



# FIRST AVENUE MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

F I R S T   A V E N U E   M I D D L E   S C H O O L   P T S A

DECEMBER 2009  
**PTSA**<sup>®</sup>  
everychild.onevoice.<sup>®</sup>

## PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

### FIRST AVENUE PTSA

- ◆ Jeff Wilson, Principal
- ◆ Kathy Yamane, President
- ◆ Maryann Stevens, Editor

If you would like to submit an article or other information for the February/March issue, the deadline is **Friday, January 22**. Email submissions to Maryann Stevens at [fanews-letter@ausd.net](mailto:fanews-letter@ausd.net).

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We have much to be thankful for here at First Avenue Middle School as we head into the Holiday Season. It has been an exciting and fulfilling 15 months to be the "New Guy" around here with the outstanding students and staff we have, the ever-changing and ever-improving Measure I construction project, and the fantastic support we receive from the parents and community of First Avenue Middle School.

I am **THANKFUL** for our students. Adjectives that come to mind when I think of our fine student body include studious, goal-oriented, diverse, creative, enthusias-

tic, inventive, kind, hard-working, skilled, happy, amusing, high-achieving – and I could go on-and-on. You have so much to be proud of as the parents of such a winning group of students. I walk through my day with a smile on my face as I consider the wonderful atmosphere that we have here at First Ave. We have amazing musicians, award-winning artists, gifted athletes, dedicated leaders, selfless givers, and talented actors, videographers, gamers, speakers, comedians, etc. One of the qualities that really struck me when I arrived on campus last September about our students

was the level of kindness I noticed between students. While we have some of the same problems that other schools have, in general our students are really nice to each other – and our PALs do a great job of modeling this characteristic. On top of all of that, we have really smart kids.

I am **THANKFUL** for our staff. And what an incredible staff we have here at First Avenue – a staff that keeps the "student-first" mantra in front of everything they do. Our teachers are dedicated, caring, creative, and hard-working, always looking for better

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## Principal's Message

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ways of bringing their curricular areas alive to our students through technologies, projects, field trips, and hands-on learning experiences. Our custodians do everything humanly possible to serve our students and keep the campus clean despite the fact that we are in the middle of a very dirty construction project. Our instructional aides are dedicated to helping our teachers produce an optimal learning environment for all of our students. They nurture and care for our students and help remove any barriers that might get in the way of their achievement. Our wonderful librarian has a huge heart for kids and does whatever she can to draw students into a love of reading. Our nurse is a steady and nurturing caregiver for students who are ill or are in need of some tender mercies. Our incredible student support staff spends all of their emotional energy counseling with students, providing speech and other special education services, and listening to their many and varied emotional needs. And of course, our incredible Mr. Rod is here every day leading our student body through a maturation process that begins the day they walk onto campus as immature 6<sup>th</sup> graders and continues, often even after they leave us three years later as (almost) mature 8<sup>th</sup> graders.



I am **THANKFUL** for the incredible changes we have seen with the Measure I construction. We now have a beautiful field and track for our P.E. program, a state-of-the-art music building for our equally state-of-the-art music program, a beautifully refurbished auditorium and classrooms, and a soon to be completed kitchen and lunch area that will make us all very proud. We look forward to a dedication of the new facilities sometime in the Spring of 2010.

Finally, I am **THANKFUL** for a very supportive parent body and community. We have an incredible PTSA led by Kathy Yamane – a PTSA who routinely jumps-in to support our student and staff activities; who raise money for campus and classroom needs; and who keep us well-fed. The staff also feels incredibly supported by the *Arcadia Educational Foundation* as they tirelessly work to provide us resources that allow us to maintain a program that keeps us at the top of the heap in California.

**THANKS TO ALL OF YOU!**

**HOPE YOU HAD A HAPPY THANKSGIVING!**

Jeff Wilson  
First Avenue Principal



## President's Message

Unbelievable! Last year around this time, we had just started on the physical hands-on part of construction. Our new principal, Mr. Wilson from the very day he started lived "construction." Now he is an old hand at First Avenue. The end of construction is also in sight. First Avenue's Music Building is spectacular! The technology in all the classrooms are incredible.

At the last PTSA meeting, Mr. Gazanian and Mrs. Grumm came and demonstrated what the classroom technology is capable of doing. As a parent volunteer at the elementary school where this technology has been common place for the past year and a half, even I was amazed at how much our students are freed by this new technology - graphs, cameras, instant loading onto and of the Internet are only the tip of the iceberg. Our students will only be bound by their lack of imagination. The Administration, Mr. Danielson, teachers have plans for a "Grand Celebration" in the works to welcome us to our student's new school! More information will follow!

This is the time of year for Holidays and Family. Take time to enjoy yours during these hectic months. Our students have grown so fast. Take each day and treasure it as a gift. As a parent of a soon to be college grad bound for Graduate School, I look back on the precious middle school years, where they still need you and treasure all the memories. I remember that my eldest played in the 3 on 3 tournaments organized by Mr. Rod. Her team played against the guys here at First Avenue and definitely made them work for their baskets. Make your own memories with your beloved child now - they grow so fast and become independent so fast. Time flies faster as they grow older...enjoy your holidays with them.

Stay involved in your family's school. Supporting the school supports your child. So many studies have shown that parents whom stay involved in their child's school have more successful students. Our students are successful because you are involved in their lives. Many schools all over the world REQUIRE parent involvement. Here we only can ask that you volunteer. Our PTSA is already planning for next year. Please consider that your involvement with us does support our students and the school to make it a much better place for our children to learn. Remember, those of us that are volunteers had to make the initial jump into the pool - we are all innately shy. We need YOU, come to a PTSA meeting, volunteer to do a small task or a big task. Move out of our comfort zone. Let's continue to challenge ourselves, so that we don't live in a monotonous world heading towards oblivion. Make a difference in future generations' lives. Our families depend on it!

In the New Year, we have plans to resume Family Movie Nights, giving us time to come together as a school family. We have a lot of plans for new events in the coming year, but for now we concentrate on the holidays. In closing I wish all of you a fantastic holiday season. Enjoy your families and friends.

*Kathy Yamane*

PTSA President 2009-2010



# Notes From Mr. Rod's Desk

## HOLIDAY CONCERTS

Our wonderful Music Department under the direction of Mr. Mike Danielson will offer a Holiday Music Concert on two evenings, December 16 and December 17. Please choose one of the evenings to attend as the auditorium only seats about 300.

Speaking of seating, this will be the first event in our newly remodeled auditorium that inaugurates our **NEW AUDITORIUM SEATS!** Choose one of the evenings to attend and enjoy the music on our new fabric seats.

## ACTIVITIES

### Recreation Leagues

Our after-school **Flag Football Rec League** had an action filled season. Each grade level fielded a team and they played hard and had much fun. There was intense action with many exciting plays throughout the season.

Up next this year is the after-school **Basketball Rec League**, with sign-ups starting in December and games beginning in January. The Ar-

cadia Recreation Department will send representatives to all middle schools and provide flyers that will explain the league and how to apply to play for the school team. In the past, the site for the games on Friday has been here at First Avenue Middle School. Unless otherwise informed, we anticipate that the Rec League will continue to use our campus for the games.

### Lunchtime Clubs

There is a lunchtime club that meets each Tuesday and Thursday in Room 35. Mr. Gund moderates the Chess Club at that time and any student is invited to come to his room during lunch period and play chess. Chess is a great problem-solving game and there will be a school-wide tournament during the year. Where are those "chess masters" out there?

### Three-on-Three Basketball Tournament

The Sixth Graders will have their portion of the annual tournament during December. The Sev-

enth and Eighth Graders will begin their bracket play in January. This is the 17<sup>th</sup> year of this event and it is one of the most anticipated lunch activities of the year. The teams can be all boys, all girls or co-ed. This is a double-elimination tournament. Last year, a total of 120 students participated in the event. There were about 90 games played during the tournament last year.

In the spring, there will be an all-girls Three-on-Three Tournament. Although this is a smaller tournament, the girls are guaranteed to play five games throughout the tournament.

## TIME FOR READING

Remember that holidays are a great time for reading. Choose a good book and enjoy.☺

## Box Tops for Education!

Look for Box Tops on packages and clip them for the school. Your child can turn them in at the office and our school gets money!



# PTSA Information

## Things to Do!

- Buy SCRIP
- Sign up to bring items to help Yoko with Hospitality Events
- Sign up to be a newsletter translator. Contact Weiyi Ro
- Get your RALPHS card registered for SCRIP
- Volunteer to help at First Avenue by contacting our Volunteer Coordinator, Lee at lcallander@ausd.net
- Go to a Music Club meeting
- Purchase a Westfield Wonders ticket
- Attend and cheer on a parade
- Attend the holiday concerts
- Look on the "new" First Avenue Website, give Mr. Olavi feedback! at solavi@ausd.net☺

## EXECUTIVE BOARD

President	Kathy Yamane
Executive VP	Lee Callander
1st VP - Legislation	Lynne Greenup
2nd VP - Ways & Means	Vicky Stiles
3rd VP - Membership	Deanna Nancarrow
4th VP - Newsletter	Maryann Stevens
Recording Secretary	Michelle Ganis
Treasurer	Karen Acosta
Financial Secretary	Dana Thompson
Auditor	Nina Chen
Historian	Terri Powell
Parliamentarian	Weiyi Ro

## Thank YOU!

Many thanks to the following individuals:

**Maryann Stevens** for editing and publishing a superb Spartan Newsletter

**Weiyi Ro** for an incredible translation of the newsletter

**Yoko Kikuta** and her helpers for their hospitality at all the PTSA meetings

**Karen Acosta** and **Deanna Nancarrow** for taking care of the Membership Drive

**Vicky Stiles** and **Dana Thompson** for taking care of the Magazine Fundraiser

**Jessie Chen** for getting the Reflections information out to the students and her continuous work on Reflections

**Yoko Kikuta** and her helpers for the wonderful Sweet Teacher Treats for Halloween and Thanksgiving lunch

**Lee Callander** for organizing the Council Luncheon

**Niuro Dev** for taking care of Red Ribbon Week

**Jennifer Tom** for selling and maintaining SCRIP sales

**Bernie Schmitt** for organizing and chairing the School Dance

The **Chaperones** who assisted the Fall String Concert

**Melinda SooHoo** and her **PALS** for all the work they did this month with Red Ribbon Week and mentoring the 6th grade.☺

# New Band Uniforms Make Debut!



*"When we become more fully aware that our success*

*is due in large measure to the loyalty, helpfulness,  
and encouragement we have received from others,  
our desire grows to pass on similar gifts.*

*Gratitude spurs to prove ourselves worthy of  
what others have done for us.*  
Wilferd A. Peterson



"When we become more fully aware that our success is due in large measure to the loyalty, helpfulness, and encouragement we have received from others, our desire grows to pass on similar gifts. Gratitude spurs to prove ourselves worthy of what others have done for us."

Wilferd A. Peterson

## Atten-Hut...SPARTANS!



On a crisp November morning in Baldwin Park, the First Avenue Marching Band majestically debuted in brand new uniforms of royal blue bibbers with gold strips and zipper-back white jackets with blue and gold accents. Gone were the old suspender pants, ruffle-fronts, cummerbunds, chains and hooked collar jackets of the last 20 years.

The marching band was led by Drum Major Alex Weisz who stood tall and poised. On his command, the band quickly stood at attention with instruments ready for play. The gold accents on the new uniforms shimmered to complement the sparkle of the instruments. Amidst resonating drums, the trumpets blared, flutes sang, clarinet and saxophones harmonized as the marchers stepped off with "Mighty Mite," the marching music arranged by and performed under the superb direction of our First Avenue music director Mr. Danielson. "Where are they from?" someone shouted as the crowd cheered and applauded for First Avenue Middle School from Arcadia.

When the awards were finally announced after the parade, our First Avenue Marching Band had triumphantly taken the 2009 first place trophy. Alex Weisz also took first place for middle school drum majors with the second highest overall score of the day including high school drum majors. And our drill team took a 2<sup>nd</sup> place finish. We were all so proud! Mr. Wilson remarked afterward, "Great job everyone. The students were amazing. The new uniforms looked fantastic." Congratulations to our students and Mr. "D!"

The culmination of the new uniforms began in the fall of 2006. Parent volunteer Lane Leidig led the new uniform fundraising campaign to replace the outdated and cumbersome uniforms of the 1980's. Parents, families and friends generously donated with direct contributions to invest in the future of the marching band experience. Our goal then was to put the wheel in motion to accumulate the necessary funds. Through persistent effort of the Music Club parents and the generous time and financial support of the First Avenue families, friends, and community, the new uniforms became a reality in the fall of 2009. On behalf of the Music Club, I would like to send a special thank you to all past and present donors who believed in our investment for the future is an investment in excellence.

A hearty thank you to all parent and family volunteers who

The marching band was led by Drum Major Alex Weisz who stood tall and poised. On his command, the band quickly stood at attention with instruments ready for play. The gold accents on the new uniforms shimmered to complement the sparkle of the instruments.



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helped with the Baldwin Park parade day preparations; such as resolving uniform issues, hat and plume issues, shoe issues, hair issues, loading instruments and equipment on and off the buses, being a chaperone on the bus, taking care of the snacks, feeding the band water, the awesome pictures (Claudia Gonzalez and Maria De La Rosa), and watching for the safety and well being of our kids. Your support is an integral part of our success. Our great school just did not magically happen overnight.

So come on out and enjoy our marching band as they continue to showcase their new uniforms at the Whittier Christmas Parade on December 12, 2009, and the Temple City parade coming in February 2010. You are also invited to the Music Club meetings which are held monthly at 8:15 p.m. on the first Tuesday of the month, after the PTSA meeting. Our next meeting is on December 1<sup>st</sup> in the new music building starting with a potluck dinner with the PTSA at 7 pm. See you then.



*Robert Kwan*

President, First Ave Music Club



## Music Mentors

A group of Arcadia High School students come to First Avenue every Friday to mentor our music students. From 3:15 to 4:15 these high school students help First Avenue music student improve their instrumental playing. It takes place in small groups so there's a lot of individual attention. No matter what level your musician is at this can be a beneficial time for them. You don't have to commit to every week - your child comes when it works with your calendar. ☺



# First District PTA Reflections Showcase



## **Congratulations First Avenue Reflection Program Winners!**

**Musical Composition**  
Nathan Chou - Winner

**Film Production**  
Jacky Liang - Winner

**Photography**  
Nathan Chou - 1st Place  
James Liem - 2nd Place  
Roni Yamane - 3rd Place  
Rachaelle Villa - Honorable Mention

**Visual Arts**  
Maggie Ye - 1st Place  
Vicki Xu - 2nd Place  
Yuqiao Zhao - 3rd Place  
Lu Che - Honorable Mention

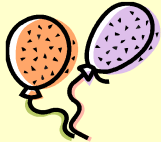
**Literature**  
Lena Atchan - 1st Place  
Jacky Kwok - 2nd Place  
Brittanie Gaja - 3rd Place  
Vanessa Yu - Honorable Mention



## "Happy Birthday To You!"

We'd like to recognize First Avenue's Staff & Teachers' birthdays for December & January.

Happy Birthday and we wish you many happy returns of the day!



*First Avenue Parents*

## DECEMBER—JANUARY

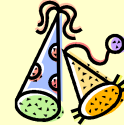
December 6 - Randa Weir

December 15 - Jaydene Davis

December 29 - Holly Bourgault

December 29 - Ken Klotzle

January 17 - Jerry Reck



## First Avenue Student Council News

The First Avenue Student Council is comprised of student leaders well suited for their positions. They have all had to navigate through some minor ordeals before achieving the honor of being part of Student Council. The member met the three steps necessary for election: First, they completed an application that showed current citizenship per class grades, and the required teacher and parent signatures. Second, our leaders must prepare a speech and attend a review of their speech in front of two of the teaching staff. Last, but not least, is the grand event of stepping up to a microphone during a grade level assembly and delivering the speech. There are many candidates for the position of class representative, however, only 10 per grade level are selected. The eighth grader receiving the most votes from their classmates is determined to be the President and the eighth grader with the second highest vote count is determined to be the Vice-President of the Student Council. The term of office is for half of the school year, with elections being held in late September or early October, and then again in February.

After elections are over, Student Council representatives meet every other Wednesday at 7:30 AM in Room 37. During the first meeting of each half, the Student Council elects the Secretary and Treasurer for that term. The official business of the Student Council is to control the funds that are earned by the student body throughout the year. Primarily, they approve funding for activities and make decision on final payments for those activities. The Student Council also plans entertaining theme days, such as Spartan Spirit Day, Halloween Costume Day, Favorite Disney Character Day and many more to come.

*Bryan Ngo*

President First Avenue Middle School Student Council

## SSC Has Lunch on Campus

Recently, we – the parent members of School Site Council – were treated to lunch at First Avenue Middle School! In addition to enjoying a tasty meal, we were given a tour of the food service facilities. We were so impressed with what we saw we just have to share it with you.

Our Principal, Mr. Wilson, showed us all of the different food options available to students such as the National School Breakfast and Lunch Program lunches, the Asian Food Bowl, pizza and ala carte items. As you can see from the photo, there were a lot of students out there eating lunch! Some students opt to bring lunches from home, but the majority of students purchase lunch on campus. We were amazed by what we saw: even with all of those people purchasing food, students went through the various lunch lines in under 9 minutes!



When you arrive at the lunch patio, you will see a new lunch service area to the right. This area houses the National School Breakfast and Lunch Program line, also known as the

Speed Line. If you are buying lunch in this area, you must exit with at least three items – an entrée, drink and side dish. If a student arrives at the cashier with only a sandwich or another entrée, they are asked to go back and get a side dish (something healthy like a side salad or an apple) and drink to round out the meal. Most kids buying lunch at this location enter their Student ID number on a pin-pad and the cost of the lunch is charged to their account. (Parents may deposit money into their child's account either online, or by sending

a check or cash to school with their student.) Some students pay with cash and this is acceptable, too. Additionally, if a student has forgotten to bring their lunch on any given day, they can go to this area and they will be provided with a lunch. The student will use the pin-pad to enter their Student ID number, and the cost of the lunch will be charged to their account. There are two lines going through this lunch area and it is very well organized and easy to figure out.

Separate from the Speed Line is our updated Snack Shack. The Snack Shack contains three food lines. The first two offer food provided by outside vendors. One of the options is an Asian Food Bowl and beverage priced at \$4.00. The Asian Food Bowl varies from teriyaki chicken, orange chicken and broccoli beef. This item is so popular that it usually



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sells out! Right next door is the pizza line. This, too, is very popular. It is an individual pizza, not just a slice, and it is provided by Round Table Pizza. The pizza is also accompanied by a choice of beverage. At either of these two lines, students may purchase their lunch with cash or by using the pin-pad to enter their Student ID number. Students may only use the pin-pad option if they currently have money in their account.

Just around the corner from these two lines is the ala carte line. These would be items that supplement a student's lunch, whether brought from home or purchased at school. Ala carte items include Robek's smoothies (a favorite among students!), milk, water, fruit, chips, and cookies. Items at the ala carte line may only be purchased with cash.

We were all surprised that the food is quite good! Our number one choice for students who like salad is the Chinese Chicken Salad sold at the Speed Line. It contains lots of fresh lettuce and plenty of chicken - a great healthy choice! We were also impressed with the other food items that we sampled - the Asian Food Bowl and Round Table pizza. Both were delicious!

Do you know about the 'Lunch Bunch'? The 'Lunch Bunch' is a handful of 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who volunteer to spend the first 15 minutes of the lunch period helping to sell food items. In return, they receive a free lunch.



Mr. Wilson and Mr. Rod are joined at lunch by a counselor and three lunch proctors who help monitor students during the lunch period. Mr. Wilson said that he really enjoys being out with students and it was clear that he knows them well. Some kids bring their own basketballs to play during lunch, and Mr. Rod also has a few available for student use.

We were very happy to receive our tour and eat lunch on campus. We know how rare a treat it is to be a parent 'lunching' at First Avenue!☺

## Recycling

**DID YOU KNOW...**even though there aren't recycling bins on campus First Avenue's trash still goes through a special sorting process and the cans & bottles the students dispose of at school are recycled through the trash company!☺



**Arcadia Unified School District Presents:**

America's Most Practical and Entertaining Parent Training

***Becoming a  
Love and Logic Parent®***

A seven-week parent training program designed by the Love and Logic® Institute, Inc.

Would you like to feel more confident as a parent?  
Would you like to have more fun parenting?  
Would you like to feel more relaxed at the end of the day?

**Answers to questions:**

"How do I get them out of bed in time to get to school?"  
"How can I stop my children from bickering and fighting?"  
"How do I get my children to help with the chores without an argument?"  
"How do I win the homework battle?"  
"Is there a way to discipline my toddler in public without creating a scene?"  
"How can I get my teenage daughter to come home at the agreed-upon time?"  
"How do I get him to stop spitting his peas and whining at dinner?"

And **skills** for many common daily frustrations... This parenting series is designed to give you practical skills that can be used immediately.

Facilitators: Nancy Martin, M.A., P.P.S. School Counselor, First Avenue Middle School  
Otto Rios, Community Outreach, Arcadia Unified School District  
Kelly Castillo, Teacher, Foothills Middle School

Dates: 7 sessions, Tuesdays, December 1, 8, 15, 2009,  
January 12, 19, 26 & February 2.

Time: 7:00 – 9:00 PM

Location: Foothills Middle School, Room 326 (Upstairs by the lunch area)  
171 East Sycamore, Arcadia, CA 91006

Cost: **FREE Course** (There is a \$12.00 fee for materials)  
Course is for adults only, please. There is no childcare provided.

**Registration: [nmartin@ausd.net](mailto:nmartin@ausd.net) or 626-821-8362 ext. 6232**

For more information, podcasts and video clips, visit [WWW.LOVEANDLOGIC.COM](http://WWW.LOVEANDLOGIC.COM)

## What's your child's learning style...what's yours?

Our Communication Specialist, Ms. Jaydene Davis will be sharing about the workshop she holds in the Science classes with the 7th graders before they leave for Outdoor Science School. In this workshop they weave together the theme of independence (personal responsibility and work habits) with discussions about multiple intelligences, the scientific method, diversity, the heroes' journey and character. The purpose of the workshop, *Leaving Childhood*, is both to activate an awareness of the profound changes that begin during the middle school years and to examine which intelligence style we each use to navigate the road towards adventure of growing up.

Please come to the January 5th PTSA meeting at 7 p.m. in the Auditorium for the 30 minute presentation preceding our regular meeting.☺

### First Avenue Counselors

*Ms. Nancy Martin*

Assignment: 6<sup>th</sup> Grade (All) & 7<sup>th</sup> Grade (Last Names M-Z)

Availability: Tuesday, Thursday & Friday-(Morning)

Contact: [nmartin@ausd.net](mailto:nmartin@ausd.net)

Phone: 821-8362 x 6232

*Mr. Kevin Darr*

Assignment: 7<sup>th</sup> Grade (Last Names A-L) & 8<sup>th</sup> Grade (All)

Availability: Monday, Wednesday & Friday

Contact: [kdarr@ausd.net](mailto:kdarr@ausd.net)

Phone: 821-8362 x 6238

### Come, Get Connected... PTSA Meetings 7 p.m.

December 1 (New Music Room)

January 5 (Auditorium)

February 2

March 2

April 13

May 4

June 1

### Do You Shop At Office Depot?

Office Depot has a 5% Back to Schools program all year long! If you are planning to shop at Office Depot (in the store or online) please be sure to include **First Avenue's School ID #: 70005681**.

Office Depot will give First Avenue a percentage of your purchase!☺

## 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Update

As we close out the first trimester, you have probably seen a change in your sixth grade student. He or she is probably a bit more confident about being in a new school and has learned the routes to their classes without any issues.

Students have learned that their agenda is an important tool in their academic lives, and have become adept at using them to the fullest. Sixth grade teachers have consistently been using technology in the classroom to supplement lessons and make them more engaging. With ongoing construction at full speed, First Avenue has been a busy place this trimester.

Academically, sixth graders have been busy and working hard. Other than the benchmark tests which help us all to gauge student learning, students are, or will be soon, reading the core literature book, *Bud, Not Buddy*, which has some great projects tied in to the literature such as the rulebook, riding the rails, and jazz music of the 1930's. Sixth graders are also learning how to write essays related to literature, which include character analyses, thematic essays, and narratives. History classes have been learning about ancient civilizations and how they came to be, including Mesopotamia and Egypt, through the use of projects like the Egyptian scrapbook, mummy project, and character recipe.

Mr. Townsend has been working on starting up the Science Club soon and will probably rename it the Garden Club or Ecology Club. They would like to begin building a new garden in the area of the old bike racks, and would like to have some of the projects tie in to other curricular areas. The newly renamed Garden/Ecology Club will probably meet after school one day a week, so look for announcements regarding enrollment in this club soon. The math classes have completed the beginning of year review and have embarked on pre algebra concepts. Not to be outdone, the physical education classes started the year with a *ropics* unit and are currently engaged in hockey skills and games. They also focus on push-ups and agility drills daily.



What a great year it's been so far with all the wonderful changes you see around campus. Students are definitely taking advantage of the new changes, and we hope to be seeing more new updates happening around here at FA.☺

### Past Honorary Service Award Winners

	2008	2009
Honorary Service Awards:	Kristin Miller Amy Resch Jenny Tsai Gina Kerfoot	Weiyi Ro David Chen Sue Wilkins
Continuing Service Awards:	Kathy Yamane	Lee Callander
Very Special Person Awards:	Ken Wong Patricia Mancillas-Wong	Jeff Laun Robert Kwan
Special Recognition:	First Avenue Staff	

## First Avenue PTSA HONORARY SERVICE AWARD—NOMINATION FORM

The Honorary Service Award Selection Committee requests members of the First Avenue PTSA for help in the selection of deserving recipients for recognition at the annual First Avenue PTSA Founder’s Day celebration in the spring. Nominated individuals or organizations are to have made significant contributions to the well-being of First Avenue’s children, youth or families throughout the city.

If you know of someone or an organization that deserves recognition, please complete this nomination form. Please do not assume that someone else will nominate your candidate. It is important that each truly deserving candidate be nominated for consideration. *All nominations will be considered.*

*\*Honorary Service Award Program includes the Honorary Service Award (HSA), Continuing Service Award (CSA), Golden Oak Service Award (California’s highest honor).*

Nomination DEADLINE is **February 10th**. Thank you for your help.

Terri Powell and Jill Trojanowski  
Honorary Service Committee

*Please type or print legibly – you may also submit your nomination to [tdpowell@pasadena.edu](mailto:tdpowell@pasadena.edu) to ensure consideration of your candidate, make sure all areas of form are completed.*

**Name of individual or organization nominated** \_\_\_\_\_

If an individual, his/her title or position \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Reason for nomination (Please present as much information as possible. Use additional paper if necessary.)**

**PTSA member submitting nomination:** \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

*Selections will be determined by the HSA Selection Committee.*

**Thank you!**





## First Avenue Traffic Report

You may have noticed a different look on the California side of First Avenue Middle School. We have a new Music building and by the time you read this the old one will be gone. In addition to the physical changes, we have also changed our student loading process in order to keep students safer as they arrive at school and leave at the end of the day. We have created a student loading zone just outside of the lunch pavilion. **Cones are set up in order to direct cars and make it clear that there is only one lane for loading and one for passing.** Parents are asked not to create a third lane to get around traffic faster. Doing so endangers drivers and passengers of oncoming traffic.



Drivers are also being asked to pull forward as far as possible in order to keep the traffic line moving quickly and smoothly. Cars that do not move forward cause traffic to back-up all the way to Santa Anita and sometimes even around the corner.

Students are only allowed to enter cars in the student loading zone, which begins just outside of the lunch pavilion area under the metal awning and extends eastward to the gate near the new music building. Students are only allowed to cross the street at the crosswalk, again for safety reasons. Signs are posted that students are not to be dropped off or picked up on the opposite side of the street.

**Our number one goal is student safety.** We understand that everyone is busy and often in a hurry, but your patience in the loading process helps us keep ALL students safe. Please allow enough time to deliver and pick-up your student while keeping all of our kids safe and sound.☺

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## Calling all 8th Grade Parents!

The 8th Grade Promotion Party date is scheduled for Wednesday, June 9th, 2010 from 6 to 9 p.m. Would you like to help plan the First Avenue 8th Grade Promotion Party? If you are interested, please plan on attending our **first meeting on Wednesday, January 6th, 2010 at 7:00 p.m.** in the school Library (location may change due to construction). Your presence and participation is vital and we'd love to see you there!

Future meeting dates are: February 3, March 3, April 14, and May 5. There may be a June meeting before the party if necessary to finalize details.

Thank you!

Dana Thompson, Deanna Nancarrow, Terri Powell, Violet Htoon, and Lee Callander  
First Avenue 8th Grade Promotion Party Chairs



## DID YOU KNOW?

The Arcadia Child Health Council was organized in 1937, during the Depression, to meet the health needs of Arcadia's children from limited income families. It continues to offer this help today, assisting with access to needed health care, on a round-the-clock basis, to children who live within or attend school in the Arcadia Unified School District. Treatments include medical exams, surgery, dental, optical and pharmacy needs, counseling, lab work, hospitalization, and more.

The Arcadia PTAs, community service clubs and private donations provide financial support for the Arcadia Child Health Council. Additionally, Arcadia Methodist Hospital and many local doctors, dentists, therapists and pharmacists donate or offer their services at substantially lower rates. No fees are ever charged to families. All donations to the ACHC are tax deductible, and are guaranteed to be used to help a child who might otherwise go without treatment.

If you, or a family you know would benefit from this service, please contact the office at (626) 701-0044 and leave a message. All calls and subsequent treatments are completely confidential.☺

## Trick or Treat for UNICEF

Miss Soo Hoo and the PALS at First Avenue Middle School organized **Trick or Treat for UNICEF** during the Halloween season. First Avenue students have joined with UNICEF for 9 years to bring help and support to children in need!

This year our First Avenue students raised **\$589.77** to help UNICEF help children! Every penny counts!

- \$2 provides nutrition for 1 hungry kid
- \$44 provides school supplies to 20 kids
- \$122 provides emergency blankets to 37 kids
- \$200 immunizes 550 kids against measles

UNICEF is a great organization who helps countless children endure disease, disasters, and other hardships.

For more information on UNICEF you can visit their website at [www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org)☺



## To the Families of First Ave,

Thank you for your donations of food for our first dance of the year and thanks to everyone who chaperoned the dance. It is with your help that the school dance was a success! It is because of you that we had a safe and enjoyable environment. On behalf of PTA, the staff and students at First Avenue THANK YOU!

*Bernie Schmitt* — Chairperson School Dances

## What you need to know about SCHOOL DANCES

**Location:** The school dances are held at Baldwin Stocker School (422 W. Lemon Avenue) in their Multipurpose Room.

**Time:** Dances are held between 6pm and 8pm. There are three dance held throughout the school year.

**Tickets:** Tickets are sold at First Ave a few days before the dance and sell for \$4.00. Only students of First Ave are able to attend. ID cards must be shown along with a ticket to enter the dance. All grades are welcomed to participate.

**Chaperones:** We always need chaperones. You can help by serving snacks, pouring drinks, making sure that the students are behaving accordingly inside or by helping watching the outside of the dance site where the kids play games.

**Snacks and Drinks:** There are always snacks, water & powered lemonade available to the student during the dances. These items are generously donated by you, the parents. If we have snacks that aren't used we try to save them for the next dance. Sometime before the next dance an e-mail will be sent to the listserv requesting food donations. We so appreciate all donations.

### Rules:

1. Only First Avenue students may attend the dance.
2. Tickets and ID Cards must be shown to enter the dance.
3. A parent or chaperone must drop off and pick up the student at Baldwin Stocker School. No students are permitted to leave the site on their own.

The next school dance will be held in January 2010. If you have any questions or if I do not have your email and you would like to help chaperone or donate snacks please feel free to email me at [rockinfs@aol.com](mailto:rockinfs@aol.com).

*Bernie Schmitt*

School Dance Chairperson



## Keeping Kids Busy Offline Keeps Them Safer Online

*The Online Mom* reports that recent research from Queensland, Australia has drawn a parallel between the activities of children offline and the likelihood of them getting into trouble online. Griffith University researchers Margee Hume and Gillian Sullivan-Mort interviewed over 150 children between the ages of 10 and 18 and found that those involved in fewer extracurricular activities were also the ones most likely to exhibit risky behavior online.



During the course of the study, Hume found that keeping children occupied and active away from the computer was one of the key components of cultivating a healthy and safe relationship with the Internet. "Exercise was a big factor. All the kids who were participating in sports or dancing and other activities not involving the Internet had experienced fewer problems online," she said.

They had a better sense of self and wellbeing and could balance out instances of cyberbullying with their friendships away from the school and the web. The children who were most at risk were those who were socially and geographically isolated and did not have a strong interest in other activities. "In many respects, it's not what children are doing online which is the problem, it's the balance of what they are doing offline which is important," said Hume.

The researchers found there were plenty of strategies parents could put in place to protect their children which they were not currently implementing. As a result, they have called for the development of guidelines to help parents prevent their children from being exposed to dangers on the Internet. "Lack of parental supervision, isolated or excessive computer use, and lack of offline activity all increase the risks associated with online activity," Hume said.

Hume and Sullivan-Mort said the potential dangers faced by children included cyberbullying, adults and children impersonating other users, the exchange of intimate photos and videos, and the sharing of personal secrets online. "We need to have easily accessible and affordable programs for parents, as well as a strong social marketing campaign which draws attention to the dangers children face online and how to protect them," Hume said.

However, "we can't keep blaming the tool," she added. "The importance of parental involvement and a strong roster of offline activities can't be emphasized enough."

For more information about your kids and technology in English and Spanish, visit <http://www.theonlinemom/>

Taken from the PTA Website

## We Need You!

Parents! Studies and anecdotal information have demonstrated that schools with a high level of parent support and participation have higher-achieving students? Student success is important to all of us, and in order to assure this will continue for our children, your involvement is needed. First Avenue is a high achieving school, but our eighth grade families will be leaving us. We need YOU!

This January, FAPTSA will begin the process of selecting new officers and committee chairs. I hope you will consider joining this group of wonderful, dedicated parents, teachers and students by volunteering to take on a position with the PTSA. It's a great way to make new friends, challenge yourself, and get to know our teachers, administrators and school staff and policies better. Don't be shy (we ALL were) - get in touch with Weiyi Ro at [weiyilin@gmail.com](mailto:weiyilin@gmail.com) and let her know you would like to help. We NEED YOU!☺

### 2010-2011 PTSA Positions

Following is a list of the PTSA positions we need to fill, with a very brief summary of what the job entails.

**President**-Presiding Officer of our Organization...multiple duties and responsibilities.

**Executive Vice President**-Assists the president. One of his/her extraneous duties is to assist in providing lunch for the AUSD Luncheon during their appreciation period.

**First VP-Legislation**-Provides our membership with education about PTA positions on various legislation.

**Second VP-Ways and Means**-Raises the amount of monies needed by the PTSA as noted in the budget. Also, will work with Vice Principal with School Fundraiser (magazine drive).

**Third VP-Membership**- Assists in membership drive and keeps the list of current members.

**Fourth VP-Newsletter/Publicity**-Produces five newsletters throughout the school year.

**Recording & Corresponding Secretary**-Attends meetings and/or trainings. Keeps an accurate, concise, permanent record of meetings. Reads the minutes when called upon so. Reads correspondences and sends notices of meetings.

**Treasurer**- Authorized custodian of funds, keeps records and generates reports to comply with laws and for meetings.

**Financial Secretary**- Receives all the monies collected by the PTSA , submits all records for the semi-annual audit.

**Auditor**-Audits the books semiannually.

**Historian**-Assemble and preserves the record of the activities and achievements of the PTSA and assists the president in the submission of the Annual Report.

**Parliamentarian**-appointed by President

## Holiday Hospitality

### Help us Spoil Our First Avenue Teachers!

It's time to treat our teachers & staff to the annual Winter Breakfast on Friday, December 18. Food items would need to be delivered to school by 7:30 a.m. If you can donate food to this event please contact Yoko Kikuta at [yokofrph@hotmail.com](mailto:yokofrph@hotmail.com). Thank you!

## A New Baby!

Congratulations to the Darr Family! Gabriel Thomas Darr was born November 2nd at 5:10 a.m. He weighed in at 8 pounds, 6 ounces and was 21 1/2 inches long. He was born at home - his dad delivered him! Both mom and dad and big sisters, Gianna and Aliya, are thrilled with their new addition.



## Protect Your Family

Dear Parents,

We realize that you may still have concerns about the H1N1 (Swine Flu). A letter was sent out to you back in April of this year regarding this illness, but some of the information is worth repeating .

This flu can cause a wide range of symptoms, including fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people have vomiting and diarrhea. If your child should have these symptoms, please contact your health care provider about any special care that they may need, and if any medications are recommended. Try to keep ill person away from others as much as possible to avoid spreading this illness.

Also, please have ill student stay home for at least 24 hours after fever and other symptoms are gone, so when the student returns to school they are symptom free without the use of any medications. This is most important to help control the spread of this illness!

There are a few precautions you can do and to instruct your child to do as well to help prevent and /or stop the spread of this flu. These precautions are always good to use during any time illness is present.

- Wash your hands often in running water with lots of soap for 20 seconds
- Cover coughs and sneezes with tissues or by coughing into the inside of the elbow. Throw the tissue into the trash, and immediately wash your hands afterward.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches their eyes, nose or mouth.
- Stay at least 3 feet away from people who are sick if possible.

We have also put in the hallways at First Avenue automatic dispensing machines that dispense hand sanitizing lotion for our students to use as needed .

Your cooperation in dealing with this flu will help make our school a much healthier place to learn!☺

### Website to check out:

[TweenParent.com](http://TweenParent.com),

a site full of advice including a "Tween Lingo" dictionary.

## SCRIP

Looking for the perfect holiday gifts? Buy scrip and support our school. We have lots of gift cards from many department stores and markets. For every dollar you spend on scrip, the merchants will donate a certain percentage of the money back to our school. The proceeds from the scrip sale are used to support various programs for our children at First Avenue.

Please go to <http://fapta.pbworks.com/SCRIPOrderForm> (print out form, pdf file) complete the form and e-mail to [j.j.tom@sbcglobal.net](mailto:j.j.tom@sbcglobal.net). Thank you for all your support.

### Available SCRIP

#### Grocery Stores:

99 Ranch (\$10, \$20)

Hong Kong (\$20)

Super A (\$5, \$10, \$20)

Arcadia Super Market (\$25, \$50, \$100)

Safeway/Vons/Pavilions (\$25, \$100)

Whole Foods (\$50, \$100)

#### Specialty Stores:

AMC Theater (\$25)

Baja Fresh (\$25)

Bed, Bath & Beyond (\$25)

Blockbuster (\$10)

California Pizza Kitchen (\$10)

GAP/Old Navy/Banana Republic (\$25)

Jamba Juice (\$10)

Macy's (\$25)

Outback Steakhouse (\$25)

Smart & Final (\$25, \$50)

T.J. Maxx/Marshall's (\$25)

Williams-Sonoma/Pottery Bar (\$25)

ARCO (\$50)

Bath & Body Works (\$10, \$25)

Best Buy (\$25, \$100)

Borders Book Store (\$10, \$25)

Cheesecake Factory (\$25)

Home Depot (\$25, \$100, \$500\*)

KFC (\$5)

Office Depot (\$25)

See's Candy (\$15)

Starbuck's (\$10, \$25)

Toys R Us/Kids R Us (\$20)

4-in-1 including Chili's Restaurant (\$25)

*\*Home Depot \$500 cards will only be ordered by special request. Please allow three weeks for delivery.*

## Chinese Translators Needed

We would like to provide Chinese translation of the First Avenue Middle School Newsletter and need your help! If you are available to *help* translate the newsletter please contact Weiyi Ro at [weiyilin@gmail.com](mailto:weiyilin@gmail.com). The newsletter comes out every other month so there are only four more issues this year to translate! Your help would be so appreciated.

# Arcadia Unified School District And City of Arcadia

## Joint Use Gymnasium Project Groundbreaking Ceremony Dana Middle School

November 5, 2009

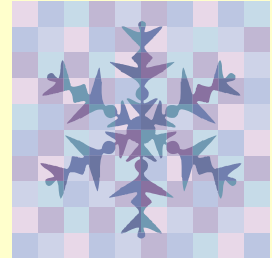




## Upcoming Events

### December 2009

- 3 on 3 Basketball Tournament (see page 4)
- 1 SSC/SLT meeting, 2:30 p.m., Lounge
- 1 Orchestra Winds After School Rehearsal (2:15 – 3:10 p.m.)
- 1 Peer Tutoring (2:20 – 3:20 p.m.)
- 1 PTSA & Music Club Potluck Meal, 7 p.m., Music Building
- 1 First Avenue PTSA meeting , 7:00 p.m., Music Building
- 1 First Avenue Music Club meeting, 8:15p.m., Music Building
- 2 Student Council Meeting (7:30 a.m.)
- 2 High School Tutors Interventions (3:25 – 4:30 p.m., Rm 11 & 12)
- 3 FA Minimum Day - school ends at 12:15 p.m.
- 3 Full Orchestra (7th/8th) After School Rehearsal (1:30 – 3 p.m.)
- 4 String Orchestra (7th/8th) Early Morning Rehearsal, 7 a.m.
- 4 FA Minimum Day and end of first trimester - school ends at 12:15 p.m.
- 7 High School Tutors Interventions (3:25 – 4:30 p.m., Rm 11 & 12)
- 8 Peer Tutoring (2:20 – 3:20 p.m.)
- 9 High School Tutors Interventions (3:25 – 4:30 p.m., Rm 11 & 12)
- 10 Peer Tutoring (2:20 – 3:20 p.m.)
- 10 Marching Band After school Rehearsal, 2:15-3:10 P.M., Music Room
- 11 Marching Band Early Morning Rehearsal, 7a.m., Music Room
- 11 Marching Band After School Rehearsal, 3:10-4:30p.m., Music Room
- 11 Music Mentors, 3:15-4:15p.m., Music Room
- 12 Whittier Parade, Time TBA A.M. , Whittier
- 16-17 Winter Concerts, 7p.m., Auditorium
- 18 Holiday Assembly Concert (during school)
- 18 PTSA sponsored Winter Breakfast for our Teachers (see page 22)
- 21-31 Winter Break - no school



### January 2010

- 1 New Year's Holiday - no school
- 5 SSC/SLT meeting, 2:30 p.m., Lounge
- 5 First Avenue PTSA meeting, 7:00 p.m., Auditorium (see page 14)
- 5 First Avenue Music Club meeting, 8:15p.m., Music Building
- 6 Eighth Grade Promotion Party meeting-7p.m., Library (see page 17)
- 18 Martin Luther King Holiday - no school
- 22 Newsette Deadline [fanewsletter@ausd.net](mailto:fanewsletter@ausd.net)
- 29 School Dance, Baldwin Stocker MP Room, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. (see page 19)
- Progress Reports Go Home to Parents

