



Orange County Council PTA BEACON

OCCPTA / 445 W. Amelia St., 9th Floor / Orlando, FL 32801
Our website: www.occpta.org



everychild.onevoice

December 2003

Volume 9 / Issue 5

Calendar



December 19

End 2nd Marking Period

December 19 - 5:30 p.m.

School Board Meeting

December 22 – January 2, 2004

Winter Holiday!

January 13

School Board Meeting

January 14

January Training Session (see page 5)

The exact dates and times of School Board meetings are subject to change. For information, contact School Board Services at (407) 317-3236

LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST ALERT! BE ON THE LOOK OUT

Due to schedule changes in the legislators calendar the Legislative Breakfast has been rescheduled. Be on the look out for information on the new date, location and time. You will receive this information via email, flyers and/or phone calls.

Goals

"Follow plans and achieve goals. When obstacles arise, you change your direction to reach your goal, you don't change your decision to get there."

Zig Ziglar

Provided by: www.BullyFreeKids.com

Call OCCPTA, we can help you reach your goal!

Thank you, Volunteers!

by Rhea Parks-Smith, President, Orange County Council of PTAs/PTSAs

The 80th Annual Florida PTA Convention was a huge success, due in part to the magnificent efforts of our Orange County Local Unit PTA Volunteers.

As hosts of this important convention and celebration of Florida PTA's 80th birthday, the Orange County Council was responsible for many aspects of the event. We could not have done it without YOU, our Local Unit Volunteers.

Delegates from across Florida were extremely complimentary to our council because of Orange County's courteous and friendly volunteers.

The Orange County Council thanks all of you who volunteered, were delegates, or contributed items for the Boutique and Auction.

I personally want to thank Daryl Flynn for coordinating and scheduling all of our adult volunteers and to Vickie DiGiovanni who amassed our student volunteers to serve as ushers and pages during the meetings. Both of these ladies are to be commended for a job extremely well done.

I also want to thank Mr. Ron Blocker, OCPS Superintendent, for bringing greetings from our school district and the gracious and kind words he had for the Orange County Council and the PTA in general. We are also grateful to Mr. Rich Crotty, our Orange County Chairman, who brought greetings and highlighted the wonderful children's programs that he personally champions in our county government.

I am very proud to be your representative, to serve as your County Council President, and stand along side you as we continue to work for *everychild.onevoice*.

IN THIS ISSUE. . .

Look for information about our January Training Session. This is an important training that will feature instruction on the election of your nominating committee and how to conduct your general elections. We will have our Program to Go centerpiece and a time for your questions.

Another important date is our Annual President's Appreciation/Founder's Day Luncheon. It will be held Saturday, February 7, 2004, look for details coming soon!

Happy Holidays!!!

OCCPTA President, Rhea Parks-Smith meets with Orange County Chairman Rich Crotty and OCPS Superintendent Ron Blocker on opening day of the Florida PTA 80th Convention.



Rhea Parks-Smith



Building Successful Partnerships



Submitted by Faye Norris, 1st Vice President,
Orange County Council of PTAs/PTSAs

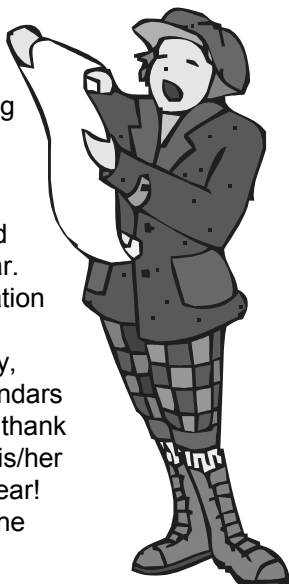
Building Successful Partnerships (BSP) is National PTA's Program on Parent Involvement. It uses all the facets of the National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs. These standards include Communicating, Parenting, Student Learning, Volunteering, School Decision Making and Advocacy, and Collaborating with Community. A presentation on this subject will deliver a consistent message about the importance of parent involvement. **Parent and family involvement increase student success.** Extensive parent involvement yields a higher student achievement.

As a PTA trained BSP presenter, I am available to your local units, school administrators, community groups, religious groups, civic organizations, etc. to present a session addressing Building Successful Partnerships. For information and/or scheduling, please contact me at 1stvp@occpta.org.

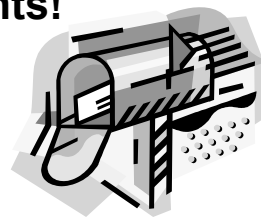
The Presidents' Appreciation Luncheon Is Coming in February!

Submitted by Faye Norris, 1st Vice President,
Orange County Council of PTAs/PTSAs

Did you know that the Presidents' Appreciation Luncheon is not only for the PTA/PTSA local unit Presidents? This luncheon is sponsored by OCCPTA to provide an opportunity for all of us, including local unit board members, to express our appreciation to the local unit presidents for their hard work and dedication to children and the PTA throughout this school year. This year, the Presidents' Appreciation Luncheon and Founder's Day celebration will be held on Saturday, February 7. Please mark your calendars now! Come to support and help us thank your local unit President for all of his/her hard work this 2003-2004 school year! We will be expecting you. Search the January Beacon for more details.



Attention Presidents! If you do NOT receive the Beacon at Home...



Fill out and mail this form to:

OCCPTA c/o
Wanda Smith
1126 Landale Ct.
Orlando, FL 32828

Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel: _____

E-mail: _____

School: _____

NOTE: Presidents, please make additional copies of the Beacon for your officers and board members. They, too, can benefit from the Beacon!



The Orange County Council PTA Beacon

The Beacon is the official newsletter of the Orange County Council of PTAs/PTSAs.
445 W. Amelia St. 9th Floor
Orlando, FL 32801
(407) 317-3200 x 2192

Rhea Parks-Smith, Council President
Wanda Smith, Beacon Editor

Published monthly with the exception of June/July combined issue. Articles for the PTA Beacon must be submitted in writing by the 10th of the month prior to publication. (i.e. September 10th for the October newsletter.)

Mail articles to: Wanda Smith
1126 Landale Ct.
Orlando, FL 32828

Fax to: Wanda Smith 407-381-5925

E-mail to: editor@occpta.org
Please write "*Beacon*" in the subject line

Fathers, Food & Children



*Submitted by Gamal Mack,
Family Involvement Chair,
Orange County Council of PTAs/PTSAs*

The number of overweight children and fathers is increasing. Currently, over 64% of the U.S. population is overweight, and 22% of kids between 6 and 18 are considered obese (obesity being 20% or more overweight). Being overweight has health disadvantages, but children who are overweight are often victims of ridicule and teasing as well.

At the University of Minnesota, researchers surveyed over 4,000 7th through 12th graders on body satisfaction, self-esteem, depression, and teasing. They found 30% of adolescent girls and 25% of boys were teased by peers concerning their weight. Additionally, 28% of girls and 16% of boys were teased by family members.

To combat this trend of unnecessary weight and body image problems, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that parents have an annual Body-Mass Index (BMI) check to identify and prevent obesity. One study (Golan, 1999) found that both fathers and children lost weight when fathers were educated on the importance of exercise, good eating habits, and the dangers of a sedentary lifestyle.

To Think About...

What kind of influence are you having on your children's health habits? One of the most important factors is your *modeling* -- your own diet and exercise habits. A 1999 study by Child Trends concluded that, "the most serious threat to the health of American children is the behavior of their own parents." Other research found that families where fathers modeled and supported good eating habits tended to eat more meals together, watch TV less, and exercise more often.

Excerpt from fathers.com weekly 8/29/03, Dr. Ken Canfield & the NATIONAL CENTER for FATHERING

Orange County PTA Convention Volunteers Shine

*Submitted by Daryl Flynn, Immediate Past President / Leadership,
Orange County Council of PTAs/PTSAs*

The OCCPTA thanks the many individuals who volunteered their time to work at the recent Florida PTA Annual Convention Welcome Table and Boutique. These individuals were sparkling representatives of the Orange County PTA community and made our organization shine! Sincere appreciation goes to:

Debbie Betourne, Palm Lake Elementary
Lorraine Burch, Tildenville Elementary
Louise Chen, OCCPTA
Debbie Colvin, OCCPTA
Torie Deremo, Windy Ridge
Jim DiGiovanni, University High
Vickie DiGiovanni, OCCPTA/University High
Connie Goenaga, Hunter's Creek Elementary
Tim Hanes, OCCPTA
Susan Harrison, Conway Elementary

Home for the Holidays...

*Submitted by Rhea Parks-Smith, President,
Orange County Council of PTAs/PTSAs*



Home is a word that can describe many places but to me the most apt description is in the adage, "home is where the heart is." I've interpreted that, as many others have, to mean that the **people whom I care about and make me long for that feeling of home** are in my heart no matter where I am physically.

This holiday season you may not be able to be in the location that you consider home but your real home will always be in your heart.

December is a month of many different holidays but they all seem to have one thing in common. They create in us a longing for peace, love, family, and Home. The holidays also seem to be harbinger of stress for many of us. After all, there's work, shopping, wrapping, parties, traveling to be with relatives, helping with homework and all of your normal duties, not to mention baking and cooking. Unfortunately, life doesn't go "on hold" for us to celebrate each of our special events.

But this year, in spite of all the hustle and bustle, resolve to take time for yourself and your families.. Spend a quiet evening at home playing a family game or baking cookies together.

This year, don't say "yes" to everything. Absolve yourself from one "responsibility" that you have taken upon yourself. Look for small, quiet ways of bringing joy to yourself and others.

And last, but certainly not least, remember to send in a few extra items for the food drive at your school. This year, some schools are experiencing a 100% increase in the number of needy families and students. Your extra donation could make a real difference in the life of a child and bring a little of Your heart into Their home.

Phyllis Hollins, Windy Ridge/Olympia High
Roylyn Jason, Cypress Springs Elementary
Joanne Johnson, OCCPTA
Gayley Lauteria, OCCPTA
Mary Lawrence, OCCPTA
Angie Linder, OCCPTA/Blankner
Alison Lonergan, Columbia Elementary
Gamal Mack, OCCPTA
Tommy Matthews, Lake Como Elementary
Beth McGahan, Cypress Springs Elementary
Candy Morgan, OCCPTA
Joy Nead, Olympia High
Faye Norris, OCCPTA/Palm Lake Elementary
Julie Popp, Southwest Middle/Bay Meadows
Tanya Roller, Palm Lake Elementary
Diane Rutzler, Ocoee Elementary
Christine Schornagle, Cypress Springs Elementary
Amy Scott, Ocoee Elementary
Marie Sharpe, OCCPTA
Patty Stewart, Bay Meadows
Cindy Taylor, Rosemont Elementary
Carol Willard, Olympia High
Edrina Wilson, Mollie Ray Elementary

How to Reach Us

If you have questions or concerns, here are a few ways to reach OCCPTA officers who can help you.

Call us at:
407-317-3200 ext. 2192
Leave a message. We will return your call.

Website: www.occpa.org

Send inter-office correspondence via the **OCCPS courier service**. Our address is:

OCCPTA, ELC 9th Floor

Our **mailing address** is:
OCCPTA, ELC 9th Floor
445 W. Amelia St.
Orlando, FL 32801

Need a faster response? Call one of the officers listed below:

President:

Rhea Parks-Smith 407-896-9269
president@occpa.org

1st Vice President

Faye Norris
1stvp@occpa.org

2nd Vice President

Vickie DiGiovanni
2ndvp@occpa.org

3rd Vice President

Kate Oates
3rdvp@occpa.org

Treasurer

Joanne Johnson
treasurer@occpa.org

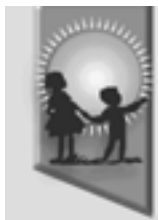
Secretary

Stella Cottrell
secretary@occpa.org

Florida PTA State Office

1747 Orlando Central Parkway,
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Phone: (407) 855-7604
Fax: (407) 240-9577
Toll Free: (800) 373-5782
E-mail: info@floridapta.org

Office Hours
Monday - Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
(Closed Holidays)



Exceptional Student Education and PTA

*Submitted by Gayley Lauteria, Exceptional Education Chair,
Orange County Council of PTAs/PTSAs*

Does your PTA have an Exceptional Student Education Chairperson? Does your PTA actively seek the participation of parents and caregivers of special students? How about Special Education teachers? Does your PTA purposefully include these individuals in activities, on committees, or as Board Members?

PTA has a long history of supporting exceptional student education and recognizing that these students are our students. In years past, special education students were placed in separate locations, schools or classrooms, and as a result they and their parents and their teachers were seen as separate and different. Thankfully, educational systems are attempting to give students with special needs the most normal and equal education they can. Our PTAs must treat these children and their families with the same goal.

There are about 26,000 Orange County students receiving services under the Exceptional Education Department. Their placements range from homebound to fully included in all regular classrooms. They are a huge portion of our population and their parents and guardians are as talented and diverse as the students are. They do have some special issues, but PTA should recognize that it is our responsibility to address these issues with our other issues. We truly need to live "everychild, onevoice".

Please, contact me about Exceptional Student Education, appointing an ESE chairperson, or how to involve families.

Gayley Lauteria. (407) 894-2279, lauteril@bellsouth.net

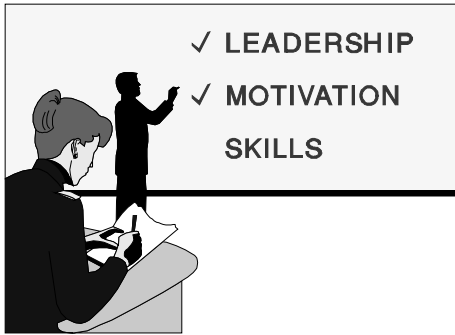


*Submitted by
Gamal Mack,
Family Involvement
Chair, Orange
County Council of
PTAs/PTSAs*

Governor Jeb Bush's annual Black History Month Essay Contest Official Rules and Guidelines

Governor Jeb Bush's annual Black History Month Essay Contest is open to all K-12 students in the state of Florida. Three winners will be selected: one elementary (K-5 student), one middle (6-8 student) and one high school (9-12 student) student. Winners will be notified on **January 26, 2004**.

- Entries must be emailed to blackhistoryessay@myflorida.com, or mailed to Ricardo Rodriguez in the Governor's Office, 206 the Capitol, Tallahassee, FL, 32399, by **5:00p.m. Monday, January 5, 2004**.
- Essays should address the following topic: "What Impact has an African American Entertainer, 'Singer,' 'Dancer,' 'Director,' or 'Actor/Actress' from Florida Had on My Life."
- Each student may enter only one essay.
- Essays should be no longer than 500 words in length.
- A parent must sign or type name on a waiver form allowing publication of the student's essay in the event that they are selected as a winner. Parental waiver can be obtained by logging onto the Governor's Black History Month webpage on the [myflorida.com](http://www.myflorida.com) web portal or http://www.myflorida.com/myflorida/governorsoffice/black_history/essay.html A parental waiver must accompany.
- Essays submitted must include: contestant's name, home address, telephone number, school the student attends, grade level and title of the essay.
- Winners will receive a 4-year full tuition scholarship to any Florida state college or university of their choice, provided by Florida Prepaid Education Foundation.
- All travel and lodging expenses will be paid for the winners and their immediate family members. Winners will be awarded their scholarships at the Governor's annual Black History Month reception, which will be held on February 2, 2004 at the Governor's Mansion in Tallahassee.
- Contact Ricardo Rodriguez in the Governor's Office at 850- 488-2183, Cristal Cole in the Governor's Mentoring Initiative Office at (850) 410-0696 or Leslie Steele in the Governor's Press office for any further questions.
- All essays must be submitted in one of the following formats:
Simple text(.txt)
Rich Text Format(.rtf)
Microsoft Word (.doc)



Orange County Council of PTAs/PTSAs Leadership Training

FOR ALL LOCAL PTA/PTSA BOARD MEMBERS

Wednesday, January 14th

9:30 AM – 11:30 AM: ELC Cafeteria

6:30 PM – 9:00 PM: ELC Board Room

- Plan to Share PTA program success stories (please bring handouts outlining your planning process)
- Appointing your Nominating Committee, Recruiting New Board Members

- Break-Out Sessions as needed (Budget Revisions, Building Successful Partnerships, etc.)
- Bylaws Update Process

For planning purposes, please contact Faye Norris, OCCPTA 1st Vice President, at firstvp@occpta.org with number of attendees by January 12. Pre-registration is not mandatory, but encouraged so that we will have a sufficient number of handouts and refreshments.

Board Members Packed 800 Goody Bags

Submitted by Louise Chen, Publicity Chair, Orange County Council of PTAs/PTSAs

The Orange County Council of PTAs/PTSAs was this year's hosts of the 80th Florida PTA Convention. Board members and some of their family members packed 800 goody bags with an assortment of items including discount coupons, snacks and pens that were distributed to this year's attendees at the convention in a little over two hours. Board members' children who volunteered with this task are Brooke Parks-Smith (left), daughter of OCCPTA President Rhea Parks-Smith, and Andre Norris, son of OCCPTA 1st Vice President Faye Norris, Mark and Mike Oates, sons of OCCPTA 3rd Vice President Kate Oates and Omar Mack, son of OCCPTA Family Chair Gamal Mack. Jim DiGiovanni, husband of Vicki DiGiovanni, 2nd Vice President, and Michelle Mack, wife of Gamal Mack, Family Chair, also lent a hand with this huge project.



Brooke Smith (left), daughter of OCCPTA President Rhea Parks-Smith, and Andreis Norris, son of OCCPTA 1st Vice President and Palm Lake Elementary student, prepare their favorite items to be packed into the 800 goody bags that will be distributed to the attendees of the 80th Florida PTA Convention

How many PTA/PTSA members does it take to stuff 800 good bags?



Vickie DiGiovanni (center), OCCPTA 2nd Vice President, sorts out pamphlets along with Gamal Mack's family.



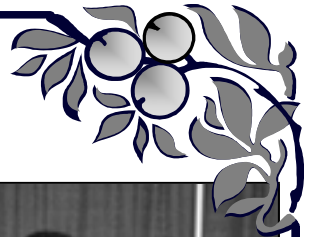
Melissa Hardin (left), Florida State PTA Convention Management Chair and Angela Linder, OCCPTA Vendor/Banquet Chair, get the supplies ready to be packed into the bags. Melissa planned and ran this year's convention. Get ready and mark your calendars for next year's convention in Miami on November 5-7, 2004.



It takes a merry group like this one!



80th Annual Florida PTA Convention



November 14-16, 2003

Wyndham Palace Resort & Spa
at the Walt Disney World Resort,
Lake Buena Vista



Kay Stephens (middle), Florida PTA State Office Membership Secretary, checks in Susanna Engel (left), Seminole County - Woodland Elementary PTA 1st Vice President and Diane Carrozza, Gotha Middle School PTSA President to the Florida Convention.



Dawn Steward (front), OCCPTA Health Chair and Florida PTA Legislative Chair, David Cullen, Florida PTA Vice President - Education, and Mary Fleckner, Florida PTA Cultural Arts/Reflections Chair, answer questions about the Florida PTA.



Looking at items for sale at the PTA Boutique are (l to r): Julie Popp, Bay Meadows Elementary PTA Past President and Secretary, Dannie McMillon, Dade County Council PTAs/PTSAs President, and Patty Steward, Bay Meadows Elementary PTA President.



Janice Bailey, Florida PTA Executive Director, and Joanne Johnson, OCCPTA Treasurer, discuss the building fund. The PTA Boutique raises funds for the upkeep of the Florida PTA office building.



Standing in the middle of the PTA Boutique are (l to r): Joanne Johnson, OCCPTA Treasurer, Jean Hovey, Florida PTA Scholarship Chair, and Candy Morgan, OCCPTA Corresponding Secretary.



Looking over the PTA Boutique are (l to r) Louise Chen, OCCPTA Publicity Chair, Dianne Smith, State PTA Vice-President of Regions and Councils, and Rhea Parks-Smith, OCCPTA President.



It's a pleasure to welcome back Angie Crawford (left), Zellwood Elementary PTA 2nd Vice President, and to welcome Kimberly Kang, Zellwood Elementary PTA President. Angie has been a very frequent attendee at OCCPTA events in the past and so it's a pleasure to welcome her back after her year hiatus.



Ransford Robinson, Dade County, Scott Lake Elementary PTA Board Member, and Sharon Miller, Palm Lake Elementary PTA President, take a moment to discuss PTA issues across the state. Florida PTA events provide opportunities for PTA members to interact with PTAs across the state.



Monica Kinas, Odyssey MS PTSA 1st Vice President, and Daryl Flynn, OCCPTA Leadership Team and OCCPTA Convention Volunteer Coordinator, share a light moment while viewing the exhibits.



Jean Hovey (left), Florida PTA Scholarship Chair, Faye Norris (middle), OCCPTA 1st Vice President, and Melissa Hardin (right), Florida PTA Convention Management Chair, talk about how rewarding it is to volunteer at PTA events. Melissa Hardin did an outstanding job in organizing this year's Florida PTA Convention.



Looking over items at the PTA Boutique are (l to r) Sharon Miller, Palm Lake Elementary PTA President, and Rhea Parks-Smith, OCCPTA President.



80th Annual Florida PTA Convention

November 14-16, 2003



Enjoying the exhibits at the Florida PTA Convention are (l to r) Marisabel Marty, Metrowest Elementary PTA President, Daryl Flynn, OCCPTA Leadership Team and Convention OCCPTA Board and Local Unit Volunteers Coordinator, and Diane Conde, Metrowest Elementary PTA Treasurer. The Vendor Exhibits at the Florida Conventions provide a wealth of information about fund raising, safety issues and other topics that are important to our PTAs.



Volunteers at the PTA Boutique look over the wide selection of crafts donated by PTA members from all across Florida (l to r) Kathy Gude, Hillsborough County Council of PTAs/PTSAs President, Faye Norris, OCCPTA 1st Vice President, and Sonia Stancil, Polk County Council of PTAs/PTSAs President.



Roylyn Jason, Cypress Springs Elementary PTA Board Member and OCCPTA Convention Volunteer, stands in front of the table with just some of the many baskets that were donated by PTAs/PTSAs all across Florida and were sold in a silent auction to raise funds for the Florida PTA Scholarship Fund. There was a wide selection of baskets to suit anyone's taste or needs from a vacation theme, to Italian food, to a picnic basket, to.... Roylyn also proudly discussed her PTA receiving the 25% Membership Increase Award. Congratulations to Cypress Springs Elementary PTA for their hard work in recruiting new members.



Getting the Orange County Welcome Table organized are (l to r) Gayley Lauteria, OCCPTA Exceptional Educational Chair, Edrina Wilson, Mollie Ray Elementary PTA President, Tonya Roller, Palm Lake Elementary PTA 2nd Vice President, and Marie Sharpe, OCCPTA By-Laws Chair.



Standing in front of the exchange message board is Vickie DiGiovanni, OCCPTA 2nd Vice President and Convention Student Volunteer Coordinator. Vickie did an outstanding job in coordinating the student volunteers. The students executed their duties as ushers and pages so politely and professionally that everyone appreciated them and students will probably be utilized at future conventions.



The Olympia HS student volunteers who worked Saturday morning of the convention as pages and ushers are pictured above and are (not in order): Glorinda Garcia, Haley Griffin, Renea Hartley, Casey Hoel, Kailey Hussey, Micheal McGahan, Patrick McRae, Megan Miller, Mirando Tsukamoto, Sylaisha Taylor, Brent Westbrook and Anna Williard (daughter of Olympia HS PTSA President Carol Willard).



OCCPTA Board and Local Unit Members volunteered to greet and handout materials including the "Goody Bags" at the Orange County Welcome Table to incoming convention attendees. Taking a shift at the Welcome Table are volunteers Joy Nead, Olympia HS PTSA member, and Debbie Betourne, Palm Lake PTA member. The many volunteers from Orange County helped to make things run smoothly at the convention and were easily identified by the t-shirts designed by Daryl Flynn, OCCPTA Leadership Team, who organized the local unit and board volunteers.



Working at the Welcome Table are (l to r) Edrina Wilson, Mollie Ray Elementary PTA President, Tonya Roller, Palm Lake Elementary 2nd Vice President, and Cindy Taylor, Rosemont Elementary PTA President.



The Olympia HS student volunteers who worked Saturday afternoon of the convention as pages and ushers are pictured above and are (not in order): Pat Bacon, Olga Kaza, Steven D'Uva, Paul D'Uva, Tom Skillman, Mari Beaudrault, Curtis Viselli, Taylor Wise, Sana Sadeek, Kara Savey and (not shown above) Paulette Alvarez.

Kudos To The Southwest Orlando Bulletin

*Submitted by Louise Chen, Publicity Chair,
Orange County Council of PTAs/PTSAs*

The Southwest Orlando Bulletin is a newspaper that covers the positive news in the southwest area of Orange County. The residents in this community receive this publication, free in the mail, every two weeks. It is packed with news and information about the community, the residents, schools and even news about the OCCPTA. Sherry Anderson, Assistant Editor for the school news, does an outstanding job in working with her school liaisons.

But now the Southwest Orlando Bulletin has gone one step further by creating a very polished and informative website. This site has an archive of about six months of school and sports news. Take a moment to check out what the southwest schools and even the OCCPTA have been doing at: www.southwestorlandobulletin.com. Click on School News and look in the Nov. 15 - Dec. 5 issue.

If you enjoy this publication or their website please support their efforts by letting them know via email, snail mail or just call them.



SCHOOL NEWS



We want you to know...

Palm Lake Elementary welcomes home a Marine!

The Palm Lake Elementary community had the distinct honor of welcoming home 1st Lt. Jonathan Bonnette, son of 4th grade teacher Karen Bonnette and husband Chris. Jonathan is in the U.S. Marine Corp, stationed at 29 Palms, Calif. He is with the infantry unit 1st Battalion 7th Marines. He has spent the last 8 months in Iraq and was welcomed home on leave with cards, signs and patriotic songs from the PLES family. PLES families graciously thank him for the sacrifices he has made to help protect freedom for all.



PTA BEACON

Orange County Council of PTAs/PTSAs
ELC-9th Floor
445 W. Amelia Avenue
Orlando, FL 32801



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