



# Cottonwood School



"Excellence - Every Person - Every Day"

44260 Sage Road

Aguanga, CA 92536

Principal, Dave Farkas



October, 2011



## Principal's Message

Although we are off to another great start to our school year, we are currently in the process of contesting an unexpected issue with our National Blue Ribbon award. Cottonwood's outstanding assessment data is the same as I announced in early August, however, The National Blue Ribbon Committee is not recognizing Cottonwood and ten other eligible California schools for the prestigious award due to a technicality in our State's accountability system. California is permitted to use only up to two percent of a school district's students assessed by the California Modified Assessment (CMA). After the percentage of students surpasses two percent, the

process removes the additional proficient CMA scores from that school district. These scores from various schools are removed systematically based on a number range. In our case, Cottonwood lost eight scores which caused us to drop below the Adequate Yearly Progress goal of sixty eight percent in two of our student subgroups. This unfair system does not affect a school's API.

Hemet Unified School District Superintendent, Dr. Lowder has been very supportive throughout this injustice. We have both spoken face to face with the Superintendent of California, Tom Torlakson. We have also recruited support from the Riverside

County Office of Education.

At this point, the responsible decision makers involved in not only overseeing the CMA criteria under 'No Child Left Behind' but the National Blue Ribbon Award have failed to do the right thing and honor the California schools eligible based on their specific school's assessment data. An article should be in next Monday's (October 3<sup>rd</sup>) edition of The Press Enterprise Newspaper to shed a light on this black eye for education. Regardless of the outcome, Hemet Unified School District, Cottonwood School and I are extremely proud of our students, families, staff and

community. Aside from another plaque to hang on our wall, we are a model for Blue Ribbon Schools and we will continue to celebrate our success as we strive to get better everyday.

*Mr. Farkas*

## Avoid Classroom Interruption

Instructional time is very important at Cottonwood School. We believe that every minute of the day is a teachable moment, therefore, we want to do everything we can to limit disruptions to the classrooms. This is where you can help. We have instituted several policies to help keep children in the classroom free from distractions. Please be aware of the following. If your child forgets his or her lunch or lunch money, please bring the lunch (money) to the office with their name and teacher written on it. It will be given to the noon duty supervisors to take to the

lunch area. Students are instructed to check with the noon duty supervisors first before going to the office to call home. We will not call the classrooms.

~ If your child forgets homework, please take it to the office. The items will be placed in the teacher's mailbox to be given to the student. Again, we will not call the classroom.

~ Please make sure your child knows how he or she is getting home before they leave for school. We do not call the classrooms to give messages. If you need to get a message to your child, we will forward you to the teacher's voice mail. Again, this would interrupt learning.

~ If you need to get in touch with a teacher, call the office and our staff will put you through to their voicemail. The teacher will return your call at the earliest convenience. Thank you for your help with this matter. Every minute counts so your cooperation is appreciated.

## Electronic Devices

As indicated in the Cottonwood Student Handbook, electronic devices are NOT to be brought to school. This includes iPods, video gaming devices, CD players, etc. If cell phones are brought to school they must be turned off.

## GUM

Gum chewing or carrying gum on campus, at Cottonwood is not allowed. This means before school, during school, lunch, after school or on the bus. NO GUM.



# Dress Code

Parents please review with your students our guidelines concerning the dress code at Cottonwood and the Hemet Unified School District. This information can be found on page 17-19 of "The Student Handbook" that was sent home on the first day of school.

## S.A.F.E.

S.A.F.E. (Students Achieving in Fun Environments) is our after school program. Spaces are available in grades 1 thru 6th. There is a wait list for grades 7 & 8 and bus service is free. For information call Laura Perluss at 951-553-1326.

Thank you,



District Wellness Policy

The Hemet Unified School District has adopted a wellness policy per state and federal nutritional guidelines. Please check with the classroom teacher or the office before bringing in any food items.

# PTO CORNER

It's hard to believe we're in October already! The PTO hit the ground running this year, starting off with our dedicated Board Members who helped during September's Back to School Night—thank you to my co-board member who helped out at the PTO table and to all who contributed to the 5th grade dinner, bake sale and raffle that included a Sprit Pack and Lunch with Mr. Farkas that Alexandria Fisher will enjoy.

Lots of orders were turned in and lots of fun prizes and Ca\$h were given away this year from our Fall Fundraiser with West Cost Fundraising. We'd like to thank all the parents that helped their students to get in orders! Huge thanks, also to all the volunteers, for their support, who came and helped, fill out the order forms in advance; this saved a lot of time and confusion when the orders came back in. Expected

delivery date for our Fall Fundraiser is October 14th.

Parent-Teacher

Conferences: October 10-14 Look for PTO sign in & information tables set up during this event. We'll have information available for you regarding the items below, along with how you can *plan now* for your child's class trip during their years at Cottonwood.

Fall Festival: A Cottonwood Family Tradition. Saturday, October 29<sup>th</sup>

Put a little Aarrggghhh in your life! A Pirates Life for me it will be! We are very excited to announce a Pirate Theme Fall Festival. We need lots of help so please pledge your 2 hours of power to your child and let's make this the best ever for our students.

The Box Tops for Education and Campbell's soup Labels for Education program is getting underway. Please keep collecting and sending them in. Please have students and teachers name on the bag to be turned into the teachers.

We're busy setting up a Shakey's Pizza and Island's Dinner nights, which will take place throughout the next couple months. Both of these great community partners allow us to host fundraising nights at their establishments, and both donate a generous profits to Cottonwood during our designated nights! Thank You, Candy McDermott for getting these nights underway. *Save the date: Our first Shakey's Pizza Night is Thursday, October 20 from 5:00 - 8:30pm. More dates TBA.*

Stay Connected with our new PTO FaceBook Page! Please be sure to friend request the Cottonwood PTO Charlotte Grant for updates and information on events and happenings.

Next PTO Meeting:  
October 5 @ 2:30pm  
Library Class Room  
See you soon,

Charlotte Grant  
Cottonwood PTO President  
949-439-5675



## COTTONWOOD ASB OCTOBER EVENTS

**10/7 NERD DAY**

**10/28** will be Halloween Dress-up.

**Red Ribbon Week is 10/24 which will include:**

**Monday 10/24** Wear RED

**Tuesday 10/25** Bee drug free (wear yellow and black or "bee" attire)

**Wednesday 10/26** Put a cap on Drugs -wear a hat.

**Thursday 10/27** Shade out drugs (wear your cool shades!)

**Friday 10/28** Do 'knot' do drugs, wear a neck tie

**Haunted House  
Thursday 10/27  
5:30-7:00 p.m.  
SCARY house**

**Saturday 10/29** during Fall Festival not so scary, just a spooky house for the younger set.  
**Saturday Night 5:30-7:00  
SCARY house**

**HELP!** The eighth grade class is looking for donations of old jeans, long sleeve button down shirts (old flannel shirts are great), suspenders, scarves, bandanas, gloves, hats, mardi-gras beads and buttons for our Scarecrow building event at the Fall Festival. Clothes that have holes or are beyond the stage of hand-me-down are welcomed! Please send donated items to school, to be given to. Mrs. Adams or Mrs. Packard.

Also, Middle School students who meet the qualifications, no referrals suspensions or "F's" in any class can go to Magic Mountain. Money and permission slip is due Friday Oct 14.



# Middle School Corner

## *NASA (UARS) Satellite* by Austin Ames

NASA is a place where the top science research is happening everyday. Landing on the moon was one of NASA's biggest accomplishments. Having space shuttles landing on the moon 7 times ought to feel like a victory for American citizens. First to walk on the moon is perhaps the greatest accomplishment any country's space program could have achieved. NASA has put many satellites in earth's upper atmosphere and around the earth in space. Recently, as you may have heard, before one of them has re-entered the atmosphere and was headed directly for earth.

NASA's upper atmospheric research satellite (UARS) re-entered the earth's atmosphere over the Pacific Ocean. About 14.1 degrees south latitude and 189.8 degrees east

longitude and has been verified by officials from many countries, including NASA and a space center in Jandberg Air Force base. They expected debris to be scattered within a 300 to 800 miles circumference from point of re-entry. Debris shouldn't be near any civilized areas nor any land mass.



## Movie Review *Rise of Planet of the Apes*

Rise of the Planet of the Apes is a fast paced movie that keeps you sitting on the edge of your seat. It is a combination of science fiction and action, where genetically enhanced apes outsmart humans. I enjoyed the whole film. My favorite part was when the apes and humans charge into battle. This fight scene is over control of the Golden Gate Bridge which gives whoever wins access to the city. While humans use guns to fight the apes, the apes only use their strength. The ending of this movie allows you to foreshadow that a sequel will follow.

Vanessa DiFranco,  
Editor  
Yearbook Staff

## Cottonwood School October 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						<b>1</b> 8:00-12:00 Saturday School
<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> 6:30 Governing Board mtg. @ Cottonwood	<b>5</b> 2:30 PTO Meeting	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> 7:00 a.m. Jamba Juice Fundraiser \$3.00  Nerd Day	<b>8</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> Parent Conference Week /Minimum days 12:50	<b>11</b> Parent Conference Week /Minimum days 12:50	<b>12</b> Parent Conference Week /Minimum days 12:50	<b>13</b> Parent Conference Week /Minimum days 12:50  Butter Braid Fundraiser	<b>14</b> Parent Conference Week /Minimum days 12:50  Butter Braid Fundraiser	<b>15</b>
<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> Butter Braid Fundraiser	<b>18</b> Butter Braid Fundraiser	<b>19</b> Make up Picture day.  Butter Braid Fundraiser	<b>20</b> Volleyball Tournament @ Pauma  Butter Braid Fundraiser  5:00-8:30 Shakey's Pizza fundraiser in Temecula	<b>21</b> Butter Braid Fundraiser	<b>22</b>
<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> Red Ribbon Week  Butter Braid Fundraiser	<b>25</b> Red Ribbon Week  Butter Braid Fundraiser	<b>26</b> Red Ribbon Week  Butter Braid Fundraiser	<b>27</b> Red Ribbon Week  Butter Braid Fundraiser  5:30-7:00 Haunted House	<b>28</b> 8:00 K-5 Halloween Parade  Grades 6-8 Halloween Dress-Up  Red Ribbon Week  Butter Braid Fundraiser	<b>29</b> Fall Festival 12:00-4:00
<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> Halloween	<b>Notes:</b>				