



Valhalla High School
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Principal: Mary Beth Kastan

Valhalla High School PTO
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PTO President: Maria Giddens

Editor: Louise Nicoloff

September/October 2009

Volume XVIII Issue 1

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear Parents:

Welcome to the 2009-10 school year!

Valhalla is excited to announce another impressive increase in our API score to 821! Thank you to our staff and students for their hard work to achieve a 21 point increase. The Academic Performance Index (API) is calculated using the results of the California Standards Test (CST) administered in the spring to students in grades 9-11. It is the leading indicator used throughout the state to measure student achievement. Valhalla's 821 API leads the Grossmont Union High School District, and places Valhalla as the 9th highest API score among comprehensive high schools in San Diego County. We're very proud of our students' accomplishments!

It was a dusty summer! Thank you for your continued patience during the summer construction projects. We know it was sometimes difficult for our students, families and staff because the campus was closed. We really appreciate your understanding. At one point, we had over 175 construction workers on campus, not including the workers on the science building project. Projects completed over the summer included:

- Replacement of the air handlers on the fourth floor
- Electrical and sewer upgrades
- ADA access issues
- Installation of a new fire alarm and bell system
- Replacement of lights and seat walls in the Student Center and Quiet Study Area
- Addition of security lights in parking lots

We have experienced an increase in student enrollment this year. Our enrollment at this time is 2213, with 547 grade 9 students. The largest enrollment is grade 10, at 586 students. These increases have led to large classes and the need to open additional sections in some content areas. Thank you for your patience as changes were made during the first 3 weeks to meet district mandates.

(Continued on page 3)

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| <i>PTO Page</i> | 2 |
| <i>Announcements</i> | 3 |
| <i>College & Career Info</i> | 4 |
| <i>Important Dates Calendar</i> | 5 |
| <i>Staff Phone and Email List</i> | 6 |

PTO PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY MARIA GIDDENS

Welcome back staff, students and parents. I hope you enjoyed your nice long summer! For those of you who do not know me, my name is Maria Giddens and I am your PTO President. I have been involved with PTA/PTO for 12 years. I've held almost all the positions on the board; from Cut & Paste for the staff to President. I served on the Cajon Valley Council PTA board for two years. For the Valhalla PTO, I served as Treasurer for two years and am now serving as President. I've been married to my husband Marc for 18 years and have two daughters: Sarah, a junior here at Valhalla, and Sophia, a 7th grader at Hillsdale Middle School.

This year is going to be a big challenge with all the budget cuts that Valhalla has experienced. I look forward to working with our principal, Mary Beth Kastan, our amazing PTO Board and the enthusiastic ASB. I know we can work together to overcome all obstacles.

You may be asking, "What is the difference between PTA and PTO?" PTO stands for Parent Teacher Organization. The main difference between the two is that all monies that are donated to Valhalla PTO stay at Valhalla. Our one and only fundraiser is the Membership Drive. The Membership money you donate to Valhalla helps fund Student Scholarships, Supply Day, Staff Appreciation, Baccalaureate, and Grad Night. There are membership forms at the front desk of the Main Office if you've misplaced yours. Please join and support PTO!

The PTO meetings are held the first Wednesday of every month at 6:30 PM in the Valhalla library. We always welcome everyone and their new ideas!

Wishing you a great 2009-2010 school year!

STAFF OF THE MONTH

Congratulations to math teacher **Eric Thomas** for being selected as the October 2009 Staff of the Month.



Students, staff, and parents are encouraged to nominate a VHS employee for "Staff of the Month."

Simply provide the person's name and why he/she is deserving of this honor. Then drop your nomination form in one of the ballot boxes found at one of two locations - the front reception desk near the principal's office or the Student Attendance Office window in the Student Center. If you have any questions regarding this program, you may contact Nancy Gannon, Staff of the Month Chairman, at ngannon@csgrr.com.

**PTO MEETING DATES
2009-2010**

PTO MEETINGS ARE HELD ON WEDNESDAY EVENINGS
VALHALLA LIBRARY 6:30 - 8:00 PM

NOVEMBER 4
DECEMBER 3
JANUARY 6
FEBRUARY 3
MARCH 3
APRIL 7
MAY 5
JUNE 2

VALHALLA HIGH SCHOOL PTO BOARD 2008-2010

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|--|--|--|
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| 3^d VP Ways & Means | <i>Eva Gatus</i> | etgatus@yahoo.com |
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| Treasurer | <i>Rene Salter</i> | rsalter@cox.net |
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| Valhalla Line Editor | <i>Louise Nicoloff</i> | valhalla.line@cox.net |
| Staff of the Month | <i>Nancy Gannon</i> | ngannon@csgrr.com |
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| Hospitality | <i>Angela Atallah Joannie Hutton</i> | angelaatallah@hotmail.com the5huttons@cox.net |
| Baccalaureate | <i>Cathy Jezierski Trish Case</i> | cjezierski@cox.net licotac@cox.net |
| Merchandise Coordinator | <i>Lori Andersen Karen Drew</i> | landersen@cox.net karendrew@cox.net |

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

(Continued from page 1)

The Valhalla High School Site Council is a group of students, parents, teachers, and support staff that oversee the goals and objectives of our instructional program and the financial resources to meet those objectives. We have openings for the 2009-10 school year. If you are interested or want more information, please see Mrs. Willson in the Principal's office.

Parent Visitation Day is scheduled for Friday, November 6, 2009. It will also be a minimum day. Please mark your calendar. We hope to see you there!

In closing, we hope you will give consideration to joining PTO this year to help us reach our goal of 100% participation. We are so fortunate to have the support of a strong parent group. In addition to producing the *Valhalla Line*, they also sponsor Supply Day, provide snacks to students during CAHSEE testing, organize volunteer proctors for AP and CAHSEE testing, and coordinate Staff of the Month recognition, just to name a few.

Thank you for your continued passion and commitment to Valhalla High School and the Orange Nation spirit. We are at the best school in the Grossmont District with the best staff, students, community, and school pride!

Sincerely,
Mary Beth Kastan



JOIN PTO TODAY!!

100% of your membership dues and cash donations stay here at Valhalla to fund programs such as staff appreciation, supply day, student recognition awards, parent-teen connection, senior scholarships, baccalaureate, and the Valhalla Line newsletter.

*\$10 for a single membership
\$15 for a family membership*

Dues/donation forms are available at the front desk in the Main Office.



ATTENTION SENIORS!!



YOU MUST HAVE YOUR PORTRAIT TAKEN AT BOYD ANDERSON PHOTOGRAPHY BY NOVEMBER 21 TO BE IN THE YEARBOOK!

PORTRAITS ARE FREE AND NO PURCHASE IS REQUIRED; HOWEVER, YOU MUST HAVE YOUR PICTURE TAKEN TO BE IN THE YEARBOOK.

MAKE AN APPOINTMENT WITH BOYD ANDERSON BY CALLING 619-444-1184 OR ONLINE AT WWW.BOYDANDERSON.COM

**PARENT VISITATION DAY
SUPPLY DAY
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 6**

Visit your student's classrooms and help Valhalla with much needed supplies!

Donation boxes will be located in the Humanities Classrooms.

Donations of paper are especially needed. Gift cards (Staples/Office Depot/Target) are also gratefully accepted,

Cash donations can be left at the Front Desk of the Main Office.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!



GOT PLANS? 2009

Six years ago, counselors in the Grossmont Union High School District decided that they wanted to provide a better way to help students and parents make their post secondary educational plans. Since about one-fourth of GUHSD graduates enroll in four-year universities, our district wanted to provide a more comprehensive list of options for our students after high school. A group consisting of one counselor from each high school came together to plan a career and college fair that included fair participants and informational workshops that would benefit ALL of our students from every walk of life. This event works in conjunction with our school district's Post-Secondary Planning initiative. After the program experienced tremendous growth, GUHSD partnered with Cuyamaca College to host the 6th annual Got Plans? College and Career Fair, which will be held at Cuyamaca College on Wednesday, October 21, 2009 from 5:00-8:00 PM.

This year's career and college fair features more than 120 tables of career and college representatives explaining post secondary options that include 4-year universities, 2-year colleges, vocational, military, and career paths. The University of California, San Diego State, ITT Tech, the Marines, our own ROP programs, along with Grossmont and Cuyamaca College's Career Technical Education and certificate programs will all have tables.

Beginning at 6:00 PM, students and their parents will be able to attend two 45-minute informational workshops and learn from local experts what students can expect after high school. The SDSU and UC workshops are highly attended. But so are community college workshops that provide information about certificate programs and transfer options. Students can also learn about financial aid, NCAA requirements, and college admissions testing. Career Workshops include topics such as Career Trends/What's Hot, Firefighter, Paramedic, and Lifeguard Careers, Health Careers, and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) Careers. A computer lab will be available so that parents and students can learn about our COIN3 computer program and its impact on students' post-secondary plan.

More detailed information is available on the district website at www.guhsd.net, including the "Got Plans?" program and schedule for the evening. This night is for all 9th through 12th grade students and their parents. Don't miss it: Wednesday, October 21st from 5:00-8:00 PM at Cuyamaca College.

COLLEGE AND CAREER CENTER

Welcome to the Valhalla family, parents of 2013 graduates! And welcome back, parents of 2010, 2011, and 2012 graduates.

Your student's future is just around the corner. College choices, career choices, how to pay for college - it all starts in the College and Career Center.

Encourage your student, no matter what grade level, to get an inside look at his/her dream choices for college and to figure out what career is a good fit. If your student's future seems uncertain, the College and Career Center can help guide them on the right road toward their future goals.

Parents are always welcome in the College and Career Center, or you can visit the College and Career Center on-line at Valhalla's website (select Guidance Home under the Guidance tab).

If you have any questions, please contact Martie Rixon at 593-5388 or mrixon@guhsd.net.

Colleges Visiting Valhalla

Cuyamaca College : Every 2nd and 4th Wednesday starting Oct 14th, from 8:00 AM-1:00 PM

Baylor
Oct. 19th @ 12:00

Westmont College
Oct. 20th @ 12:00

St. John's College
Oct. 21st @ 9:30 AM

Prescott College
Oct. 21st @ 11:30 AM

Indiana/ Purdue
Oct. 22nd @ 10:30 AM

Seattle University
Oct. 26th @ 10:30 AM

University of Redlands
Oct.27th @ 8:30 AM

Colorado State
Oct.28th @ 8:30 AM

Whittier College
Oct. 29th @ 10:30 AM

To attend the college visits, students must have a permission slip from Mrs. Rixon. All visits are in the College and Career Center, Room.309.

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

OCTOBER

10/07 PTO Meeting - Library, 6:30 PM
 10/16 First Student Progress Report
 10/21 Career/College Night, Got Plans?
 Cuyamaca College Student Center
 5:00 - 8:00 PM
 10/28 **Minimum Day**
 10/30 Homecoming

NOVEMBER

11/04 PTO Meeting - Library, 6:30 PM
 11/06 Parent Visitation Day - **Minimum Day**
 Supply Day
 11/11 **HOLIDAY - Veterans Day**
 11/23 - 11/27 **THANKSGIVING HOLIDAYS**

DECEMBER

12/02 PTO Meeting - Library, 6:30 PM
 12/04 Second Student Progress Report
 12/21 - 01/01 **WINTER BREAK**

JANUARY

01/04 School Resumes
 01/06 PTO Meeting - Library, 6:30 PM
 01/18 **HOLIDAY - Martin Luther King**
 01/26 - 01/28 FINAL EXAMS
 01/28 First Semester Ends

FEBRUARY

02/01 Second Semester Begins
 02/03 PTO Meeting - Library, 6:30 PM
 02/08 **HOLIDAY - Lincoln's Birthday**
 02/15 **HOLIDAY - Washington's Birthday**

MARCH

03/03 PTO Meeting - Library, 6:30 PM
 03/10 **Minimum Day**
 03/12 First Student Progress Report
 03/29 - 04/02 **SPRING BREAK**

APRIL

04/07 PTO Meeting - Library, 6:30 PM
 04/21 **Minimum Day**

MAY

05/05 PTO Meeting - Library, 6:30 PM
 05/07 Second Student Progress Report
 05/31 **HOLIDAY - Memorial Day**

JUNE

06/02 PTO Meeting - Library, 6:30 PM
 06/18 - 06/22 FINAL EXAMS
 06/22 Last Day of Classes
 06/23 Graduation

THE VALHALLA LINE IS PUBLISHED BI-MONTHLY

*THE DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT VALHALLA LINE IS
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2009*

ARTICLES MAY BE E-MAILED TO
VALHALLA.LINE@COX.NET

VALHALLA HIGH SCHOOL
STAFF PHONE AND EMAIL ADDRESS LIST
2009- 2010

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OFFICE QUICK REFERENCE

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------|---------------|----------|--------------------|----------|-------------------|----------|
| Attendance | 593-5332/5333 | Book Clerk | 593-5380 | Finance | 593-5337 | Registrar/Records | 593-5330 |
| Campus Supervisors | 593-5399 | Career Center | 593-5388 | Library | 593-5360 | SAT | 593-5345 |
| | | Counseling | 593-5340 | Principal's Office | 593-5312 | School Resources | 593-5373 |
| | | Nurse | 593-5371 | Psychologist | 593-5374 | Transcripts | 593-5330 |