

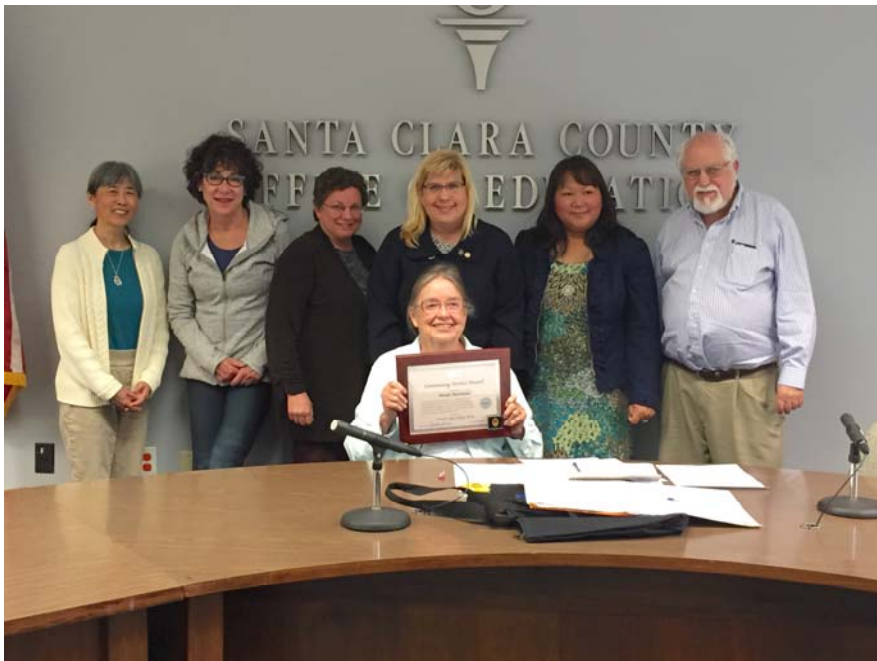
SANTA CLARA VALLEY PTA SPRING 2017 NEWSLETTER

**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE FROM DINAH SHOWMAN**

What a wet and wild first quarter of the year we've experienced, with a heavy dose of rain and a new national education secretary. Our thoughts are with many varied groups at this time, from those affected by the flooding to educators concerned about major budget cuts. Only time will tell how the changing political landscape will impact children; PTA continues its efforts in support of public education and the well-being of children. Locally, Santa Clara Valley PTA continues our project to support PTAs in conducting parent education programs and in strengthening PTA leadership by providing assistance to enable local PTA leaders to attend convention.

Our election was held at our association meeting on March 28. Congratulations to Elena Shea, current Sixth District PTA president, who will be the new SCVPTA president, and to the other officers! Here is a list of the 2017-18 board-elect. The president will appoint the parliamentarian. Please see page 2 for a lively Q&A with Elena. Other business at the meeting included adoption of the revised bylaws as proposed.

<b>SCVPTA Officers-Elect for 2017-18</b>	
President	Elena Shea
Executive VP	Naomi Higaki
VP Membership	Susan Canty
VP Communications	Dinah Showman
Secretary	Marcie Brown
Treasurer	Diane Foote
Auditor	Peggy Switchenko
Historian	Wanna Kapoor



**WELL DESERVED HONOR**

Long-time state and regional PTA executive, SCVPTA president and VP communications-elect Dinah Showman received an Honorary Service Award at the March 28<sup>th</sup> association meeting! Dinah was honored for constantly going above and beyond the normal job duties, for example, when she helped a new PTA get started, and for a positive attitude and ongoing mentoring activities.

## **An Interview with Elena Shea**

**Q: Tell us about yourself: where were you born?**

A: San Francisco, CA

**Q: Where do you live?**

A: Los Altos, CA

**Q: Do you have kids and how many?**

A: 2 kids—a daughter who is a junior at Brown University and a son who is a freshman at University of Idaho



**Q: What are your hobbies?**

A: Reading (I am in 3 book clubs), hiking, walking my dog

**Q: What was your first PTA job? How did you do?**

A: Newsletter editor at Oak Elementary School. Another mom and I shared this job. We had to go into the school office and use an old Apple desktop computer to do the newsletter. It was fun because we got the inside scoop on the school by spending time in the office with the staff.

**Q: You've been to numerous PTA conventions. What is the coolest thing you've seen or experienced at a California State PTA Convention?**

A: Google was a sponsor at last year's convention and they gave out really tasty treats each day. But really the coolest thing at convention is seeing the "first timers" get blown away by how many people are involved in PTA. Seeing them get fired up to do new things for their school communities. Seeing them collecting all the freebies and shopping at the PTA store. Seeing them learning more about how to help their kids. Seeing them talking and laughing and sharing.

**Q: If someone wants to help PTA or children but doesn't have the time, what advice can you give them?**

A: Public schools are innovating and changing every day. It's deceiving because the schools you drive by everyday probably look the same as they did 20 years ago. But the education programs, the students, the teachers, the technology inside those schools are really very different. Read the articles in the news about schools. When your local district has a school board election or parcel tax or bond election, go to a candidates night and read up on the issues affecting your local schools. Take a look at the website [Ed100.org](http://Ed100.org) for an overview of the issues facing the state's public schools. When you're speaking with a student, ask about their classes, their homework, what they like or don't like about their school. You'll learn a lot!

## **Current Issues Affecting California Children:**

Recently SCVPTA Board Member Diane Foote attended a meeting with several prominent experts on issues affecting school kids in California. She shared her notes with the newsletter team. Speakers brought up the first two topics and more. The voucher item was a more recent development that has been in the news.

### **Illegal Immigrants losing rights to public school:**

With the new administration increasing the severity of the enforcement of illegal immigration, many public schools are expelling students whose parents have illegally entered the United States, which contradicts California's goal to provide education to all who seek it.

### **Lack of LGBTQ+ acknowledgement by education authorities:**

Recently, many students have felt underrepresented by their school for their inability to gain complete control over their gender identity, for certain schools refuse to allow transgender children to gain access to the restroom matching the gender they identify as. Some schools, such as Cupertino High School, have addressed this issue by installing unisex restrooms.

### **Betsy DeVos's voucher policy threatening standardized education:**

The United States's secretary of education, Betsy DeVos, is attempting to cut funding for public education in favor of a new voucher program, which would sponsor students when they select a private school to suit their specific needs. The PTA directly opposes cutting national funding for public schools in favor of private schools as detailed here: <http://toolkit.capta.org/advocacy/position-statements/education-opposing-vouchers-tuition-tax-credits-and-deductions-as-systems-of-education-aid/#>

## **EXCITING NEWS! PTA CONVENTION IN SAN JOSE COMING UP IN LATE APRIL!**

Check out the photos and live Tweets at #PTA4Kids on Twitter.



Congratulations to all of you with family or friends who will be graduating this spring!

Our website is Santa Clara Valley PTA, at [www.scvpta6.org](http://www.scvpta6.org). A recommended hashtag for social media is #PTA4Kids.

Please email president Dinah Showman or VP for Communications and newsletter editor Michelle McIntyre if you have questions, comments or concerns. Lastly, thank you to Westmont High School Sophomore and Eagle Scout Scott McIntyre for helping write and edit this newsletter. Coincidentally Scott's Superintendent Robert Bravo, Campbell Union High School District, is a member of SCVPTA.

###