



The ParentPost

BUILDING SUPPORT, RESOURCES & COMMUNITY



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Sunset Mesa Parent Association May 2010

Final letter from the 2009-2010 President:
It is time to say good-bye to the school year. It has been my pleasure to serve as President of the SMPA this year and I have been honored to work with a great administration, staff, and dedicated parent community. The SMPA introduced “spirit items” this year as an effort to supplement our recycling project and our continued support of teacher appreciation. Thanks to you, we achieved our goal and have ended this year with a balanced budget! We have also improved communication this year. By checking one of the boxes on the directory information form in the summer mailing packet, I have kept about 250 people “in the loop”, where before we had to wait for the newsletter to circulate. If you were not on the email list, consider doing so next year.

I have many people to thank for helping to maintain a strong school community this year. First of all, thank you to Cindy Stofberg for her time as Vice President and for her continued commitment to the SMPA as president next year. Thank you to Cristi Sandoval for her secretarial duties and thank you to Kathleen Lucero for her many years in the role as treasurer. Thank you to Julie Martinez for organizing the back to school coffees and back to school get-togethers. The kids and parents enjoy the time catching up. Thank you to the parents that hosted these get-togethers last Fall. Thank you to Margie Levandoski for organizing yet another successful and much-appreciated Veteran’s Day Breakfast. Thank you to Laura Pauza and Andy Drescher for helping to organize the teacher appreciation lunches that the teachers and staff so enjoy. Thank you Lisa James for keeping us informed with a newsletter that is

fun and enjoyable to read. Thank you to Charlotte Schoenman, Lisa Roberts, and Colleen Christensen for their work on the directories, which makes scheduling play-dates easier. Thank you to Colleen Christensen and Kim Beauford for organizing our 1½ year- old recycling program. Thank you to Kathleen Lucero, Julie Ellis, and Tania Hake for putting together a great yearbook for our kids. And finally, thank YOU! That’s right, YOU! Our programs do not work without your help. Our Veteran’s Day Breakfast, teacher and staff appreciation lunches, successful holiday drives, and recycling program were only a success this year because of your involvement so thank you!

Again, it has been my pleasure to work with such a great community.
Kelly Caperton

My Time At Sunset Mesa

by: Lisa James

Going onto mid-school can seem like a scary and uncertain time, but for these three fifth graders, Sunset Mesa has more than adequately prepared them for what is next in their education and life journey.

Sarah Utterback is a delightful young lady with a beautiful spirit. Sarah has attended Sunset Mesa since the 3 year- old preschool. Her love of books, reading, writing and music, have no doubt nurtured her future interest in helping animals. Sarah hopes to become a professional involved with animals. This interest was fostered when she attended the Rio Grande Zoo Camp where she saw animal exhibits behind the scenes and got to feed the monkeys. Sarah is unsure of the specific occupation just yet, but knows for sure NOT a veterinarian because she couldn't bear to put any animal to sleep. A veteran at Sunset Mesa, her memories include when the preschool was on the North campus. One thing that Sarah is going to miss is the nice teachers and staff. Sarah is looking forward to learning at her new school, especially since she has never attended another school. Her advice to underclassmen: Everyone may tell you how difficult the upper grades will be, but it's really not as hard as you think. Just try your best.

Raffaele Moore met with me to discuss his future plans post Sunset Mesa. He is a handsome young man with his sights set high on his future. Extremely articulate, his well thought out responses caused me to have to remind myself I was speaking with a 5th grader and not an already high school student. Raffaele has attended Sunset Mesa since Ms. Clark's 3 year- old preschool class. His favorite subject is social studies because he loves history, especially Civil War and WWII history. I could not pin him down to one specific enrichment class, because he loves them all, as they are all so different.

Raffaele is going to miss the Sunset Mesa environment, because he has grown up here but he is excited about making new friends while keeping his old ones. He likes to learn and feels that the teachers provide the foundation to make learning fun.

Raffaele's current future goal is to earn a degree from USC and be a Professor of Military History. Advice to underclassmen: The work- load will increase. The school molds a personality but you have to be willing to learn.

Sabrina Keith is a wonderfully spunky young lady who is very excited about her next phase of life after Sunset Mesa. Sabrina has really enjoyed her time at Sunset Mesa, having gone here since 3 year-old preschool. She says she won't be too sad about leaving Sunset Mesa because she knows her old friends will mix in with her new friends. She is also very excited about changing classes in her next school. In her words, "Sunset Mesa prepares students well for middle school to make new friends by mixing kids up to know everyone." She also feels that SMS give you the right fit teacher who can properly challenge you.

Sabrina hopes to be an artist in her professional life. When asked which medium of art, she was visually undecided but jubilant when she described her current art enrichment of print - making. Something tells me that Sabrina will go on to learn many different mediums in her future endeavors and we will see her name and work in lights some day! Her advice to underclassmen: "It's going to get harder, they just need to hang on!"

Thank you very much to Sarah, Raffaele and Sabrina. It was a pleasure spending time with each of you. During our time together, I was in awe of your articulateness, poise and maturity. I have no doubt you all will go on to accomplish great things!

NEW FOR FALL Healthy Kid Initiative

Many schools across the country are starting healthy child initiatives, due to children's climbing obesity rates, declining exercise habits and unhealthy diets.

An elementary school in Texas has implemented such an initiative, a running program. Once a week, kids run laps around the school's playground before school. Parents are there to encourage the kids and record the number of laps they run. There is no competition, no racing, and kids can walk if they want. Over time, they reach certain milestones like 1 mile, 5 miles, 10 miles and so on, and are rewarded with a cool bead that they put on their shoestrings. Some children at the school have reached 500 miles, a significant accomplishment!

The SMPA would like to start a similar running program for Sunset Mesa students. Preliminary program details are as follows:

- We would meet every Wednesday at 7:30 am at El Oso Grande Park (north of Sunset Mesa on Morris between Montgomery and Spain) during the fall and spring.
- Parents would stay with their kids, and the kids would run for 10 -20 minutes then the parents would take them to school. Parents can run or walk with their kids if they want.
- We would encourage all Sunset Mesa children K – 5th grade to participate. If 7:30 is too early, just come whenever you can, run a few laps and head to school.
- Parent volunteers would be needed for each Wednesday in the fall and spring. The parents would set up the course, maintain the sign-in/out list, and record the number of laps for each child. They would serve as “coaches” for that day.

- In addition to attaining a bead for “mile”stones, students would be recognized during flag ceremonies.

The benefits of the program are:

- Increased awareness of exercise. It has been shown that people that exercise as kids are more likely to continue to exercise as adults.
- Confidence builder to all kids because it is not competitive, kids are just trying to do their personal best and push themselves.
- Inexpensive and simple to administer. A little bead on a tennis shoe is an inexpensive reward but worn by a kid, it is a great source of pride.
- In Texas, they have found that kids that have trouble focusing do better at school after they have done morning exercise. You can say it gets rid of some of the “excess energy.”

We will have an informational meeting the second week after school starts. Please consider being a part of this program. It could make a difference in your child's life and maybe in yours too. Please feel free to contact Rachel Johnston at johnston505@comcast.net or at 999-9676 with comments or questions.

Back To School Get Togethers

Thank you to the following parents who will be hosting the back to school get togethers for the respective grade levels. More information about when and where to meet will be coming in the June mailer from Sunset Mesa.

5th: Catherine Berry
4th: Colleen Christensen
3rd: Abby Kunz
2nd: Kelena Maxwell
1st: Merrick Burkhardt
PreFirst: Rachel Johnston
Kindergarten: Jalene Lyon
Early Childhood: Julie Cook
Montessori: Susan Epstein

The North Campus third through fifth grade students exhibited special works of art at the May 7 Spring About event. The theme of the exhibit is "Art Rocks," and all the artworks are created on stones. Each grade level has a different theme. An Albuquerque business, **Pete's Landscaping at 9300 Holly Ave NE**, donated all the rocks used for the artwork. Mrs. Morris, the third through fifth grade students, and the SMS administration would like to thank Pete's for this support of the Spring About art exhibit.

North Campus Teacher Appreciation – Laura Pauza

The first grade held a Mexican themed Teacher and Staff Appreciation Lunch, which was hosted by Mrs. Ashcroft, Mrs. Cervantes, Mrs. Jackson, and Mrs. Robinette's classes. Thank you to Beth Robison for all of her efforts in coordinating the first grade lunch. Thank you to all the parents who made this lunch possible for our wonderful teachers and staff!

Mrs. Heath, Mrs. Jackson, and Ms. Johnston's Kindergarten classes hosted the March Teacher and Staff Appreciation Luncheon. They enjoyed sandwiches, salads, and cupcakes from the Napa Valley Cafe. A special thank you to Chris Budagher and Brittany Jorgensen for coordinating this event. Thank you to all the parents for their contributions and for helping to make this luncheon a great success!

Thank you to Kanella Aiello for all of her work in coordinating our final Teacher and Staff Appreciation lunch in April! This Greek themed luncheon was hosted by the second grade teachers: Mrs. Allen, Ms. Boldine, Mrs. Bowman, and Mrs. Findell. Thank you to all of the parents who helped with this luncheon!

OFFICIAL PLEA:

North Campus Teacher Appreciation Volunteers needed!!

Volunteers are needed to be team leaders for next year's teacher appreciation luncheons. The TA Luncheons are put together by the SMPA so that the SMS community can show their appreciation for the teachers and the SMS administration. Each grade level has a designated month to hold their luncheon. The theme or choice of food for each luncheon is decided by the team leader and their parent volunteers.

Beth Robison will be the Teacher Appreciation Luncheon Coordinator for the 2010-2011 school year. Beth needs parents from every grade level to help organize the luncheons. If you have any questions or would like to volunteer for next year, please contact Beth at cbrobi@aol.com

South Campus Teacher Appreciation from Andy Drescher:

This year we had very successful Teacher Appreciation luncheons on the South Campus. The staff were treated to four luncheons from Italian to gourmet delicatessen fare. These luncheons were coordinated by volunteer parents and everything is provided through donations of either money, food or time by these parents.

Each of these events would not have been a success without the hard work of each event coordinator: Christina Gopal, Jalene Lyon, Margie Levandoski, and Dawn Gerencer. Many thanks to all of the parents that helped the coordinators gather donations, organize volunteers, prepare the food, set-up the decorations, clean up the lunch room and say thank you to the wonderful staff that takes care of our children. To all that helped this year, thank you very much, and I look forward to working with you all again next year.

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***NOTE: We welcome involvement with these
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