

## Plano ISD Council of PTAs Newsletter

November/December 2008

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### Calendar & Contacts

The [Council calendar](#) is on the [Plano PTA website](#). If you are a google calendar user, you can easily add it to your personal calendar.

[Contacts](#) for the PTA Council board and information about each position can also be found on the website.

### Quick Links...

[Plano PTA \(Our Website\)](#)  
[National PTA](#)  
[Texas PTA](#)  
[Area 15 PTA](#)  
[Plano ISD Home](#)

"BE A HERO" - That is our Texas PTA theme this year. And I've been thinking about my heroes. None are athletic or rock stars, a few are in history books, two are survivors of hostage situations, and several are related to me. What does it take to earn "hero" status? To me, it is the combination of daily courage to do the right thing, even when it is the hard thing, and then to do even more.

Have you ever talked with your children about their heroes? After listening to the famous names, ask them if their heroes really measure up. Does the hero possess the qualities they would like to have? Are they hard-working? Do they have a special skill or talent? Are they caring and loving? What really makes them special?

Heroes are important to all of us. They help us see the spark of greatness that every person has inside of them and can inspire us to do more and live up to our potential. I hope your child sees YOU as their hero.

In PTA, we get the opportunity to be a hero for children all the time! Our mission in PTA is to make every child's potential a reality. That starts in our own homes, with helping to guide our children to a successful adulthood, but it also means being part of a community that cares for all children. By being a PTA member, your voice helps advocate for child safety, health and education and works to strengthen families.

Thank you for your support as a PTA member and for being one of my heroes!

Sincerely,

[Cara Mendelsohn](#)  
[President, Plano ISD Council of PTAs](#)

### A Plano Hero

Every year Texas State Board of Education honors 15 people in Texas as their "Heroes for Children". This year, the honoree from our area is PTA Council School to Life Chairman and Vines PTA president, Tamra Sadafszaz. Tamra flew to Austin recently to receive the award at the Capitol. We are so thrilled and excited for Tamra to be recognized for this well-deserved honor! We'll post pictures on the website after she gets back! Congratulations to Tamra - You are our HERO!!!!

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

**Plano Advocacy Project Will be Considered at Texas PTA Convention**



We have received word from Texas PTA's legislative committee



that our project has been accepted to be part of the Texas PTA Convention business! PTA members from across Texas will vote whether to accept a position statement that mirrors our advocacy project in support of expanding the high school diploma degree plan choices for students!!!

This year, the Convention will be held in Austin, the day following Texas PTA Day @ Capitol. We don't usually have a very strong attendance at the convention, but it would be great if you can come for Texas PTA Day @ Capitol and stay for the weekend. If you are planning on going, please [click here](#) to let Cara Mendelsohn know.

## Reflections

The Council judging of Reflections went great this week! We had over 500 fantastic entries in the visual arts, music, photography, dance, film and literature categories that were advanced from local PTAs. A list of the Council awardees (and which ones that are being submitted to Texas PTA) will be posted on the website soon! Thank you to the many volunteers that make this event great and help us recognize the creative talents of our students.



## Grab Your Seat on the Bus!



You are invited to hop a ride to Austin to celebrate Texas PTA Day @ Capitol! We'll join folks from all over Texas as we show up on the steps of the Capitol and advocate for issues that affect children. This event will kick-off the 100th birthday of Texas PTA and there is sure to be media coverage and many dignitaries in attendance. Plano ISD is paying for the bus to take us there and back because they believe so strongly in parent involvement and advocacy.

Agenda for the day:

Board the charter bus on **Thursday, February 26th**, at 5:30 a.m. at the **PISD Administration building**.

On the bus, we'll watch a legislative update that has been prepared by Texas PTA lobbyist that will get us up to date on all the issues and etiquette of our visit with legislators.

In Austin, we'll attend the rally on the Capitol steps, participate in the birthday celebration at the Capitol, have lunch and meet with our legislators, take a quick tour of the Texas PTA offices (it is a historic house) and then head back to Plano.

We will return by 7:30 p.m.

To reserve your seat, please [email Gretchen Abner](#). The bus will fill up fast, so please make your reservation ASAP!

## Membership News

Hi folks, GREAT JOB on your membership campaigns! Thank you to all the local Membership Chairmen who worked so hard this year to encourage our parents to join PTA! You have had wonderful ideas and made great strides to reach out to all PISD parents. We will share your creative ideas at PTA Officer & Chairman training in May.



PTA Council Membership Awards

We were pleased to announce the winners at the Plano ISD Council of PTAs November Regular Meeting. They are:

Hand-in-Hand Award  
Bethany PTA

100% Participation Award:

Aldridge PTA, Beatty ECS PTA, Bethany PTA, Boggess PTA, Brinker PTA, Daffron PTA,

Haun PTA, Hightower PTA, Renner PTA, Rice PTA, Schimelpfenig PTA

Creative Membership Campaign

1st Place: Hightower Elementary PTA

2nd Place: Vines High School PTA

3rd Place: Beatty ECS PTA

Lisa Williams

*VP Membership, Plano ISD Council of PTAs*

## Environmental Corner



A big congratulations to **Clark High School, Renner Middle School and Boggess Elementary** for kicking off their organic recycling program in November, just in time for "Texas Recycles Day" on November 15th. Way to go and keep up the good work!

**Murphy Middle School** did a clean up on an adjacent wooded area and students picked up 4 large bags of trash and debris. They also celebrated Texas Recycles Day on the 13th and 14th of Nov. by utilizing parent volunteers teaching about recycling and handing out bookmarks, bracelets and recycled rulers to commemorate the event.

**Harrington Elementary School** has created a new award titled "Huskies Helping the Earth" which recognizes environmentally friendly behavior at individual grade levels- something the children, staff, community and school ALL benefit from.

**Daffron Elementary Kids for Saving the Earth** planted 16 - 10 gallon trees around the school in coordination with The City of Plano Parks and Recreation, Urban Forester Michael Sultan and a generous grant from Walmart in a "Neighborhoods" project that celebrates the beauty and benefits of trees.

Is your school doing something great with recycling, sustainability or beautification? Don't hesitate to share the good news and even better ideas. Together, we can all make Plano ISD a greener and greater place to learn.

Michele Carey-Dave

PISD PTA Council Environmental Chair

## Publicity: PTA and Social Media

Publicity isn't limited to newspapers and newsletters. National PTA keeps up with the times by having accounts on several popular social media sites. Click the links below to check out these valuable resources!

[Twitter](#)

[Facebook Group](#)

[YouTube Videos](#)

[Fotki](#)



The national site also plans to add a blog. It currently has a [PTA Great Idea Bank](#) where you can search and submit ideas (click on link to view).

The Twitter page, which contains short comments, provides many resources such as a link to PTA radio. These social media resources provide your PTA with the opportunity to share its successes and ideas.

We've seen a few Plano PTA stories on [NeighborsGo.com](#) and some appear in the print edition, so take advantage of that resource.

Please note that Plano West People no longer publishes its newspaper due to the difficult economic climate.

Meryl K. Evans  
Publicity Chair, Plano ISD Council of PTAs

## Children First! Collin County Coalition Groups



There is a new group comprised of Collin County organizations focused on the well being of children in the community. PTA Council has signed up to be a member organization, which simply means we want to be engaged in focusing on pressing problems affecting Collin County children. If you'd like to be an active part of this group, please email Tamra at [schooltolife@planopta.org](mailto:schooltolife@planopta.org). There are five workgroups that focus on Health, Economic Security, Education, Safety and Family Strengthening. We'd love to have at least one Plano PTA member in each workgroup. If you'd like to learn more, check out [www.childrenfirstcollincounty.com](http://www.childrenfirstcollincounty.com). If you were at the November regular Council meeting, the fantastic video presentation was data and information from Children First! Collin County Coalition.

## Give 2 Minutes and No \$\$

Please take 2 minutes to do something that will cost you nothing and could bring about big (and needed!) changes! Consider joining [RaiseYourHandTexas.org](http://RaiseYourHandTexas.org). They are a group committed to "Stronger Schools and Brighter Futures". They won't ask for money and will send you monthly emails with legislative updates.



Raise Your Hand Texas (RYHT) has the same goal as our PTA Council to see a change in the high school diploma degree requirements. They are also working on positive changes for the accountability system, promoting safe campuses, teacher quality, full day pre-K and school choice. To sign up, [click here](#).

## PTA to Float Plano's Boat



The Plano ISD Council of PTAs will have a float in the 36th Pancake Feed with Christmas Parade on Saturday, December 6. The parade runs from 9:00 am to 11:00 am beginning at Plano Senior High School on Independence Parkway, starting at W. Park Blvd. It will flow north to Spring Creek Parkway and east to St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church on Round Rock.

The Plano Early Lions Club and First United Methodist Men host the pancake feed and parade. The pancake breakfast starts at 6:30am in the Plano Senior High School cafeteria. All the pancakes you can eat plus sausage and choice of drink: coffee, hot cocoa, orange juice, or water. It costs \$5 for adults and \$3.50 for children under 12. Proceeds benefit Plano Santas and two Plano food pantries.

Park on the North or West side of school. Parking opens at 6:30am and closes at 8:30am. It will reopen at 10:30am. You can also park at the Aquatic Center on Westside Dr off Parkhaven from 6:00 am to 11:00 am.

Come enjoy the "small town" feeling that's such a defining quality of this Plano tradition. We hope to see you there!

## Save the Day for RoughRiders and PTA

PTA's RoughRiders Day will be Sunday, May 3, 2009! Sit with your school's PTA and enjoy the RoughRiders game, with all the PTAs in Plano's Council of PTAs as company! Watch for more information, coming soon!



## Save the Date - PISD PTA Council Vendor Fair

The PISD PTA Council Vendor Fair is coming!



Date: **March 28th**  
Time: **9:00 - 1:00**



Parenting Programs, Fundraising, Speakers, Promotional Products, and School Supply Vendors will be at your disposal. We will also be giving away many raffle items for those who attend. All attendees will receive a special goodie bag & folder with great samples and ideas.

Save the date and tell your friends and family to attend.

\*\*Vendor information -- e-mail [waysandmeans@planopta.org](mailto:waysandmeans@planopta.org) for more information\*\*

### Life Members - The Time is Now!!

WOW! It's that time again...nominating volunteers who have shown their interest and dedication to the PTA for the Texas Life Membership Award and/or the Extended Service Award. Every year local PTAs have the opportunity to honor extraordinary volunteers, staff or community partners that have made a significant impact on their PTA at the Texas Life Member Banquet. You and your Board should have assembled a Texas Life Member Nominating Committee by now for the submitted names to be reviewed. The decision for who shall receive the honors should be announced at your December board meeting.



### Texas PTA Life Member FAQ's

*Q: Is the honoree required to be a PTA member?*

A: No. Certainly the bulk of honorees are PTA members, but the main criteria should be outstanding service to children and youth.

*Q: If a staff member hasn't joined the PTA, can they still be nominated?*

A: Yes. I would certainly let the selection committee know who is/isn't a PTA member and let them make a decision based on all the facts.

*Q: How do we select our Texas PTA Life Members?*

A: Many PTAs have specific guidelines on how they select their Texas PTA Life Members. Please check your bylaws or contact your local PTA president to get the process started.

Check your budget before bestowing too many awards...2-3 is a great consideration! This is a wonderful and distinguished award and should not be given without merit.

*Q: When should we have our members selected?*

A: You will need to know who your honorees are by the beginning of January! Many PTAs purchase a whole table (of 10) for honorees and guests (often spouses and principals), while others purchase one or two tickets per honoree. Don't forget that I'd like the write-ups the first part of January 2009 if they are to be included in the keepsake program.

*Q: When will we get the Banquet invitations?*

A: Your invitations to the Life Member Banquet will be at your school the first week back from winter break. It is going to be a blast!!! This is a big affair and we expect over 600 guests!

### Banquet Details

Tuesday, February 17, 2009

6:30 p.m. @ Plano Centre (just east of Spring Creek & Central Expressway)

\$25.00 per person, dinner included

RSVP needed by the end of January - see details on invitation!

The banquet is coordinated by the Plano ISD Council of PTAs and we are proud to have returning sponsor AXA Advisors and new sponsor Class Act School Packs.

### Certificates & Pins

Most PTAs present a Texas Life Member Certificate and pin (or charm) to their honorees at the banquet. To ensure you have these items in time, you must order them on the Texas PTA website by the first week of January. If you didn't get the document

attachment in my email, you can download the form and mail in the check or order online at <http://www.txpta.org/members/awardforms.html> and Texas PTA will send you a receipt to submit for reimbursement from your local PTA.

## What and When Do I Need To Submit to Council?

By the first part of January you must submit information on your honorees to have them included in the keepsake program. Of course, we'd love to get this information as early as possible. Write ups will be in the standard short paragraph format.

This year I am asking for the following information:

1. Name of Honoree as you would like it printed
2. Which honor is being bestowed? (Texas Life Member or Extended Service Award)
3. List positions currently or previously held in PTA or any other role related to this honor
4. How many years supporting PTA/PISD
5. Why is this person being honored?
6. List three (3) adjectives that describe the honoree and their PTA efforts
7. People who share this honoree's life (if applicable & honoree wishes to include)

Please send the information to [membership@planopta.org](mailto:membership@planopta.org).

Lisa Williams

*VP Membership, Plano ISD Council of PTAs*

## PTA Mission

PTA is

A powerful voice for all children,  
A relevant resource for families and communities, and  
A strong advocate for the education and well-being of every child.

## PTA Vision

Making every child's potential a reality.