundraisers and Halloween Carnival Crewing.

I challenge all units and councils to increase their male involvement quotient. There are many tips on how to do this, and it starts at home. Moms, aunts, grandmothers and students, find your untapped resource and tell him to get to a PTA meeting or event. Make him a member when you sign yourself up and pay your dues. And train your sons, nephews and grandsons as well that their PTA membership doesn’t stop when they graduate high school, and they can pass that gift on and stay involved in PTA through their own children’s school units and into the future.

For more resources and information, visit [http://pta.org/topic\\_male\\_involvement.asp](http://pta.org/topic_male_involvement.asp).

### Jennifer Zaheer

Education /Parent Involvement  
Vice President



“How do we keep our inner fire alive? Two things, at minimum, are needed: an ability to appreciate the positives in our life – and a commitment to action. Every day, it’s important to ask and answer these questions: ‘What’s good in my life?’ and ‘What needs to be done?’”

Nathaniel Branden

## Martin Luther King Jr. Freedom From Hunger Food Drive

Ninth District PTA is proud to support the Martin Luther King, Jr. Freedom from Hunger Food Drive as our Winter Service Project, the food drive runs from January 18, 2010 through January 29, 2010.

San Diego County is experiencing a 50 year high in the number of families living in poverty. During the fall of 2009, the San Diego Food Bank has received nearly double the requests for assistance from as same period of 2008.

The MLK Freedom from Hunger Food Drive is a focused challenge, inviting all San Diego County High School Associated Student Body (ASB) organizations to participate. All donations will benefit the San Diego Food Bank. The Food Bank has sent an invitation to all high school ASB presidents.

### **Food Drive Challenge runs from January 18 through January 29, 2010**

The drive will benefit the San Diego Food Bank as it struggles to meet record need of families facing hunger in this current economy.

Nearly half of the meals will be to children 18 years old or younger, who do not know if there will be food to feed their

family or how they will get their next meal.

In addition to collecting non-perishable food items, ASB students will be invited to visit the food bank's 80,000 square foot warehouse in Mira Mesa to help distribute food and see first-hand the incredible work being performed by the San Diego Food Bank every day.

The top four high schools that collect the most food will receive a donation (up to \$1,500) to their ASB and will be recognized at the Laurels for Leaders luncheon saluting all San Diego County High School ASB presidents on February 16, 2010.

### **Units and council PTAs are encouraged to participate in the following ways:**

**Units** - High school units can share the opportunity with your high school Associated Student Body (ASB) leadership, both staff and students. Units that feed into participating high schools are encouraged to advertise the *Food Drive Challenge* to their school communities, utilizing collection and drop off information specific to your participating high schools. Conduct your own food drive in support of the *Food Drive Challenge*.

**Councils** - Share the opportunity with your high school PTAs. Once a council is aware of which high school ASBs in their community are participating, please encourage your middle and elementary school PTAs to join in by collecting and donating the food collected from feeder schools to participating high school ASBs.

If a unit or council cannot find a local participating high school within your district please check the Ninth District PTA website for postings of San Diego Food Bank drop off locations. Along with supporting the ASB *Food Drive Challenge*, the true end goal is to provide food assistance to those in need during these difficult times of job cuts and increased economic hardships.

For more information visit <http://www.kiwanisclubsandiego.org/calendar/MLKFlyer>

### **Rebecca Hernandez**

Community Concerns Vice President

Another great training opportunity has fallen into our laps! Our insurance company, BB&T Insurance Services of California, offers training workshops as part of the benefits they provide us as their insured's. They will be held monthly beginning in January, 2010, at their office in Symphony Towers, 750 "B" Street, Suite 2400, San Diego, CA 92101 from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Several topics are "must attends" for those associations and councils that have hired employees. Below is the list of workshops. Click on our website, [www.ninthdistrictpta.org](http://www.ninthdistrictpta.org), for a complete description of each workshop. Happy training!

01/21/10 Advanced Wage & Hour Concerns  
02/18/10 Sexual Harassment Prevention Training  
03/18/10 2010 HR Legislative Updates  
04/22/10 HR Self-Audit Checklists / Business & Employee Handbooks  
05/20/10 Conflict Management Strategies  
06/17/10 Leadership Training: Using Teams to Manage Projects  
07/22/10 Americans with Disabilities Act / Hiring Practices  
08/19/10 Silk Ties & Tattoos: The Workplace Culture Clash  
09/23/10 HR Risk Management Strategies & Employment Practices Liability Insurance  
10/21/10 Hiring and Termination of Employees  
11/04/10 9:00 -11:00 a.m. Sexual Harassment Prevention Training  
12/09/10 9:00 -11:00 a.m. Effective Communication: Are Others Hearing & Understanding?

Carolyn Johnson  
President

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**Calendar**

**Meetings**

January 7 Unit and council officers training  
 January 19 Ninth District PTA Board Meeting, 9:30 am, Annex C, SDCOE  
 Council Presidents Meeting, immediately following board  
 meeting, same place

**Due Dates**

**March 16** [Program books, newsletters, website entries and membership  
 Due to the Ninth District PTA office to qualify for Ninth District  
 PTA awards](#)

**Save the Dates**

February 10 Ninth District PTA Annual Meeting/Founders Day  
 February 21-23 California State PTA Legislation Conference and  
 Ninth District PTA Sacramento Safari in Sacramento  
 April 14 Ninth District PTA Awards Celebration

**Plan Ahead**

May 2010 California State PTA Convention, April 29– May 1,  
 Sacramento

**Past Due**

Unit and council end of fiscal year audits –copy forwarded  
 through channels  
 Unit and council adopted annual budgets - copy forwarded  
 through channels  
 Unit insurance payment of \$202 and council insurance  
 payment of \$120 due to Ninth District PTA through channels  
 Unit and council workers compensation report  
 Unit and council Tax filings—copy forwarded through channels