LA JOLLA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

TIDINGS

www.ljes.org

June 2010

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Olympian

First grader Savannah Dennis stood on the medal stand during the Junior Olympics at LJHS.

Friends Prez Cherishes Her Experience

By Haleh Bolour
President, Friends of LJE, Inc.

Sweet...! Summer starts, as another exhilarating, wonderful academic year at LJES ends! Kids around the campus are buzzing with more energy and excitement than before, talking about things to do this summer with family and friends!

Yet another amazing year with Friends 'FUN'draising activities to support our mission to bring higher quality of educational experience to our children at LJES: GALA (Night at the Oscars), La Jolla Art & Wine Festival (LJAW&F), Annual Giving Campaign (AGC), eScrip, La Jolla Open Aire Market (OAM)….

Well, as you may know, my term as President of Friends of LJE, Inc. has come to an end. I feel both privileged and grateful for the opportunity to lead and be a part of such an energetic, involved team of parent and community volunteers, dedicated to making a positive impact on the current and future quality of education. This is definitely one experience I will always cherish and never forget!

Most importantly, on behalf of Friends of LJE, and myself, I'd extend a warm-hearted, sincere thank you to YOU wonderful, generous parents, who supported Friends' mission and fundraisers throughout this year and helped us meet our financial goals.

I'd be remiss if I didn't recognize this team of dynamic individuals, dedicated committee chairs and their volunteer members for their hard work and dedication. Without them – and the LJES volunteers who helped them - we would not have achieved our goals for providing the high quality educational experience at LJES. My sincere thanks and gratitude to (in no particu-

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So Long, Farewell...

Fifth graders Brenda Lewis, Katya Strom and Georgie Morris will say good-bye to La Jolla Elementary this month along with the rest of the class of 2010.

Pay Attention To Cluster

By Donna Tripi, *Principal*

Thank you for another exceptional year at La Jolla Elementary School. I have enjoyed working with you to ensure a quality education for our students. It truly is a labor of love for all of us – we love our children and want them to have a rigorous academic program and enriching experiences that they will remember for the rest of their lives. I think that once again, we have accomplished our goal!

While the list of our achievements this year is a long one, a very important achievement for our school and all of the public schools in La Jolla was the formation of the La Jolla Cluster Association – a grassroots efforts by parents from all of the La Jolla schools (Sharon Jones, Fran Shimp and Natascha Vossen from LJES). I know that many parents attended the public forum to talk about the formation of the cluster. The cluster exists to help our La Jolla public schools have a collective voice in speaking with the Board of Education and advocating for the needs of our school community.

The Cluster Association board is made up of 25 parents, teachers and principals from the five public schools in La Jolla. There are two parents, two teachers, and the principal of each school (Bird Rock, La Jolla Elementary, Torrey Pines, Muirlands Middle School and La Jolla High School). We meet monthly to discuss our cluster goals and district information. We have just begun to organize into subcommittees to work on cluster-wide goals, e.g. finance, technology, and curriculum.

We have already seen the power of a united committee in working with the district. In February, we had our budgets swept which left very little operational funds for the rest of the school year. The cluster board wrote a letter requesting the reinstatement of some of the funding and were successful in obtaining it.

I am looking forward to working with the cluster as it has huge potential in ensuring that the needs of high performing schools is considered in planning

See Cluster, Page 3

A 'Thank You' Poem From the PTO Prez

By Fran Shimp, *President, LJES PTO*

The weather is warmer, the tourists are here, the teachers are smiling - summer must be near.

Our school year flew by, filled with learning and fun, I can hardly remember all the things we have done.

So many parents gave so much of their time, they deserve much more than this silly "thank you" rhyme.

To Susan and Valerie and all their cooks, too, for the delicious food at the kinder barbecue.

To Dolores and Wahoos and those who served dinner, for the Back to School Picnic was surely a winner.

To Paola and Marta for our annual Book Fair, and to those who helped work it, can you be our new Chair?

To Melinda for running our Family Dance once more, for five years she's put on this party we adore.

To Laurie for making our Movie Night so great, no wonder our kids like to be on campus so late.

To Robin and helpers and those up on stage, for the Talent Show is always quite the rage.

To Katie and Mary and those working a booth, the Amigos Fiesta is a favorite with our youth.

To Lisa and helpers, all we can say is "wow," for this year at Family Science Night we milked a cow.

To Erica and Elise and all those who went, the Art Show was truly a spectacular event.

To Jen and the parents who sold pizza by the slice (did you notice this year they lowered the price?)

To Jana and parents who sold tons of ice cream, you ladies sure make a wonderful team.

To Wendy for selling logo wear at school, this year's shirts looked really, really cool.

To Sharon for Tidings - an amazing publication, with incredible pictures and important information.

To Barbara for the many eblasts she sent, without you we wouldn't know about any event.

To Sandra and others for the pictures they take, and put in the Yearbook - a wonderful keepsake.

To Sally and Jenna and those who volunteered, to be our room parents – you are truly revered.

To Marie for dealing with paperwork mess, the volunteer forms and the late TB tests.

To Cynthia for teaching our kids to help others (if only they would help their own sisters and brothers.)

To Julie for getting "Partnerships" going, thanks to you the deposits will keep on growing.

To Laryssa for recycling our bottles and cans, this new program has won you many new fans.

To Cindy for the directory where we get all our numbers, to plan all the play dates and overnight slumbers.

To Garth for the Handbook, that explains everything, from dress code, to testing, to when the bells ring.

To Dolly for Box Tops, she collected a stash, and sent them all in so we could have extra cash.

To Monica and parents, in the office they sat, helping Susie and Carylin with this and that.

To Mara and Amy for pick up at school, and dealing with parents who don't follow the rules.

To the playground volunteers, we know with no doubt, the extra set of eyes, really helped out.

To all the parents who worked in the classes, driving the field trips and herding the masses.

To the entire Friends Board and the money they raise, they enrich our kids' lives in so many ways.

To the teachers and staff and our Principal, too, we're constantly amazed at the things you guys do.

And last but not least, to our great PTO, Laney and Cindi and Shi and Hiroko,

Sandra and Debbie and Sharon and Michelle, thank you for running our programs so well.

To all you volunteers, and to those I forgot, we appreciate your time and we thank you a lot.

With all of your help, my job's really easy, so if you'd like to be president PLEASE come see me!

Attendance Matters

The number of students who have missed school this year has been alarming. Each month the district sends us a report comparing the number of students present to the same month the previous year. We have decreased in the percentage of students attending school every month this year.

Dancing in the Moonlight

Playing the role of the fireflies in a recent Grouchy Lady Bug performance were kindergartners Elisabeth Holm, Megan Spilsbury, Olivia Meloy and Tabitha Hibbs.

We know that this is not largely due to illness. The H1N1 flu had a minimal effect on attendance at the end of the fall. The number of students who missed school on Mondays and Fridays was significantly greater (30% higher) than those absent on Tuesday – Thursday. Though parents are calling students in sick (a concern in and of itself), the students are excited the Thursday before their long weekends and tell us otherwise.

Parents may not realize the impact absences have on their children and the rest of the class. "When students miss class, they are at a disadvantage. Lessons often build on prior work, and students who were absent feel lost until they receive additional instruction," stated Johanna Weber, fifth grade teacher and School Site Council Co-chair. Teachers then need to spend valuable whole class time catching up the student who was absent and taking away time from the students who are there. Though we often send homework home, it is not the same as being in class. Students miss valuable read alouds, discussions, and hands on activities. By design, we have the kind of instruction at our school that can not be made up by sending a packet home.

We implore you to look at the school calendar available on our web site and the district's web site and to plan vacations and long weekends on actual school holidays. In this way, your child and the rest of the class is not missing out on instructional time and the district does not lose all important funding.

Thank you.

-- Donna Tripi and the faculty of La Jolla Elementary School

Will Your Child Use – Or lose – Skills Over Summer?

By Donna Tripi, *Principal*

We know children benefit from continued reinforcement of their skills over the summer, but they also feel emotionally more confident coming into the new grade if they know their skills remain strong. This year, you will have the added information of a report on the Essential Skills of the grade level that will be sent home with your child's report card. Please work on any of the areas your child has not mastered over the summer.

Research spanning 100 years shows that student scores on standardized tests drop significantly between the beginning of summer and the end of summer (White, 1906; Heyns, 1978; Entwisle & Alexander 1992; Cooper, 1996; Downey et al, 2004).

How do you set the stage for successful work this summer? Here are some simple steps to guide you in this task:

• Ensure that your child understands the reasons that he/she must continue doing school work over the summer. Explain that adults work throughout the year, taking only short vacation breaks from time to time. Children need to continue to practice with all of the important concepts they have learned this year and any "essential skills" not already mastered.

• Set up a schedule with your child of when he/she will work (around camp times, lessons, play dates) and what types of learning activities he/she will perform each day. This will give her/him some ownership and responsibility toward the tasks. It will also alleviate some of the "power struggle" involved when a decision comes from parents alone.

• Encourage reading activities over the summer. Many of us enjoy extra reading time on beaches, parks, or while on vacation. Make consistent (weekly, biweekly) trips to the library or bookstore to diversify the reading. Look for a reading incentive program or create your own. **I always ask children to complete a summer reading log and return it the first week of school. They earn a small gift (bookmark, pencil) and an ice cream certificate. The public library also offers a summer incentive reading program.** Your child can bring me his/her library log and it counts for my program.

Most students lose about two months of grade level equivalency in mathematical computation skills over the summer months.

Children lose more than academic knowledge over the summer. Most children—particularly children at high risk of obesity—gain weight more rapidly when they are out of school during summer break (Von Hippel et al, 2007).

• Throw in some writing activities. It is fun to keep a journal of summer activities. Children can write about visits from friends and/or family, camps, classes, special trips or just things they do each day.

• Ensure that there is a mixture of activities. While daily reading is essential, working on math facts and problem-solving activities are also important.

• If you purchased a "Summer Connections" workbook, make sure your child does a page of reading/language arts and mathematics each day.

• Utilize the computer programs made available to you over the course of the year: Raz kids for reading, IXL for math and LJES links for reinforcement literacy and math games. Some require passwords, so make sure you have those before the year ends.

ˆIf your child has been receiving speech and language services or occupational therapy services, find time to practice the skills the child has learned in the year so that they will be maintained.

We hope you will continue to read to your child, have your child read to you, share reading, but READ! READ! READ! over the summer.

NEW NEXT YEAR!

MANDATORY BACK TO SCHOOL SIGN UP DAY

Similar to the middle and high school, LJES will be hosting a Back to School Sign Up Day for ALL parents to make sure your family is ready for the new school year. There will be NO Back to School Folders next year!

Two days to choose from!

Tuesday, August 31, anytime between 11am and 1pm or
Wednesday, September 1, anytime between 6pm and 8pm

Check EVERYTHING off your list all at once!

See below for just some of the things our Sign Up Day will include…

Items to be Filled Out and/or Handed In:	Items That May be Purchased:	Items to be Handed Out:
• District Papers • Proof of Residency • Classroom Volunteer Forms • Background Checks • eScrip • BuxBack • Disaster Preparedness Forms • Enrollment Cards • School Directory Consents • PTO Volunteer Forms	• Annual Giving Campaign • PTO Membership • Yearbook • Logo Wear • After School Science • Family Picnic Dinners • Knowledge College • After School Wednesday Classes* • Before School Spanish* ** if vendors are available*	• Supply Kits (if purchased online) • Handbook • 5th Grade Promotion Information • Open Aire Market Information • La Jolla Art and Wine Festival Information **Items to Bring:** • Checkbook • Credit Card (for Escrip) • Two Recent Bills That Show Proof of Residency

▶ Cluster

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for the district. It will also be a vehicle for the La Jolla schools to share all of the wonderful things we're doing at each school. It will ultimately make a smooth transition from elementary schools to middle school to high school.

I hope that you will keep informed of the cluster activities through the cluster web site, which can be accessed through a link from our ljes.org web site. I also hope that if you see a subcommittee announcement with an area you are interested in and/or have expertise in, you will consider taking an active role in it.

Thank you again for another great year! Have a wonderful summer of rest, fun and relaxation.

Volunteers Make LJES Special

By Donna Tripi, *Principal*

On Wednesday, June 2nd, our school community recognized all of the volunteers who have so generously donated their time and efforts this year at our Volunteer Thank You Breakfast. Many of the parents who volunteer in our classrooms, are members of our school organizations (Friends of La Jolla Elementary, Inc., PTO, SSC/SGT, Technology Committee, and Bloom) and who help for special activities were able to attend this special event.

Special thanks to the following parents and community members. . .

Haleh Bolour, President of our Friends of La Jolla Elementary, Inc., and the entire Board of Friends (Kelley Albence, Sherry Ahern, Christina Andrews, Donna Scurio, Dawn Villela, Dina Buckley, Jeanine Davey, Randi Hegeler, Kiley MacDonald, Melinda Mahoney, Sabrina Nelson, Aaron Roberts) for a successful year of fund raising efforts and supporting the work of our school

Fran Shimp, President of our PTO, and the PTO Board (Laney Beres, Hiroko Wilson, Cindi Stratton, Shi Deng, Julie MacDonald, Sandra Munson, Sharon Jones, Michelle Campagna) for supporting our programs and organizing the many wonderful activities for our children and families.

Sigurd Kallhovde, Chairperson of our Technology Committee and parent volunteers to the committee: Haleh Bolour, Brian Butler, Garth Conboy, Serge Issakov, Rick MacDonald, and Larry Michaels for their work on the Technology Committee. The committee is responsible for planning for all of the technology and technology support for our school, including ST Math (AKA JiJi).

Our Site Governance/School Site Council Co-Chairs, Adrienne Berlin and Johanna Weber, Haleh Bolour, Maia Clewley, Melinda Gaffney, Adriana Scott -- parents who served on our Site Governance Team/School Site Council this year for their work in shaping the future of our school.

Dina Buckley, Marcy Holthus, Carrie Morris, Alexa Scoma and Jen Spengler, for their work on the site beautification committee, Bloom, and for completing the last major Bloom project – the Marine Street Entryway.

Sharon Jones and Lisa Starr Goodin, our Tidings editors for an outstanding monthly newsletter.

Our newsletter is interesting, fun to read and surprising – you never know whose pictures will pop up or what fabulous things you'll read about our school.

Our room parents who help with a myriad of classroom projects and activities. Thanks for all of your help and support with the gala projects as well.

Our classroom, office, and playground volunteers who help our students daily and do "behind the scenes" work for our teachers.

We could not have the programs and the support we have for our children without all of you! Thanks!

▶ Friends Prez: 'It's A Pleasure to Serve You'

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lar order):

Christina Andrews (GALA, Investment subcommittee), Donna Scurio (Treasurer, OAM subcommittee member), Kelley Albence (VP), Sabrina Nelson (AGC), Dina Buckley (BLOOM), Dawn Villela (Friends/OAM Marketing, OAM subcommittee), Sherry Ahern (OAM, LJA&WF), Aaron Roberts (Legal Counsel), Kiley MacDonald (Secretary, New Fundraising Programs, Investment subcommittee member), Janine Davey (Asst. Treasurer and OAM subcommittee member), Melinda Mahony (Grant Writer), Marie Browning (eScrip), Randi Hegeler (Historian), Kristina Harvey (Teacher Representative), and Sigurd Kallhovde (Technology Advisor).

My apologies if I have inadvertently omitted any names. I know there are many more volunteers who work diligently behind the scenes to support Friends mission.

My sincere thanks again, for without these wonderful volunteers and YOU, Friends of LJE wouldn't exist. It's a pleasure to serve you and the community.

So in closing, I do have one final request. I ask that each of you wonderful parents pledge your continued support and help our new Friends leaders continue with the mission to deliver quality educational programs at LJES that our children deserve.

As you know, we can and will do this, but only together.

Have a relaxing summer, and see you back in Fall!

Haleh Bolour

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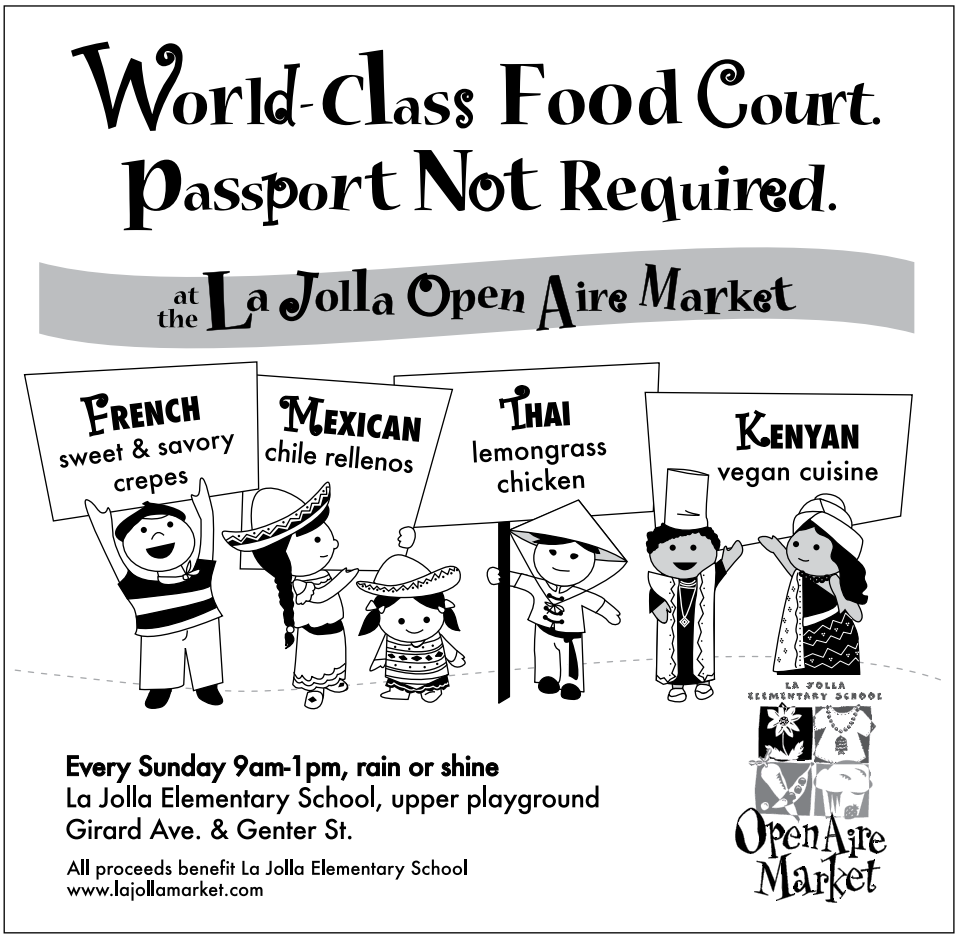


Olympic Spirit

This year's LJES Junior Olympics team consisted of 202 students that competed on Sunday, May 16 at La Jolla High's Edwards stadium. All students earned ribbons and medals for all events that they competed in. Special thanks to P.E. Coach Kelly Wiskus for training and organizing our team, Ms. Tripi for handing out medals, Leon Osteyee for assisting with event safety, Cameron Hickman for designing the team shirts, Seldom McGee for printing the shirts, and all of the parents for coming out to support the students! Participants included: Blaise Gimber (above left), Vanessa Itzkowich (above right), Ella Hagey (below right) and Tanner Ruane (below left). Above, Cameron Hickman and Rhanya Alkafaji show off the event t-shirt.

LJES Does Good

By Cynthia Kronemyer, *Service Learning Chair*

I hope all of you have enjoyed the first year of LJES's Service Learning Program as much as I have! Let's review what we've accomplished:

September: We learned about Disaster Preparedness and collected toiletry items. Thankfully there were no local emergencies, so we donated them to Alpha Project for the homeless.

October: We collected gently used Halloween costumes that were donated to Miramar Marine Air Station for the children of the low ranking military families.

November and December: We did a food drive. Members of our student council delivered the food to The San Diego Food Bank and toured the facilities.

January: We collected used eyeglasses. They were delivered to Lenscrafters who participate in the onesight.org program. Their staff travels to third world countries and refits the glasses to people who otherwise would not be able to support themselves due to poor eyesight.

Collecting used glasses for reuse by the poor is just one of many service-learning projects tackled this year

February: We collected spare change as a part of the Pennies for Pasta program. We also sold Valentine's to raise money for Haitian earthquake relief. The money raised was then donated to Scripps Health for their medical mission in Haiti. After an inspiring assembly from the CEO and CMO of Scripps, some students have been selling cookies and lemonade to raise more money themselves. Hooray for them; they've got the idea and are running with it!!!

March: We collected used footwear. Everything collected was given to Shoe Metro, a local store that participates in solesforsouls.org.

"Seek to do good, and you will find that happiness will run after you."
James Freeman Clark

April: Students were encouraged to participate in local Earth Day and other environmental programs.

May and June: We collected used towels for the Spay and Neuter Action Project (S.N.A.P.).

Anyone interested in giving input for next year's service learning program, please email me at cgk@ljfamily.com.

I hope that this summer you and your families will have the opportunity to do some volunteer work together. There are LOTS of local organizations that would love to have your help! Just pick a topic that is important to you, then do a Google search of non-profits in the San Diego area that address the community needs related to that topic. Happy helping!!!

Congratulations Graduates

Elisabeth - Kindergarten

Erik - 5th grade

Lina - Ironman

Students Race to Top Fitness

By Kelly Wiskus, *P.E. Teacher*

Happy National Physical Fitness and Sports Month! In conjunction with this holiday, the 1st week of May was also National Physical Education and Sports week. Over the years sports have played an integral role in the development of American society. The history of sports in America dates back to the Native Americans playing a game that eventually developed into now one of the fastest growing sports in America: La Crosse! As immigrants came to America they brought with them activities and games from their Native countries as well.

Rory McLean, Alex Monell and Allegra Bark were the top runners for this year's Run Club.

In addition to creating healthy lives, sports also helps individuals to develop important values such as teamwork, fairness & perseverance and has facilitated racial and social integration over time, acting as a "social glue" which bonds the country together.

In PE the students have been perfecting their Track & Field and Baseball skills. Many classes have also been working hard to earn their PE points to earn their "free choice" games!

In other sports news, a club baseball team consisting of several LJES students recently took first at the Tecolote Memorial Day All Stars Tournament. Representing LJES on the team were Michael Campagna, Thomas Evans, Cole Browning , Cade Kronemyer, and Axel Youngdale.

5th Grade Sleepover A Hit

By Lisa Alexander

From the moment our children came into the world, we have all worked tirelessly to protect them, teach them, guide them and, above else, to make certain that every day of their lives…they know that they are loved. With this immense responsibility also comes the joy of watching them grow. As we walk them down this path, there are moments of indescribable pride. With each milestone achieved, however, there are also moments of great poignancy. I know for myself, as I have been watching Lucy turn the corner from being a child to quickly-maturing young girl, these bittersweet emotions have risen to the surface in preparation of closing the door on her elementary school experience.

This year, a group of dedicated 5th grade parents worked to plan an end-of-year event that would allow the children to experience one "last hurrah" at LJES... a place where, for years, they have felt safe, protected and nurtured — academically and emotionally. As with all inaugural events, this was no easy task to accomplish given the pre-planning required to manage the logistics, care and feeding of over 100 children and their parents for more than 12 hours! But accomplish it they did…with tremendous grace and unbridled enthusiasm.

Parents watched with amazement as the children entered into this, their home turf, and saw it come to life in a way they had not yet experienced. A "wonderland" of sorts that — for one night only — belonged solely to them. No bells rang to return to class. No restrictions were placed on which part of the field could be theirs. No shoes were required. It was a land of dance and music, wall ball and field games, tacos and cookies, and most of all…friendship. But something unexpected happened on this night. We, as parents, were allowed into this magical place….to see how they have played, laughed — and made memories — with their classmates throughout these past years. A priceless gift…

The morning after, we emerged from our tents in various combinations of flannel pajamas, sweatshirts, messy hair and more than a few bleary-eyes. But the joy was still there. No proverbial shoes dropped throughout the evening. No wheels came off the track. And, most importantly, no one would have rather been anywhere else at that moment.

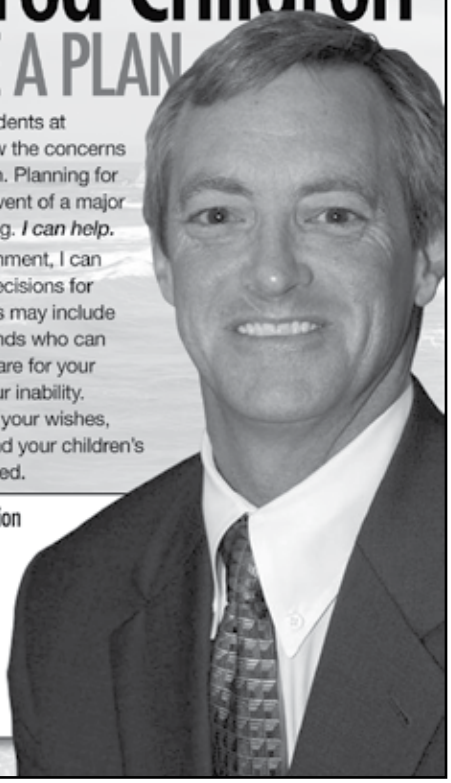
It took a village to fulfill this experience. Many hands and generous hearts contributed to its success: e-mail senders, spreadsheet specialists, food servers, cooler haulers, tent builders, DJ's and night watchman… it simply could not have happened otherwise. But there in the wings, creating the backdrop…managing the stage, stood two brave ladies who took on the monumental task of designing this unequalled experience. It is with them in mind and heart that I express the following…

Brava, Natascha Vossen and Carrie Morris. Brava.

YOU and Your
Treasured Children
DESERVE A PLAN

As a fellow parent of students at La Jolla Elementary, I know the concerns of caring for minor children. Planning for them and yourself in the event of a major life change can be daunting. *I can help.*

In a low-pressure environment, I can guide you to make wise decisions for you and your children. This may include nominating family and friends who can manage your affairs and care for your children in the event of your inability. By properly memorializing your wishes, you will ensure that you and your children's financial affairs are protected.



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5th Grade Fun

Above, fifth graders Meagan Birnbaum, Kathy Tran, Alice Wu, Annika Kjos, Bob Perrine and Max Roemer showed off the gold ribbons that they won at the county final competition for Music Memory. Right, Natalie Roddy, Siena Munoz and Vanessa Itzkowich got creative. Below right, Gabriela Anastasi, Will Kellogg and Julia Arnade–Colwill showed their school spirit.

"I have switched schools a lot but this one has definitely been one of the most memorable. I have enjoyed the many different spirit days in 5th grade. They gave me and everyone else a lot of laughs. It was so much fun to dress up every month. They didn't do it like this at my old school. I also loved the Pizza Wednesdays. Who wouldn't want to grab a slice of pizza after school? Here is a list of SOME other things I love about this awesome school: the Amigos Fiesta, student council, service learning projects, the teachers, M.A.R.E., the talent show! Thank you so much LJES!" -- **Ariana Dennis**

"I've had a great time on student council this year and at LJES these past six years. Trust me, by the end of fifth grade you have a lot of good memories. Student council just adds to those memories. All the charities we helped, all the things I learned… Student council isn't about having power, it's about helping others in different ways. And fifth grade shows you're older and wiser. So do your best, everybody." -- **Shane Pauker**

"LJES has been a wonderful school. From the plays in 4th grade to being in student council, it has been a fabulous place to learn. Some of my favorite 5th grade memories have been: being elected as historian, making new friends, book clubs, the student council's canned food drive and Pasta for Pennies, recycling and having Miss Kristina Harvey and Mrs. Melissa Wood for teachers." -- **Julia Arnade–Colwill**