



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

JUNE 2009
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FIRST AVENUE PTSA

- ◆ Jeff Wilson, Principal
- ◆ Lee Callander, President
- ◆ Amy Resch, Editor

This is the final issue of the First Avenue Newsletter for this year. It has been a pleasure editing the Newsletter the past two years for First Avenue. I hope everyone has a great summer vacation!

Amy Resch

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PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

An American Tale

A young Italian man exhausted and weak in the knees, newly arrived from the old country sets foot for the first time on an uneven wooden pier and takes his first breath of new world air. As he steps over lurching water pipes supplying the many vessels moored on the pier, the sound of machinery is deafening. With his wife and two small kids, he is quickly herded into a processing area where numerous foreign languages are spoken – none of which he understands. Multitudes of people are speaking at once asking questions he doesn't comprehend. He fills-out paperwork not knowing what he is signing. He is confused, scared and uncertain about what the future holds. He turns and looks over his shoulder and for the first time views Lady Liberty proudly presiding over the largest city he has ever seen. His heart

rises with hope. A scene from Ellis Island in New York Harbor? Not exactly... just another Thursday at First Avenue Middle School as our 8th graders celebrated Ellis Island day.

Unique, creative and interesting instructional activities abound at First Avenue Middle School bringing state standards and curriculum alive to our students. Along with the Ellis Island processing area, our 8th graders experienced what it meant to be a late 19th or early 20th-century newly arrived immigrant in New York City. The students visited a museum that displayed immigration stories of our more recent immigrants; a reader's theater provided illuminating first-hand accounts of Ellis Island immigrants; and a movie theater where moving stories were heard of the hardships of third-world people who sojourned to

America. The day was made complete with a semi-official oath and swearing-in as United States citizens by a famous judge (well... would you believe Mr. Wilson?).

Other fantastic learning activities throughout the year have and will include, Greek Day, Workshop in the Woods, the House of Blues historical tribute to the origins of modern music, the Physics Day at Knott's Berry Farm, the Spartan Olympics, dramatic and musical presentations, and many other interesting and varied learning experiences. First Avenue Middle School is proud to have teachers who invest their expertise and energy in these exceptional learning opportunities for all of our students.

Jeff Wilson,
Principal



President's Message

Dear First Avenue Families,

With just a handful of days to go before summer vacation, I'd like to look back on my last two years as PTSA President. The time has been exciting, to say the least. We celebrated our school's Centennial in October 2007, later bid a fond farewell to Dr. Klatt, welcomed our wonderful new Principal, Mr. Wilson, and have watched the hallways and campus transforming into an up-to-date facility. Between these major changes, the PTSA has woven together its usual array of programs that benefit our students, families and staff.

I feel truly privileged to have served in this position along with an incredible group of moms and dads who have so generously given their time and effort to support our school. We are all so fortunate to have our children attend a school where the parents, administrators and teachers together form a successful team.

Thanks again to the 2008-09 PTSA team – and best wishes to Kathy Yamane and the new group of volunteers for 2009-10!

Have a wonderful summer!

Yours truly,

Lee Callander

PTSA President 2008-09

2009-10 First Avenue Middle School PTSA Board

Kathy Yamane – President

Lee Callander – Executive Vice President

Lynne Greenup – First Vice President–Legislation

Vicky Stiles – Second Vice President–Ways & Means

Deanna Nancarrow – Third Vice President–Membership

Maryann Stevens – Fourth Vice President–Newsletter & Publicity

Michelle Kakish – Recording and Corresponding Secretary

Karen Acosta – Treasurer

Dana Thompson – Financial Secretary

Nina Chen – Auditor

Terri Powell – Historian



Incoming President's Message

Dear First Avenue Families,

The excitement of a bright sunny morning; the cool crisp air against your face; this is what we are enjoying this past month. The State Tests are but a memory, and we are looking forward to the excitement of summer! We are writing our appreciation notes to our teachers-we are lucky and blessed to have this amazing "family" of teachers who support and nurture our students. A third of our students are looking onward and upward to the high school. It is a different and exciting world a few blocks down Santa Anita. Their summer will be filled with high school exploration classes-summer school, athletic classes, tryouts, music camps, athletic camps-the hot days of preparation for the high school. Fare thee well and travel the high road, my friends. Do your best and remember your teachers and friends here at First Avenue. WE are very proud of you. Spartan Pride always! One more bit of advice! Don't let people tell you different-Ninth Grade does count!

For us who remain here at First Avenue, another exciting year will come after the summer. Some of us will go abroad, we'll go on trips, some will go to summer school, some will be bored in front of the electronics during the summer...BUT, when we come back...we will come back to a new FIRST AVENUE, one that is different from the 100+ year old school we had when we arrived. We will have a new Music Building; no more practicing in the closets, a real track; no more running around the outside of the school, a new auditorium; new seats, new stage, upgraded classrooms-TECHNOLOGY abounds...what new visions and class plans will the teachers expect...it's amazing...and the new students coming in will know this technology. But, the education and excitement of learning which our teachers bring out in our very human children continues.

And helping support our students and our wonderful teachers is their amazing families. Without the support of their parents and families this school, this school district, this city would not have the wonderful reputation that we all enjoy. This summer will slip by fast-and when August rolls around, we need your help. Please do not schedule your children to be away during Spartan Days...they need to register for school, get their books, take their ID pictures, get their uniforms, their schedules, so that they can start SCHOOL the first day of school without this extra paperwork. This year, Spartan Days has been condensed to one day, so it is especially important that you get your child on campus on **Thursday, August 20, 2009**. We need parent volunteers to help get our entire school registered...then you can have a week off before **school starts on TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2009**. Please be aware that this is BEFORE the Labor Day Holiday. If you'd like to volunteer to help, please contact me at mikatyam@aol.com ASAP. I will put you down for a shift...7:45-11 or 1245-4p.m. I will also remind you before the summer is over. We do have a makeup day -you should get a letter from the school during the summer.

One more thing-as usual, I would like to urge you all to get involved in the school. You all have heard that parents who support their children in the schools have more successful students. I don't need to reiterate that; however, I would ask you to think about your children's role models-in a few years your child will be going off to college, to work, to adulthood. What every parent wants is a successful, well -rounded fulfilled member of society. Who is their first role model? You, the parent! It is easier to get involved in your child's school now and transition to the larger high school, than it is just to jump into a large pool. Get involved...come to a PTSA meeting, come meet us. We all started somewhere. Honestly we are all very shy (well, at least I am)-so come! Welcome!

Yours,

Kathy Yamane

P.S. School Starts
Tuesday, September 1st,
Labor Day Holiday is
September 7th.

Incoming PTSA President 2009-10

From the Desk of Mr. Rod



Notes from Mr. Rod's Desk

THANK YOU, PARENTS

This has been a wonderful and very interesting year. You have continued to support First Avenue and helped make this the successful year we have had. I hope that those of you with returning stu-

Drive, Student Council elections, Back-to-School Night, school dance parties, Outdoor Science School (OSS), Magazine Drive Prize Day, PTSA meetings once a month, district-wide earthquake drills, parades & Festival of Bands, school plays, holiday concerts, grade level trips, Spartan Olympics, Spartan Mile races at lunch, bas-

ketball tournaments at lunch, special dress-up days, sports league play at lunch, California State Testing, Ellis Island (8th grade), Workshop in the Wood (7th grade), Greek Day (6th grade), Nite at the Movies and Community concerts. Finally we ended the year with yearbook distribution and Promotion Party for our departing 8th graders.

dent will see the benefits of our reconstruction year starting in the Fall. As for those of you who will end your years with us we wish much success to your student who continues on in high school. We have enjoyed having your middle school student with us. And remember, even though they move on

they will always be **SPARTANS.**

THIS YEAR

Many things are brought to mind as I think over this past year, beginning with Spartan Days in August and then the first day of school, with green fences all around and portable classrooms on the front lawn. We had grade level assemblies, the Magazine

Now it is on to summer vacation or summer school (or both) or perhaps yet another adventure. But, that is what middle school is all about – an adventure.

Have a wonderful
summer,

Mr. Rod

Rod Rodriguez

Assistant Principal

Congratulations Mr. Danielson

Mike Danielson, First Avenue's own wonderful music teacher, was chosen as California's nominee to the National Education Association Foundation Award for Teaching Excellence. The NEA Foundation Awards for Teaching Excellence recognize, reward and promote excellence in teaching and advocacy for the profession. Submitted to the program by ATA president Cindy Stewart, Mr. Danielson was the State selection committee's unanimous choice to represent California! Teachers selected for this award represent professionalism, creativity and dedication to teaching and learning. It's no surprise to anyone at First Avenue that Mr. Danielson was chosen to represent California! Congratulations!!!



Pictured in photo: Jeff Wilson (principal of First Avenue), Cindy Stewart (ATA president), Mike Danielson, Joann Steinmeier (Board of Education president) and Superintendent Joel Shawn.

Important Dates

Registration Dates For Returning First Avenue Students

AUGUST 20

- 6th Grade: 8:00 a.m. - 11 a.m.
- 7th Grade: 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.
- 8th Grade: 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

AUGUST 27

Make-up (all grades) Thursday A - Z 9:00 a.m.

Registration Dates For 8TH GRADERS entering Arcadia High School

August 21 (All Incoming Freshmen)

8:00 a.m. - 2:45 p.m.

(Alphabetical breakdown of times per grade level is not available at this time. You will be able to access the website when you go through the online registration process as to what time the student is to report).

Calendar of Upcoming Events

June 2009

- 9 Lawn Concert**
- 10 8th Grade Promotion Party (6-9pm) Community Center**
- 11 F.A. Minimum Day—School Ends at 12:15 p.m.**
- 12 F.A. Last Day of School— Minimum Day School Ends 12:15 p.m.**

August 2009

- 20 PTSA Membership Drive begins**
- 20 6th Grade: 8:00 – 11 a.m.**
- 7th Grade: 1p.m.-3p.m.**
- 8th Grade: 2-4p.m.**
- 27 Make-up (all grades) Thursday A – Z 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.**

September 2009

- 1 WELCOME BACK TO SCHOOL!!! First Day, Tuesday Rotating Schedule**
- 1 PTSA meeting ,7:00 p.m. , Library**
- 1 Music Club meeting, 8:15p.m.,Music Room**
- 7 Labor Day Holiday**

FA PTSA Website link: <http://fapta.pbwiki.com/>

Have a Great Summer!

See you next year at

First Avenue!