



Ladera PTO Newsletter

PTO President's Message

By Janice Lee

Greetings to 2012! It has been a busy school year for all of us. Our fundraising efforts year-to-date have generated over \$62,000. Thank you for your tremendous support thus far! We have quite a ways to go to hit our \$100,000 goal set in the Fall, so your continued support is needed. Please look for our online auction coming up on **March 16th**. Since this will be a non-event, 100% of the proceeds will go directly to programs for your kids. Please see page 2 of this newsletter for more information.

We are also forming the nomination committee to elect our PTO Executive Board for the next school year. If you have interest in serving on our board, there will be many open positions. Please send me an email message at laderaleopards@hotmail.com if you are interested.



Principal's Message

By Derek Pinto

Student's Organizational Skills Important

One of the major tasks in helping students make a successful transition from elementary to middle school is to teach them the skills needed to organize their work and time effectively. Ladera teachers use a system that is designed to help students organize their work, and involve parents in this important process.

Each student receives a student "binder reminder" which contains an academic planner with a weekly assignment sheet format. Students are expected to log the class assignments in their planner every day. Parents should review the assignments with students each evening, and if needed, give them some advice on how to budget their time so all of the assignments are completed on time.

Another important element is home communication. Parents should be checking with the school on a regular basis to ensure that their student is keeping up with work. Contact via phone, email or in person is always welcome.

We Love Parent Support

We are grateful for the continued support and involvement of parent groups in advancing our mission to serve and educate our student population.

Recently, Ladera participated in the Tustin Public School Foundation Fundraiser, the annual Dino Dash. The Dino Dash is a "run and ride" for education, which features 2, 5 and 10k runs and a 50k ride. As a result of our

level of participation, the school raised a total of \$3500, which went directly to the school and student programs.

Ladera Elementary staff and students were also the recipients of two Tustin Public School Foundation grants. The first one for \$1000, focuses on "Giving Students with Autism a Voice", to facilitate verbal communication for our non-verbal students. The second grant for \$2000, focuses on writing for grades 3, 4, 5 - and is called "Write on Target".

December was punctuated by our annual book fair at Barnes & Noble, and PTO-driven family restaurant night at Red Robin, and the events contributed approximately \$1100 to our school.

In a bid to heighten student "health, wellness and fitness", Ladera parents have orchestrated two in-school programs that will serve to heighten student's physical fitness levels. Volunteers are coordinating our Ladera Laps "running club" every Tuesday & Thursday. On Fridays, we have parent-lead Zumba (dance/aerobic) classes for interested students.

Thanks to our Tustin Public Schools Foundation, the PTO and interested parents. Their contributions serve to heighten student connections to our school, advance our educational programs and bind our community together.

Regards,

Derek Pinto, Principal



Feb. Calendar

- 2/2-2/3: 4th Grade
Lazy "W" Trip
- 2/6: Art Masters
- 2/10: Family Game
Night
- 2/13: No School 
- 2/14: Valentine's Day
- 2/15: PTO Meeting
- 2/20: No School
- 2/21-2/24: 5th Grade
Outdoor Science School

Spelling Bee

Ladera's Annual Spelling Bee will be held on Thursday, February 9th at 1:00 p.m. in the MPR. The winner will go on to represent Ladera at the National Elementary School Spelling Bee this March in Long Beach, CA.

PTO Board

- President:** Janice Lee
- VP Programs, Assemblies:**
Kathy Ghanouni
- VP Programs, After School Programs:** Sheila Adlwan
- VP Fundraising:**
Lisa Schwartz
- VP Membership:**
Zubia Villacorta
- VP Publicity:** Karen Sisson
- VP Volunteers:**
Pam Edmondson
- Secretary:** Judy Clark
- Treasurer:** Jim DiLellio
- Financial Secretary:**
Pam Dixon

Family Game Night

Ladera's next Family Night is scheduled for **Friday, February 10th** from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. in the Multi-Purpose Room. It will be a Family Game Night and all are invited to attend. The event is free and everyone is welcome to participate in the games. Dinner will be available for purchase,

provided by Fifth Grade Promotion (pizza, drink and dessert). Bingo, Twister, Headbandz and Candyland will be played with prizes for every winner. Watch your child's Friday Folder for the flyer with more information. If you have questions, please contact Amanda Turner at amanda.turner0087@gmail.com.

Spring Fundraiser

The planning has begun for our exciting **Spring Fundraiser!** We have decided to forego a live event for an **ONLINE AUCTION**. We feel this will make our fundraising experience simpler and involve a wider range of participants (even beyond our school community) So, mark your calendar now...**Friday, March 16th - March 23rd**. We are hopeful this event will generate additional funding for the many important programs our kids count

on. In order for this event to be a **SUCCESS**, we are reaching out to our Ladera community! We are looking for **DONATIONS!** If you are able to personally donate an item/event/experience **OR** if you're able to help us obtain an item for our auction, please contact Lisa Schwartz at LSchwartz@tustin.k12.ca.us. Remember, some of the best items will be those "unique" experiences, those one of a kind opportunities. Put on your thinking caps. Thanks!

Fit Fridays at Ladera

It's Fun...it's Free...it's Zumba!

In an effort to promote healthy, fun, fitness to our students, free Zumba classes are being offered every Friday during lunch recess. Comfortable clothing is recommended but not required. Encourage your kids to come out for Fit Fridays to dance and have fun!

Wondering what Zumba is?

Zumba involves dance and aerobic elements. Unlike a typical dance class where counts are used, Zumba involves following the music with repetitive, easy-to-learn movements. The choreography incorporates hip-hop, samba, salsa, merengue, mambo, martial arts, and various dance moves.



Thank You Copy Cats!

Luz Pineda, Diana Hanson, Cindy Kanchanapoomi, Betty Cautillo, Vani Shiroor and Elaine Schwarz are this year's Copy Cats. These volunteers donate several hours each week helping to make sure our teachers have all the copied materials they need. This is the

second year of the program and teachers and staff both enjoy this efficient method of handling our copying needs. So, a big thank you to our volunteers, you are appreciated!



The Importance of Early Literacy

The background of early literacy and different activities parents can do with their child to promote literacy skills help create a learning environment in which a child can grow to be a successful student - and then adult!

Early literacy is the exposure of phonemic awareness, vocabulary, and text comprehension during the early stages in life. Phonemic awareness is the ability to realize that the sounds of spoken language can work together to make sounds. One activity involving phonemic awareness is to take a three-letter word and sound out each letter, running them together. Another activity may be to blend the last two letters of a three-letter word and change the first letter. There are also many songs, games, and finger plays which promote the use of sounds.

Vocabulary is another key component of early literacy. Conversing with your child as you walk through the grocery store can help to build your child's vocabulary. Discuss the different items you see as you walk up and down the aisles. Talk about the

different sizes and shapes of various cereal boxes or fruits nearby. Help your preschooler expand his or her knowledge and vocabulary by also modeling this language. Use an "adult" word to describe something, such as mentioning that you will help your child with his "abrasion" when he falls down and gets hurt.

Last but not least, don't forget to focus on comprehension. When reading a story, ask your child questions, about what happened first, second, and third. Also, read her favorite story over and over again. Children use memory skills to recall events which have previously been read about or have already happened.

There is evidence to suggest that without exposure to early literacy activities adults have a difficult time developing the literacy skills they need to be successful at work, at home, and in the community.

Help your child develop school-readiness skills and start his or her school career out on the right track. You will be happy you did!

~Bonnie Solomon, SDC Teacher

Photos Needed for Ladera Yearbook

The Ladera Yearbook Committee is asking all Ladera photo volunteers to submit photos for the 2011-2012 Yearbook by the end of February.

We are looking for photos taken of classroom parties, field trips, Ladera family nights, Dino Dash or any other fun activities at Ladera.

Please contact Colleen Bell at colleenbell@cox.net or Angelika Belle at abelle2@mac.com to receive information as to where to download your pictures. Thank you!



Art Masters

Art Masters students were recently introduced to Joseph Raffael, an American realist painter. Students viewed many of Raffael's photo-realist watercolors which often depict nature, especially large scale close ups. Students learned about his use of photographs to capture his subjects, and how he used color to create his realistic art. Students then created their own masterpieces, using watercolor pencils to create beautiful underwater scenes.



Two Furlough Days Restored

The Tustin Unified School District is restoring two furlough days on Friday, Feb. 17, and Friday, May 25, 2012. Both dates will be student instructional days and work/paid days for TUSD employees. The revised school year calendar has been posted to the TUSD website, along with the press release announcing this change. Visit the TUSD website at www.tustin.k12.ca.us.



Birthday Book Club

Thank you to the following students who joined the Birthday Book Club by donating a book to the Ladera Library in December and January:

Adam Biele

Zachary Bunney

Roxy Chavez

Danielle Jones

Madison McClelland

Alyssa Nguyen

Timmy Sharp

Luke Spencer

Lindsey Tom

Sophia Tran

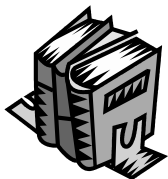
Aleana Winter

Caitlin Zuniga



Book Fair Results

The December Book Fair at Barnes & Noble was a huge success! The Ladera Library received a Barnes & Noble gift card for \$589.79 to make book purchases. Special thanks to Ladera parents Elaine Schwarz and Kathy Winters for organizing such a successful event!



Children's Author to Visit Ladera

In honor of Read Across America Day and Dr. Seuss' birthday (March 2nd), children's author and illustrator Scott Sussman will be visiting Ladera Elementary on **Tuesday, February 28th** to read and present a Dr. Seuss book, as well as his own book **SILLY THE SEED**. Mr. Sussman will be visiting us from his home in Rome, Italy, to celebrate this occasion, read his story, and personally autograph books.

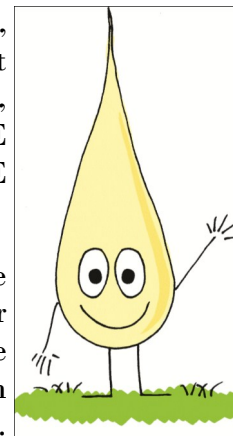
You may purchase an advance copy of his book from Amazon or at www.octopusinkpress.com where you will also find downloadable projects to accompany **SILLY THE SEED**, as well as additional

information about Mr. Sussman. This site includes poems, links to various "silly" sites, and a sneak peek at his upcoming book, **MARK AND THE MOLECULE MAKER**.

Ms. Shaw will also be sending home order forms to purchase books directly from Mr. Sussman for \$14.

These books will be delivered to your student the day of the assembly for signature by the author!

We are all excited to have Mr. Sussman join us and share in our love of literacy!



GATE Corner

The Gifted Children's Bill of Rights:

You have a right...

...to know about your giftedness.

...to learn something new every day.

...to be passionate about your talent area without apologies.

...to have an identity beyond your talent area.

...to feel good about your accomplishments.

...to make mistakes.

...to seek guidance in the development of your talent.

...to have multiple peer groups and a variety of friends.

...to choose which of your talent areas you wish to pursue.

...not to be gifted at everything.

GATE Parent Resources:

California Association for the Gifted

www.cagifted.org

Orange County Council for Gifted Education

www.occgate.org

Supporting Emotional Needs of the Gifted

www.sengifted.org

