

VUSD UPDATE



Vacaville Unified School District
751 School Street, Vacaville, California 95688

Peña Adobe Opens Its Doors to the Public

What do 4th graders and the Peña Adobe have in common?

California History!

Here is a *golden* opportunity to tour this pre-gold rush era home of one of the founding families of Vacaville. Walk the grounds of early settlers and see historic artifacts unearthed at the site. In the nearby Mowers-Goheen Museum is a fine collection of Native American grinding tools and baskets, housewares from the adobe, maps of the San Francisco Bay Area dating back to General Vallejo, and a land grant map from 1851.

The adobe and museum, located in Peña Adobe Park in Vacaville, are now open to visitors and students of history on the first Saturday of every month, from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., free of charge. Group tours can be arranged by calling the Peña Adobe Historical Society at 707-447-0518.

Coming Soon!



May 3, 2008



SAVE THE DATE

May 16, 2008
Annual Retirement Gala
5:30 Cocktails
6:30 Program

Vacaville Youth Summit 2008

Saturday, March 8, 2008

9:30 am – 2:00 pm

Ulati Cultural Center

Planned by and for teens

The theme for this year's event is: *It Starts with You!!!*

Please call 707-449-5371 or visit www.cityofvacaville.com for more information.

Special Recognition Event

by Julianna Wade

Three recognition events are held each year in which the Governing Board honors and expresses their appreciation to outstanding adults and students for their achievements and contributions to our District. On Thursday, February 28, one of those special events was held in the Wood High School Theater. As always there were plenty of people to recognize and, as this was a recognition event that focused mainly on our adults, I would like to take the opportunity to inform all of you of these wonderful individuals. The evening began with the singing of our National Anthem by Holly Stell, Buckingham Charter Magnet High School student, who (due to her amazing talent) recently participated in the National Lighting of the Christmas tree in Washington D.C.

The Solano County Office of Education hosts an Art Faire each year and County Superintendent Dee Alarcon presented awards to students: nine from Wood High, three from Vacaville High, one from Browns Valley Elementary, and three from Cooper Elementary. The teachers who supported, encouraged and worked with these students were Marcia Jones, Browns Valley; Laura Napier, Vacaville High; Kathy Farros-Hoepner and Stephanie Jones, Wood High; and parent volunteer/art program coordinator Diana Christensen at Cooper Elementary School. Students were presented copies of the Solano County Annual Report Calendar with each page of the calendar dedicated to students' artwork. Their creations are currently showcased at the Solano County Office of Education, 5100 Business Center Drive in Fairfield.

Adults were also recognized from each school site including Deidre Tokiwa, Alamo; Kelly Palm, Browns Valley; Charles Hall, Callison; Kristin McKenzie, Cooper; Christine Zavaglia, Fairmont; Lorraine Young, teacher at Hemlock; Bob Henderson, Markham; Karen Sewell, Cheryl Stratton and Ellen Coburn, Orchard; Pat Spencer, Padan; Claudia Mourlot, Sierra Vista; Tricia Cowen, teacher at Jepson; Anne Carr, Vaca Pena; Barbara Schmidt, Buckingham; Yumei Morton, Country High; Bob Blaine, teacher at Wood; and Adina Schwerdtfeger, Vacaville High. These adults represent volunteers as PTA/PTO/PTC officers, classroom and school parent volunteers, campus monitors, crossing guards, and members of Site Council, Budget Advisory Committee, Parent Advisory Council, Parent Forum, Wellness Committee, Strategic Planning, Book Fair Event Coordinators, Child Care Worker and three of our fabulous classroom teachers! There is never a lack of adults in our District to recognize for their extraordinary contributions, dedication and commitment to our students and schools.

This year for the first time the California Department of Education is sponsoring a program to recognize classified employees in six categories throughout the State. The

nominees from our district were honored at the February 28 event. Our district nominated one individual for each of the six categories: Denise Martinez, Child Nutrition; Irma Vargas, Maintenance and Operations; Dorothy Smith, Transportation; Gloria Villarreal, Para-Educator; Teresa Flores, Office & Technical Services; and Gisela Crabtree, Support Services and Security. Two of our district's nominees, Denise Martinez and Dorothy Smith, have also won the Solano County's selection and will continue to compete for the State Awards in their categories!

The Association of California School Administrators (ACSA) conducts annual state-wide selections for honoring administrators. Individuals are nominated by Charters (there are six charters in Region IV), then by Region (there are 19 Regions of ACSA in the State of California) and then finally progress to the State competition. Our Solano Charter is one of the six charters in Region IV and we nominated eleven individuals for various 2008 ACSA Awards. Nine of our eleven nominees have also won Region IV selections and will continue to the State competition. The persons winning these honors and their classifications are as follows: John Alongi, Secondary Co-Administrator of the Year; Lynda Donahue, Special Education Administrator of the Year; Mark Frazier, Curriculum & Instruction Administrator of the Year; Eldridge Glover, Elementary Principal Administrator of the Year; Bob Hampton, Secondary Principal Administrator of the Year; Randy Henry, Continuation/Educational Options Administrator of the Year; Sylvia Concepcion Rodriguez, Elementary Co-Administrator of the Year; Cindy Williamson, Classified Manager of the Year; William (Bill) Lee, Every Student Succeeding Award; Peggy Alexander, Marcus Foster Memorial Award for Administrator Excellence; and Alza Community Outreach Team, Partners in Educational Excellence Award.

The Margaret Beelard Community Foundation was also honored for its continuing support for the community and our District. Margaret "Mig" Beelard was a teacher in Vacaville for many years and eventually formed the Margaret Beelard Community Foundation. The goal of the foundation is to continue to present grants to community groups "with the focus on children, education and residents". Our district expressed their appreciation for the more than \$560,000 which has been donated to fund such programs as Accelerated Reader, Accelerated Math and upgrading classroom technology. A reception in the Wood High Cafeteria followed the presentations. Congratulations to the individuals and organizations honored at the February 28 Special Recognition Event!



ACSA Legislative Action Day March 10, 2008

ACSA, the Association of California Schools Administrators, annually sponsors a Legislative Action Day. The Legislative Action Day is a day in March each year in which representatives from the 19 Regions of the organization meet with their local senators and assemblymembers in Sacramento. Superintendent John Aycock is the ACSA Region IV Vice President and has confirmed meetings on Monday, March 10 with Assemblymembers Noreen Evans, Jared Huffman and Lois Wolk; and meetings with Senators Patricia Wiggins and Michael Machado. Region IV ACSA members, along with Superintendent Aycock, will meet and speak directly with these legislators to discuss specific and current concerns regarding education in the State of California. This is a very effective and direct tool to deliver messages of educational concern to California legislators. Region IV includes Solano, Sonoma, Napa, Mendocino, Lake and Marin Counties.

The Mission of ACSA is to Support California's educational leaders; ensure all students have the essential skills and knowledge needed to excel; and champion public education. One of ACSA's goals is to be a Legislation/Funding Advocate for the best interests of California's students and educational leaders through positions on legislation, education policy issues, initiatives and candidates who are supportive of ACSA's legislative platform and public education. With today's budget and educational concerns for student achievement; this is a critical time to join together. As public school employees, our children's future and the future of California's education is a priority.

Each of the 19 regions in California is responsible to confirm meetings with their assigned local legislators. Each region's members meet with their own legislators to ensure that all are addressed during the event. If you would like further information, please contact Julianna in the Superintendent's Office at 453-6101.



News from Our Schools

Alamo

Alamo is proud to announce the January winners of our school spelling bee:

1st Place, Kim Rich; 2nd Place, Amy Jensen, and 3rd Place, Morgan Annala. Well done!

Welcome to Eli Armstrong, a 1998 graduate of Will C. Wood, who is doing his student teaching in Mrs. Harless' sixth grade class.

Melissa Woods' fourth grade students did a super job at last Friday's assembly with a Reader's Theatre version of George Washington facts. The surprise at the end was a song played on a REAL RECORD PLAYER! Amazing what some children have never seen!

In addition to some fine spring weather, Alamo is looking forward to our Triathlon on March 14th! This event always generates fun and excitement along with donations to help out our school!

Browns Valley

Browns Valley had two teams competing in the *Odyssey of the Mind* competition. Good luck to both teams!

Our Wellness committee is in the process of painting a "Paw Print Track" for students to walk at recess and PE.

Our students enjoyed the Alaska Husky Spirit Assembly recently. Learning about life in Alaska and the Iditarod Race.

We were also very pleased with the success of the "Soar to Success" training that took place at Browns Valley this past month.

Buckingham Charter Magnet High School

Congratulations to our own Principal, Bob Hampton, for his recognition as Secondary Administrator of the year for Region IV ACSA!

Congratulations also to those students recognized by The Reporter for their "Design An Ad" submissions. Quite a grand sweep of awards! As always, we are very proud of the creative talents of our students!



Happy St. Patrick's Day! Go GREEN!

Callison

Cherie Ruport, now Cherie Greenlee was married this past September 22nd to Marty Greenlee. Thanks to their friends and family they recently took their honeymoon to the Bahamas.

Peg Richardson has added three grandsons to her family in the past nine months. Warren born on May 30, to son Steven and his wife Krista; Evan born on June 8 to daughter Kristi and her husband Steve; and Logan born on Dec.8 to her daughter Shannon and husband Joe.

Thanks to a VPEF Mini-Grant, Lorraine Temple from Homer, Alaska visited Jean Callison Elementary School in January. Her assembly "Alaska Husky Spirit" was presented to Grades 4-6. She brought along a sled, two dogs, and winter gear needed to participate in races like the Alaskan Iditarod Sled Dog Race. She integrated current events, geography, plus emphasized the commitment and determination that it takes to run the race. What a great way to have the Iditarod experience all the way from Alaska here in California!

Blake Ryan Ledford was born on 9/20/2007 at 2:52 a.m.
He was 5 pounds, 5 ounces. He was 5 weeks early but is healthy and doing just fine.
Proud Parents are Amy and Scott Ledford.

Cooper

Congratulations:

To Irma Vargas and Kristin McKenzie. They were honored for their dedication and service to Cooper at the Board Appreciation.

To Deanna Stratton, 3rd grade teacher, on the birth of her twins, Sean and Jayden, born on February 19, 2008. All are doing well.

To Mikael Walker, custodian, on the birth of his granddaughter, Kelsey Ann, She was born on January 14, 2008, weighed 8 ¼ pounds, and was 20 ¼ inches long.

Cooper held a very successful basket raffle on February 15 and raised \$140 for each classroom.

Fairmont

Congratulations to Christine Zavaglia, our Librarian and PTC Treasurer, who was honored at the Board Meeting on February 28, for all her many jobs on behalf of Fairmont School.

Hemlock

Our Cafeteria Manager, Denise Martinez will be getting married on March 6 to Manuel Azevedo. Their wedding will take place at a small chapel in Yosemite. They chose this date as it is their third year anniversary. Denise & Manuel will make their new home in Concord. Congratulations!!

Jepson Music

April 16 at 6:00 p.m.	Spring Concert at VPAT for Jepson's Orchestra and Chorus
April 17 at 6:00 p.m.	Spring Concert at VPAT for Jepson's Concert Band, Symphonic Band, Wind Ensemble, and Jazz groups
May 24 at 9:00 a.m.	Jepson's three bands will combine into one mighty marching band for the Fiesta Days parade
May 29 at 6:00	Patio Concert - Enjoy a casual meal and music from all of Jepson's fine musical groups

For more information, please contact Patty Phillips (pattyp@vacavilleusd.org) or Nancy Sanchez (nancys@vacavilleusd.org)

Orchard

Our Kindergarten classes held a Stone soup Day on January 30th as part of our "Choose Well, Be Well" campaign for healthy eating. Each student brought a vegetable or something for the soup to school. We had huge crock pots full of wonderful vegetable soup. Some of the parents shared their recipes for our healthy Kindergarten Newsletter that went out in February.

We are very proud of Breanna Sewell 6th grader. She won first place in the City-Wide Spelling Bee.

Orchard honored Karen Sewell, Ellen Coburn (Karen's mom, who does murals for us), and Cheryl Stratton at the School board Meeting on Thursday night for their work on the Book Fair every year.

Padan

The Padan Staff had a wonderful Pietro's Luncheon to celebrate the 71st birthday of our wonderful school librarian, Mrs. Rita Chandler. Rita does so much for all of us so it was nice to have the opportunity to show her how much she is appreciated and loved.

They will be missed!

What will I do all day today? We have not doubt that this question will not be asked by Mrs. Nancy Madonna next year. While Nancy has decided to retire we know that she will be at Padan helping us out on a regular basis.



Mrs. Lydia Wulfe has decided that spending time with her husband (who is also retiring), riding her horses, and of course, exercising at the gym maybe enough to keep her happy and content. It doesn't sound half bad, does it?

Mr. Kevin Davis is not near retirement age but as several other staffs know, Kevin is one who loves new adventures. Kevin will be moving to Santa Cruz to pursue "new adventures in education and in life."

Baskets, Baskets Everywhere

Padan School's Booster Club is in the midst of an AMAZING basket raffle. The baskets, 46 in total, were designed and donated by classrooms and are on display in our library and tickets can be purchased through March 4th.

Vacaville High School

Two current Vaca High Students, Shelby Burchell and Raquel Merrick, and one Vaca High graduate, Diane Williamson, class of 2004, deserve recognition for their participation in Gymkhana, the sport of timed speed events on horseback, throughout the state. They belong to the California Gymkhana Association, a statewide organization that promotes the sport of gymkhana and the family fun of the sport. These three girls were elected to the royal court for the 2007/08 competition year. They are: Diane Williamson, Princess, graduate in 2004; Shelby Burchell, Princess, current freshman; and Raquel Merrick, Queen, current sophomore. These girls work hard year-round in their sport. What a great honor for Vacaville! They also belong to and work with a local non-profit riding organization, Circle D Horsemen of Vacaville.

Will C. Wood

Ed Murphy has been selected as one of three finalists for the California Troops to Teachers 2008 "Teacher of the Year" program (High School Division). This is an outstanding honor that Ed has received!!!! He will be honored at a dinner in San Diego on Saturday, April 12th.

"Boy, do we have awesome teachers on this campus!!!!"



News from Our Departments

Central Office

Human Resources is very happy to welcome our new District Office Receptionist, Tammy Cagle. Tammy previously worked as a Health Clerk at Cooper Elementary School and replaces Suzanne Gallichio who recently became the Staff Secretary in Learning Support.

English Learner Department

The English Learner Department is pleased to announce an upcoming workshop regarding *when or when not* to refer an English Learner for special education assessment. The workshop will be held on Friday, April 4, from 8:30 AM-3:00 PM, at the Solano County Office of Education. For more information and the registration form, please contact Priscilla Ramelo at (707) 399-4445.

We just completed our *Focused Approach* training for elementary teachers. The training provided excellent frontloading strategies for teachers so that they can provide access to the reading/language arts for EL students. The teachers who attended are encouraged to continue to work together so that they can share ideas and successes.

On February 29, the district will conduct its annual Language Census. This is a count of all the EL and FEP (fluent English proficient) students in the district and the different languages spoken by these students; it also includes information about program settings and services for EL students. Soon after this date, we will have all the information compiled and ready to share with the school sites. Last year, the total number of EL students was 1,600, and there were 471 FEP students; there were more than 28 languages reported in our district. We look forward to the new census information.

Please contact either Jane Luick (453-6145) or Denise Fracchia (453-6165) if you have questions about English Learners

GATE

Over 30 6th and 7th grade students completed the Qualifying Exam for Sacramento State's Academic Talent Search Summer Program. Both Vaca Peña and Jepson Middle Schools also administer the assessment for those of interest in grades 6-9.

Five teams competed at the *Odyssey of the Mind* Regional Tournament on Saturday, March 1, 2008 at Natomas High School. This year we have two teams from both Browns Valley Elementary and Padan in addition to a team from Alamo competing in Division 1. How wonderful to have so many creative problem solvers across the district!



The next Elementary GATE Event is entitled, *Artstravaganza II*. It is a multi-medium exploration of art that will take place at *A Stroke of Magic* Art Studio in downtown Vacaville on **Wednesday, March 12, 2008**. Reservations will be taken for a maximum of 50 students in one-hour sessions beginning at 2:30.

The Finale for Elementary is all about music. It will be led by STAR GATE Inc. We may even have a musical guest to close the year. Remember, the incentive 'IFLip' portable, digital camcorder will be given away to a lucky student that has attended all year. It will occur on **Saturday, May 17, 2008**.

Novel Knowledge Site Competitions are about to begin. The readers will engage in collaboration to answer questions from the pre-selected 8 titles. The first place team from each of the ten sites will compete for the title of 'District Champion' on **Friday, May 9, 2008** at Borders Book Store.

The *'Ins and Outs of the Middle School* Enrichment program:

The second Middle School Event will occur on **Saturday, April 12, 2008** beginning at 9:30. It is entitled, **Multi-Media Madness**. The 7th & 8th grade GATE and Honors Students will explore media of yesterday, today and tomorrow at Willis Jepson Middle School.

For those who entered the Ruckus Nation Challenge the awards ceremony will take place in San Francisco on Monday, March 17 at 3:00.

For those with interest in Robotics, teams from Vaca High will compete at The University of Davis on March 20-22. Please come and support our techno-wizards! Please e-mail with interest regarding either competition: jbucsko@vacavilleusd.org

Finally, the **Loop the Lagoon** sponsored by VPEF is **Saturday, May 3, 2008**. We would love to have even more 'GATERS' out supporting VPEF in their GATE T's. If you would like to be involved, please contact the GATE Office for more information.

Technology

In February, 2008, the Margaret Beelard Community Foundation granted \$60,000 to Vacaville Unified School District for the purchase of 80 mounted digital projectors for the district's fourth- and fifth-grade classrooms. The grant brings the district one step closer to its goal of placing a mounted digital projector and screen in every classroom. For more information see the district's web site.

Ed1Stop, our portal to subscription services, recently put up a couple of free trials worth looking at:

Learn360 is a streaming video service similar to Discovery Education (formerly called United Streaming.) Ed1Stop describes it as a "stronger package for high schools" because it contains content from PBS and National Geographic. The link to the free trial is under the Curriculum Support tab in Ed1Stop.



Soundzabound is a royalty free music library students and teachers can use with their digital projects. Files can be previewed online and downloaded in MP3 format, and use of them meets all the licensing and technology requirements needed for education. Teacher user names for Ed1Stop are listed on the right side of the gateway for each school. The Ed1Stop login page has form that will email a forgotten password to teachers.

NIE is going green!

We invite you to participate in an entirely new program – the new NIE E-edition. Starting March 1, we will be able to provide the Reporter newspaper electronically in PDF format to all teachers.

We at the Reporter are taking a very proactive approach to some very serious global environmental issues, and examining ways in which all of us can be more involved in being part of the solution, instead of part of the problem.

By offering the newspaper in PDF version to the teachers we hope to address some of the environmental concerns by accomplishing the following –

- Saving the paper that is used in producing the newspaper, thereby saving more trees
- Saving the fuel now used for delivery of newspapers, thereby resulting in fewer carbon emissions
- Reducing the waste of left over newspapers, so there will be less to dispose of at the schools

In addition, there are many benefits to the teachers, some of which are –

- Convenience – teachers can click on link from any computer
- Better selection - teachers can print only the articles, ads, or sections that are needed
- The program enhances computer literacy skills

At the present time, being an NIE E-Edition teacher/subscriber is entirely optional. We ask that you call us at 707-453-8177 or sign up online at <http://nieonline.com/thereporter/> or email nie@thereporter.com. Once we receive your information, you will be contacted with further details.



Announcements and Services

Beanstalk Tutoring

- Help your child succeed
- One-to-one tutoring with a credentialed teacher
- All subjects and ages
- Customized instruction to meet your child's academic needs
- Assistance with homework, school projects and test prep
- SAT prep and college admission's essay instruction
- "Helping Parents Help Their Kids" workshop series

Jennifer Kile 707-280-4023
BeanstalkTutoring@yahoo.com

HELP WANTED

We would like to hire a person, ideally a college student, to work from March to May 2008 and September 1 - October 31, 2008 at Sierra Vista School, 4 days per week, 12:15 - 1:45 to facilitate and coordinate student group activities in Grades 4 - 6 during lunch recess time. The pay is \$30 per day.

If you know of a college student, or someone who might be interested in this position, please have him/her call Eldridge Glover at Sierra Vista at 453-6260, ext. 0. Thank you!

SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE TO PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS

The Retired Teachers of Solano County (SCRTA) has a number of \$1000 scholarships available to prospective teachers who have a BA degree and are in a 5th year credential program. The due date for applications is April 18, 2008, and scholarships will be awarded in May 2008.

Please contact Teri Ramos in HR (x.6119 or by e-mail) if you would like more information and/or an application form.



Advertisements



Alto Sax- like new- \$800
Call 448-1350

House for rent. 3 bdrm, 1 bath
 \$1,300 month
 230 West Kendal St.
 449-0850



2005 Kawasaki Concourse
 Motorcycle, 64K miles,
 \$5000 OBO.
 Call Bill 365-8409.

I am a district employee interested in purchasing an Elliptical machine. If you have one in good condition that you are interested in selling, please contact me at rajuwade@aol.com.

For Sale: 3 bedroom 2 bath main house (1600 sq ft.) and 2 bedroom, 1 bath newly remodeled guest house (1100 sq ft.), four car garage, large in-ground swimming pool with retractable cover and 3 out buildings on two level acres of land. Located just off of Cherry Glenn Road. Guest house has separate address and P.G. & E account, excellent rental possibility. If you are interested in purchasing this property, please call Jim or Patty Wasielewski at 707-447-9040. \$800,000

For Rent:
 Crestview home - 500 Blue Ridge Court



Charming single story home with covered porch. Upgrades include custom stained glass entry, pergo flooring, remodeled kitchen, authentic clawfoot tub in master bath, gas firestove in family room/kitchen area, beautiful brick backyard patio. Backyard is filled with camellias, hydrangeas, gardenias, and an awesome shade tree. Walking distance to Orchard School.
 1535 square feet, 3 bed/2 bath available March 1.
\$1650/month - Contact Cathy Thomas at Callison