

BEAR TRACKS



Theodore Judah Elementary School *3919 McKinley Blvd. *Sacramento, CA 95819 *277-6364

September 2009 Edition

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MESSAGE FROM PTA PRESIDENT

Dear Theodore Judah Families and Staff,

Welcome back to all returning families and a warm welcome to those joining us for the first time! I am Donna Dowson, your Theodore Judah PTA President for the 2009-2010 school year. I hope everyone had a great, relaxing summer and are ready for the exciting year ahead. Your PTA has been working over the summer planning some fun activities and programs for our children. We will hold the first general PTA meeting at the annual **Membership BBQ** on **September 24**. This will be a great opportunity to meet all the new and returning families of Theodore Judah. Details will be sent home closer to the date of the event. At the general PTA meeting, we will adopt the budget for 2009-2010. This is your opportunity to see how we, your PTA, plan to use the funds raised throughout the year. Please join us to get more information about the PTA, our vision for the year, and volunteer opportunities.

The Theodore Judah PTA is here for our children and families. To be successful, we need volunteers! Every little bit makes a difference. You can volunteer in the classroom, at events after school, or even help with some small items in the evenings. If you have a lot of time, great! If you only have a little time, that's OK too; we'll find something for you. The most effective way to know what's happening in the school is to volunteer and be involved. It is a great way to meet new people and get to know the school and the community.

By now you probably know our school is in the middle of a major landscape renovation. This has been made possible due to countless hours of dedication and hard work from several families, community members, and district employees. However, none of this would have happened without the tireless efforts of our Garden Docent Coordinator, Shannon Hardwicke who is spearheading the project and managing all the eager volunteers. Her enthusiasm is contagious and her spirit and drive unyielding. Please be sure to give her a huge thank you when you see her on campus!

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the PTA, please contact me at 916-798-9001 or donna@d3x.com. I look forward to meeting and working with you and hope everyone has a great year. Remember....Together, we are Better!

Donna Dowson, PTA President

"Great opportunities to help others seldom come, but small ones surround us daily." - Sally Koch



THEODORE JUDAH GARDEN PROGRAM IS BRINGING SCIENCE TO LIFE.

Well over 200 volunteers worked this summer to improve our campus and to extend our garden and science learning sites. You may have noticed our torn up lawn and bare grounds but it is all to improve the landscaping, water usage and to provide more learning zones. The front will now have a native plant and woodland garden learning zone, along with pathways and sitting areas that will offer our families and community new areas to learn and enjoy. Many thanks to our garden sponsors **Sutherland Plumbing** and **John Deer Landscaping**. They have made some great in kind donations to our landscaping projects.

In addition to the mess we have made in front, we have expanded our vegetable garden. The students will be able to see their food growing!!! What a concept. The area behind the cafeteria has been turned and planted with additional crops to help fuel our school garden snack. We have voracious veggie eaters on our campus. This area will also house a new outdoor classroom with sitting area and shade structure. All students will meet in this area to start their garden lessons this year. You may also notice some beautiful flowers in this zone. These are the start of a butterfly garden/ insect pavilion.

We hope to transform our campus and bring science to life. It is our goal to create hands on science learning zones through out campus. This program, called Science Alive will begin this year with a partnership between garden class time and science lab. Students will be learning the same subjects during their science lab and their garden units. We hope this will enable students to grasp this curriculum and get really excited about science.

If you would like to get involved in the Science Alive/garden program.... There is a place for you. Don't hesitate to call the office for more information. Remember we run this program on volunteers. You are crucial to our success.

We will be having a native **plant sale** on the night of the Membership BBQ on September 24th. We encourage you to decorate your homes or stock up on gifts from our great Theodore Judah plant sale!

PS - Go on a hunt around campus with your kids. We have some great pumpkins, watermelon, gourds and squash hiding in some very peculiar places. Its really fun!

Shannon Hardwicke, Garden Docent Coordinator



MISSOULA CHILDREN'S THEATRE

After the success of last year's show, Red Riding Hood, our PTA is excited to bring back the Missoula Children's Theatre for a one week residency at Theodore Judah October 12-17th. The Missoula Children's Theatre is a non profit organization based in Missoula, Montana. This coming year more than 65,000 cast members across the globe will take the stage to the delight and applause of their families, friends, community, neighbors and teachers!

Auditions' for this year's show, Rumpelstiltskin, will be held Monday, October 11th after school at 2:15pm in the Auditorium. There are roles for students in Kindergarten through 6th grade. Approximately 50 - 60 of our students will be cast to appear in the show. This is a group audition - no advance preparation is necessary, but a smile never hurts. Students should be ready to come and have a good time. This is a one week commitment and due to the limited rehearsal time, attendance is required at all rehearsals. Please consider rescheduling any after school appointments or activities for this week so your child will have the opportunity to participate. There is no guarantee that everyone that auditions will be cast in the play, but everyone will have the opportunity to see the play at the end of the week.

The Mission of MCT is the *development of life skills in children through participation in the performing arts*. Please encourage your child to experience this fantastic opportunity.

Need more information? Contact Dana Moore, danam@rcip.com, 505-8928



ART DOCENT'S CORNER

Have you seen some of the great art our students have created and want to be a part of it? An Art Docent may be the perfect volunteer position for you. The PTA Art Docents go in to classes once a month and present Great works of Art to the students and a project. All the lessons are created we just need docents to implement them. It is helpful to have more than one docent per class so grab a friend and volunteer together. **NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY**. Beware - you may become the HERO in your child's class, as students love art docents.

We have some exciting projects planned for the year. Your commitment of 2-3 hours per month will be sure to expand each student's imagination (which actually improves their problem solving abilities, spatial thinking and math).

Please join us for an **Art Docent Orientation Friday September 18th at 8:15 am**

Location: Theodore Judah in Room 20 (the portable across from the cafeteria)

Remember to check in at the office for a visitor's pass first!

If you want to be an art docent, but cannot attend orientation please contact me.

A new program we are starting is **Open Studio Friday**. One Friday a month Room 20 will be open during the lunch break for students to stop in and create a piece of art. September's theme is: "What did you do over summer vacation?" There will be paint,

markers, collage materials, and other supplies. Students must eat their lunch first before dropping in. The first open studio of the school year is Friday September 18th. Volunteer Art docent and parents will be needed to man the studio. Let me know if you are interested.

Dana Moore, Art Docent Coordinator
505-8928, danam@rcip.com

HARVEST FESTIVAL AROUND THE CORNER

Date: Friday, October 23, 2009

Time: 4:00 pm to 7:30 pm

Admission: FREE

Location: Theodore Judah Elementary School

- **What is the purpose of the Harvest Festival?**

Fundraising for the teachers' classroom supplies and materials. The Sacramento community is invited to enjoy a free admission and family-fun neighborhood festival at Theodore Judah Elementary. Theodore Judah is very much part of the community and it is our way of giving back and helping our teachers.

- **Does it raise funds for the school? If so, how much money was raised this year and for what will it be used?**

The 2008 Harvest Festival raised \$1816. Whatever money the teachers' booths generate, the teacher can use at his or her own discretion. The remaining balance generated is allocated to the PTA account for the music teacher's salary and field trip bus transportation.

- **About how many people attended this year's HF? Is that more, less or about the same as usual?**

In 2007 we had about 600 people attend; in 2008, we had approx. 1200 people. This year we expect to grow larger. We advertise on our school campus, distribute flyers in the neighborhood, nearby school such as St. Francis, Washington, Caleb Greenwood, Phoebe Heart, David Lubin, Sacred Heart and the Montessori schools.

- **What types of activities were included?**

Theodore Judah continues to offer 25¢ game tickets so that it is affordable to all families. Home Depot will return with their kid's woodshop where the children can built pre-cut wooden block in various objects, such as boats, banks, cars, bird house, etc..The Sacramento Area Woodcrafters will demonstrate wood craving. This year, Roxie Deli & Grocery will be serving the food. He will be serving is famous smoked BBQ steak sandwiches for \$12 and serve Reeds Gourmet Meat hamburgers. We'll have over 30 other community organization participating. We will have raffles items, over 20 carnival games, Dr. Gedestad will take pictures of children's teeth with his microscopic camera, an actor's studio, free give-a-ways, live entertainment, garden sales, face painting, martial arts, cookie decorations, scarecrow contest, decorate a tile (garden fundraiser), and health organizations.

Typically the teachers pay out-of-pocket for the gift prizes. We are seeking sponsors to assist the teachers in this area so teachers can redirect their funds and purchase more supplies for their students. Hope to see you all there!

Louis Yanez, VP Fundraiser,
Sacramento Council of PTAs, 2nd VP Reflection Coordinator
455-6683, learnwisdom@sbcglobal.net

PTA REFLECTIONS PROGRAM

This year Theodore Judah will be participating in the Reflections program, A National PTA arts recognition and achievement program that provides students opportunities to express themselves creatively, receive positive recognition and increase community awareness of the importance of the arts in education. This year's theme is "**Beauty Is...**" All Theodore Judah students are eligible to submit entries in any of six categories: Literature, Musical Composition, Photography, Visual Arts, Dance Choreography and Film/Video Production. Our Art Docents will be working on Visual Arts entries with the students, but students are welcome to submit in other categories. See <http://www.capta.org/sections/programs/reflections.cfm> for official rules and entry forms.. The deadline for all submissions is Friday, November 20th. Louis Yanez our PTA VP of Fundraising is also the VP Chairperson of the Reflections Program for the Sacramento Council of PTA's. He is arranging an independent group of judges to judge our student's work. Outstanding entries will be sent on the District, State and National PTA level. The PTA is in need of a parent volunteer to collect all the artwork and package to be sent off for judging. Please contact Louis Yanez (501-8754) or Dana Moore (505-8928) if you are interested.