



# Raven About Rice

VOLUME 7 ISSUE 1

SUMMER 2010

## CALENDAR POINTS OF INTEREST

- August 12—  
6th & 7th grade schedule pick up
- August 13—  
8th grade schedule pick up
- August 23—  
First Day of School 8:30 a.m
- August 23—  
PTA General Membership Meeting and Back to School Coffee
- September 6 -  
Labor Day/Student Holiday
- September 10 -  
Fall Social

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## PTA President's Letter

By Melanie Pellegrino, PTA President

"Summertime....and the livin' is easy..."; you know the tune and I hope you are enjoying time with your kids. I know I am!

The information packet you received this summer has everything you will need to get started back to school. I know it is going to be a great year as the Rice staff has prepared some special open houses for the returning students, including a very special night for our new sixth grade class. Sixth grade is a wonderful, exciting experience for all of our new students, so don't be apprehensive about the transition. The staff at Rice has been doing this a long time, so your student is in great hands!

The calendar of events shows our schedule pick up times. So on August 12 and 13, plan on coming to Rice to pick up pre-packaged school supplies, your pre-ordered PE uniforms, spirit wear (we've added some bling this year) and plan to visit with some of our wonderful PTA volunteers. We will have a special membership table for you to sign up for the PTA and enjoy the many benefits of membership (discounts at area stores and amusement parks). Your student will also have time to put supplies in their lockers and get familiar (or reacquainted) with Rice Middle School.

Volunteering has been a part of my family for generations and I am very excited and honored to serve as your PTA President this year. I know Rice Middle School is one of the best in Texas and

the staff and administrators exemplify that excellence by their commitment to our kids.

PTA is an organization that comes together to generate monies for the betterment of Rice and its students. It takes an army of volunteers to run/ manage the programs we offer every year. To this point, I challenge all Rice parents to give back to the school. As a long time volunteer, I feel giving back is important for my child and it benefits others as well. Rice Middle School has a diverse student body and I'd like to see that diversity represented on the PTA committees. Included in your mailing is a volunteer form. Please consider volunteering for one of the events we have slated this year. Some of these volunteer positions can be done at home. Some positions require only one night chaperoning a student social, or selling candy on a Friday after school. If you can't volunteer, consider a one-time donation to the PTA. Simply fill out your membership form and include your donation. Every dime we spend from donations goes to benefit the Rice Middle School community.

I'm often asked "why is PTA membership important?" "If I join, do I have to volunteer?" I get these questions all the time. Since we do not hold traditional fundraisers at Rice, our membership monies are key to supporting all the wonderful activities and services offered each year. Every dollar from membership funds parent

education programs, grade level field trips, teacher workshops, teacher appreciation luncheons, and special amenities throughout the building. This year, we would like to see 100% parent participation in membership. I know this is a lofty goal, but I believe that everyone can benefit from being a PTA member; and it's only a \$16 membership fee. And to answer the second question- no you do not need to volunteer, but it is truly appreciated if you do.

This September, you will receive a PTA survey via email. My goal as President is to provide programs and events that are meaningful to the Rice community. Take time to fill out the survey and offer your suggestions/comments. I want to provide the membership with new direction based on parent input. I feel a clearer understanding of the parents, students, and staff's needs will help us create and manage our goals over the next year and beyond. Your feedback is critical to providing the roadmap for the future. Please let your voice be heard by filling out the survey when it arrives and thank you, in advance, for your participation.

Feel free to contact me if you have questions about Rice PTA. The best way to reach me is via email at [melanie.pellegrino@sbcglobal.net](mailto:melanie.pellegrino@sbcglobal.net). I look forward to serving the Rice Community and making Rice PTA the best in the state.



**Rice Middle School  
is an accepting,  
nurturing, safe  
community where  
students are given  
the freedom to learn  
and grow as  
responsible  
individuals.**

*Rice Mission  
Statement*

## Summer Reflections...By Gail Stelter, Rice Principal

I hope you are all enjoying your summer break. This is a time to unplug, travel, and slow down. I noticed tonight how long the sun was up and it made the day seem to stretch. I miss the sounds of students laughing and hurrying to class, and teachers inviting me to their classroom to see something exciting! But I'm putting this quiet time to good use. It is so important to take time to reflect on the past year and start visualizing next year. And the longer daylight hours will allow me to ride my horse in the cooler evenings, or enjoy the backyard.

Looking ahead to the new school year, three priorities come to mind: Safety, Learning and Character. I want all of our students to be physically and emotionally safe. As parents, you provide much of the support in this area. You provide you child with a safe home, good nutrition and the resources he needs to be successful. Please take time to consider your child's route to school. If you drive your child, look into

carpooling. You'll help the environment and build relationships on the way to school. You will get to know your neighbors and increase your sense of community. Study the traffic flow and establish a pick up and drop off location. I prefer you all follow the traffic plan. The area across from the school gets very congested. It really goes very quickly if you drop off in the school traffic lane and your child won't have to cross a street. If your child walks or rides a bike, try to set up a group for your child to travel with to and from school. Think about taking turns with other parents watching the group cross Coit or Independence.

Make sure she has a helmet and a bike lock. Many students do not lock their bikes up. Every year we have a few stolen. Ask to see your child's helmet and bike lock – make sure they are in good condition and tell them to use them!

If your child is safe, she feels grounded and confident to learn and

take risks in how she learns. Learning is always a priority and at the heart of our mission. We want to hold the bar high and give each student the resources she needs to grasp that bar and pull herself even higher.

Learning has little value if we don't instill positive character traits as well. We want each student competing against himself, to become the best he can be. We want each student to have all the academic support he needs to be successful. We want all of our students to feel there is no need to plagiarize, copy answers or fudge the rules because they don't need to in order to be successful. The goal is not the highest score but the learning along the way and a job well done.

I look forward to joining together with all parents in the 2010-2011 school year to provide a safe learning environment where children grow to responsible young adults.

## RICE PTA Candy Sales

Every Friday at the  
6th and 7th grade  
pods at 3:30 p.m.  
Kids love the candy!

Profits will go directly  
to the school,  
students, and all kinds  
of Rice activities that  
might need support.

In addition, parents  
get to socialize with  
other parents and  
meet new students at  
Rice MS.

Volunteer it is Fun!



# Join the RICE PTA!

## Join the Rice PTA and make a difference!

When you become a member of the Rice PTA you.....

- Become part of the largest children’s advocacy group in the world
- Join over 6 million members of the National PTA
- Join over 36,000 PTA members in the city of Plano
- Provide support for your children’s teachers
- Fund wonderful field trips for your child
- Provide new learning tools for the classroom
- Support the Rice PTA Find Arts Night for our community
- Support Arts in Education and the National PTA Reflections arts contest

*To become a member of the Rice PTA, complete the membership form included in the summer packet and drop it off at the membership table during schedule pick up or return it to the Rice school office.*

## PISD eNews



eNews is Plano ISD’s free e-mail newsletter service for parents, community members and students. Subscribers may sign up to receive e-newsletters from the district and individual schools, including Rice Middle School.

PISD Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Doug Otto, sends an occasional e-newsletter to district subscribers. He and his administrative team also send occasional special notices and rare emergency notices to district subscribers.

**Sign up today for eNews** by going to [www.pisd.edu](http://www.pisd.edu), then click the “Middle School” tab to select “Rice.” If you already subscribe to eNews, **please login and update your subscription to include the Rice Middle School eNews.**

*Rice*

*Schedule*

*Pick-Up*

**August 12th**

9am-12pm

for 6th grade

1pm-4pm

for 7th grade

**August 13th**

9am-12pm

for 8th grade



# Pick-Up Your Supplies!



**YARD SIGNS AND DECALS**

Yard signs and decals for Rice will be available for ordering at Rice schedule pick up on Aug 12 and Aug 13. There will also be applications in the front office once school starts. Be sure and order one to show your school spirit.

**RICE SPIRIT WEAR**

Be ready to pick out your t-shirts and sweat shirts at schedule pickup. There are new colors and styles. Once school starts you will be able to get your Spirit Wear at the school store any Monday, Wednesday, or Friday.

**RICE PE UNIFORMS**

PE uniforms that were ordered at the end of the 2009-2010 school year will be available at schedule pickup. If you need to order a PE uniform, they can also be ordered at schedule pickup. Those ordered at schedule pickup should be available in October.

**RICE SCHOOL STORE**

The Rice School Store will be open during schedule pick-up. It will be carrying many items that will not be included in the supply packets such as: Asel Art Kits, scientific calculators, locker shelves, binders, pencil bags, organizers, pens, pencils, erasers, etc. Once school starts, the store will be open from 7:50 a.m.—8:30 a.m. on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Cash and checks accepted through the year.

**SCHOOL SUPPLY PACKETS**

The Rice PTA is once again ordering pre-packaged school supplies for sale at schedule pick-up only. We have first quality school supplies and you will get exactly what your child needs. **The packets will only be sold August 12th and August 13th at schedule pick-up** on a first-come, first-served basis. **No credit cards will be accepted this year. No tax on Aug 12 and 13.**

6th grade—\$46

7th grade—\$68

8th grade—\$50

**Save even more time—complete this form and bring it with you to schedule pick-up. Cash or check to Rice PTA.**

Student's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Total cost of school supplies: \_\_\_\_\_



Please take a look at the volunteer opportunities on the volunteer form included in the Summer Mailing.

The completed form can be returned at schedule pick up on August 12 or 13, or can be returned to Rice the first week of school.

Remember—all volunteers must have a current background check on file each school year.

### Questions:

Contact Holly Dickerson-West, VP of Volunteers

[holly.dickersonwest@yahoo.com](mailto:holly.dickersonwest@yahoo.com)

## PISD Online Volunteer Application

All PISD volunteers must have a background check. To do this, volunteers are asked to complete an application that is found online at [www.pisd.edu/volunteer](http://www.pisd.edu/volunteer).

Please note that if you are not a US citizen, and/or you do not have a US Social Security number, you must register with the Plano ISD Safety and Security office at 2700 W. 15th St. For information call 469 752-8057.

Instructions:

- Go to the PISD website at [www.pisd.edu/volunteer](http://www.pisd.edu/volunteer).
- Scroll down and click on "Returning Volunteer" if you volunteered for the 2009-2010 school year. You will be asked for your User ID and Password that you created when you first completed the online volunteer application. If you can not remember your User ID, then click on the third option "Registered Volunteer with no User ID" and follow the instructions. Be sure to click on "Update" to go to the screens to update your application.
- If this is your first time to volunteer in PISD or you have never completed the online volunteer application, please click on the second option "New Volunteer" and follow the instructions.

When the online portion of your application is complete, YOU NO LONGER NEED TO PRINT the Volunteer Notary Form.

If you have difficulty, contact the Plano ISD Resource Center at 469 752-2180 or [team-shelp@pisd.edu](mailto:team-shelp@pisd.edu).

## Volunteer Help Needed

- The Rice PTA Executive board is seeking an enthusiastic parent(s) to coordinate the Spring Student Social. This position will organize and work with the Social Committee to plan a fun evening for our students.
- Summer Schedule Pick-up Volunteers are needed to complete a 3-hour shift on Thursday, August 12th or Friday, August 13th.

If you are interested, please contact Holly Dickerson-West (VP of Volunteers) at [holly.dickersonwest@yahoo.com](mailto:holly.dickersonwest@yahoo.com).

# Save the Date

The 2010 Rice Fall Social is set for  
**Friday, September 10**

The schedule for each grade is:

6<sup>th</sup> Grade  
6:00-7:30 pm

7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade  
8:00-9:30 pm



PTA General Meeting  
Back-to-School Coffee  
Monday, August 23  
Rice Library  
8:30 a.m.

**Rice  
Middle  
School  
Belief  
Statements**

## “In Pursuit of Excellence”

- Rice MS will provide an academically challenging learning environment.
- Rice MS will recognize and address the needs of individual learners.
- Rice MS will provide a safe, secure, pleasant learning environment.
- Rice MS will promote tolerance, respect, citizenship, and love of country.
- Rice MS will address students’ social and emotional development and needs.
- Rice MS believes that parents and community are an integral element in the students overall educational process.
- Rice MS believes that Fine Arts and Humanities promote student growth.
- Rice MS will utilize technology to prepare students for a changing world.
- Rice MS believes that critical thinking and real-life experiences promote good decision making and validate the learning experience.