PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

Happy April everyone and welcome to another month of being busy with family, vacations, and PTA work that is coming to an end and elections are soon approaching or are here for some of you. I know that in previous newsletters I have been touching on the National Standards for Family School partnerships and this month is Standard 4: Speaking up for every child—Families are empowered to be advocates for their own and other children, to ensure that students are treated fairly and have access to learning opportunities that will support their success. This is so important that schools have opportunities for all parents to learn about how the school district operates, what opportunities are out there for each child, and that there is information available for parents that pertains to relevant issues in their school and district. PTAs are so integral in this because your PTA can help parents get answers and its one uniform location for parents to turn to for consistent help and guidance.

This standard is important to me and I don’t mean to be short with it, but I have something on my mind that I feel like I need to address. Lately there has been a letter being sent to mostly state PTA offices from a “Concerned Citizen” and it’s addressed out of Colorado. There are ramblings about doomsday devices, airborne viruses, and computer viruses. If your local PTA unit receives one of these letters please take a copy of it and get it to the Montana PTA office. National PTA is collecting all of these letters and is turning them over to the FBI to investigate the situation. There seems to be a reason that PTA’s are being targeted. This saddens me that things like this happen to our PTAs. Hopefully there will be an end to this soon and the person responsible will be caught.

On a personal note I would like to thank each and every one of you for your hard work with your PTA this year. It feels like a year starts and it’s already at the end before you know it. We have been working hard to watch our finances and use our money wisely. We can’t say “thank you” enough to all of you for your recruitment of members. You make Montana PTA possible and National PTA stronger. Your PTA still has time to apply for our awards because the deadline is April 15th. Check out our Leadership, Membership, and Grass Roots Award that Montana PTA has available. One more note please consider putting money in your budget to send members to Convention in October held in Billings again this year. We believe this training is very valuable for your PTA board and members. We work hard to make it affordable and remember we have scholarships to pay for some expenses.

Please if you have questions or would like to talk give me a call any time 855-3160. It has been great serving as your Montana PTA President for that past year and a half.

Michelle Duncan
Montana PTA President
ANNUAL REPORT FILING
SECRETARY OF STATE—DEADLINE APRIL 15

The deadline for submitting your annual report to the Secretary of State is April 15. Submission of this report is required to maintain your incorporation status, as well as to remain in good standing with Montana PTA.

The submission process is fairly simple and can be done online at www.sos.mt.gov. For detailed instructions, please review page 5 of the March Montana PTA Voice which is available on the Montana PTA website at www.montanapta.org.

TREASURER NEWS

This time of year your units may be trying to find new board members. Sometime this is not an easy task and finding a good Treasurer is no exception. Prospective Treasurers sometimes want information on what there duties would be if serving in this position. Here is a link to the National PTA Back to School Kit which is all about Treasurer Duties. http://shar.es/B29Ug

Please contact the Montana PTA office with any questions you may have. Thank You!

Colleen Nichols
Montana PTA Treasurer

THE OBJECTS OF THE PTA

✓ To support and speak on behalf of children and youth in the schools, in the community, and before governmental bodies and other organizations that make decisions affecting children; and
✓ To assist parents in developing the skills they need to raise and protect their children; and
✓ To encourage parent and public involvement in the public schools of this nation.

PTA Mission

PTA is

• A powerful voice for all children
• A relevant resource for families and communities; and
• A strong advocate for the education and well-being of every child.
I was honored to attend the 2014 National PTA Federal Legislative Conference held March 11-13, in Washington, D.C. The conference provides in depth discussions about National PTA’s public policy priorities through workshops, keynote speakers and advocacy training. Following the training we spent an entire day on Capital Hill. Along with Dee Hensley-MacLean, Advocacy Chair I met with Senator Jon Tester, Senator John Walsh and Representative Steve Daines. The topic of discussion was The Family Engagement in Education Act of 2013 (S.1291/H.R.2662). A special thank you to Dee, (veteran Fed.Leg. attendee) for showing me the ropes and coordinating all our Hill Visit’s and tours. As this being my first trip to Washington, D.C. her knowledge and expertise of D.C. helped make this a successful trip. A special thanks to Representative Daines for the personal tour and the V.I.P treatment he bestowed upon us during our visit. Providing us with special clearance to accompany him up the Capital steps for a vote and then a personal tour, which was the highlight of my trip. The Family Engagement Act is an important issue. Please take the time to become familiar with National PTA’s Public Policy Agenda and what it means for all the children in Montana. Always, please contact me if you have any questions on this topic as I would love to talk one on one with you on these issues.

Sherry Holderith
Montana PTA President-Elect

Please join me on my monthly President Calls —
2nd Tuesday of each month at 7:00pm

The topic for the April 8th call is “Board Elections”. The topic for the May call is “Summer Meetings” and will be held on May 13th at 7pm. If you are interested in taking part in the April and/or the May President’s Call, please e-mail me your name and email address to montanaptapresident@gmail.com. Thank you in advance for your interest! I look forward to hearing from you.

Michelle Duncan, Montana PTA President
on the Hill in DC — PTA Advocacy is supporting and speaking up for children — in schools, in communities, and before government bodies and other organizations that make decisions affecting children. State laws can have a major impact and involving PTA members in state and local advocacy can play a pivotal role in securing adequate state laws, funding, and policy for the education and well-being of our children.

PTA is the oldest and largest volunteer child advocacy association in the United States. Founded in 1807, PTA has a long, successful history of influencing federal policy to promote the education, health, and well-being of all children — resulting in kindergarten classes, child labor laws, school lunch programs, a juvenile justice system, and strengthened parent-teacher relationships. PTA continues that legacy today by fighting for change under its federal public policy priorities: Family engagement in education; Opportunity and equity for all children; and Child Health.

NPTA makes the most of your membership dollars by launching an annual expedition of leaders from every affiliate or congress (in good standing) to Washington DC for training and meetings with our states representatives. This gives each affiliate or congress (state) a voice in DC as they meet with their representatives and talk about the significance of Family Engagement in Education, Education Funding, Reauthorization of ESEA-NCLB (Elementary and Secondary Education Act/No Child Left Behind), IDEA (Special Education), Early Childhood Education, Child Health and Nutrition, School Safety and Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Each of these have a policy that outlines the issues and actions we may take to advocate change in support of our children and families. To review the NPTA Public Policy Agenda Executive Summary http://www.pta.org/advocacy/content.cfm?ItemNumber=3222.

We first met with Senator Tester, Senator Walsh and Congressman Daines at the Wednesday morning Montana Constituency Coffee March 12th. This gave us a chance to speak with each representatives’ staff, have a brief conversation with each representative as we have a photo taken, marking our presence on the hill. At Wednesday’s PTA luncheon our Keynote speakers were Denis McDonough, White House Chief of Staff, and Tom Vilsack, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, they spoke passionately about the power of family engagement.

Senator Tester, Senator Walsh, Congressman Daines and their staff took time out of their busy schedule to sit and talk with us on Thursday, March 13th. This gave us the opportunity to go in depth with each policy area, having two-way meaningful conversations to ensure all children reach their highest potential. It is always satisfying to have meaningful dialogue with the powers that be in the interest of children and families. We engaged them in conversation about family engagement and possibly what it would look like in Montana’s school districts. We answered their questions on our public policies and looked at what challenges Montana schools face now and in the future. We received positive responses for our volunteer efforts and offered to be a resource to each of their offices.

All said and done, it felt as if we made a connection with each office and we’ll continue to maintain our relationship and offer all our information.

Thank you for all you do.

Dee Hensley-Maclean
Montana PTA Advocacy Chair

Montana PTA takes action on the Hill in DC during the Legislative Conference in March 2014.
MEMBERSHIP NEWS

COULD YOUR UNIT USE $1,000?

Just because we are into the fourth and last quarter of the 2013 - 2014 school year, doesn’t mean you have to put a halt to your membership recruitment efforts!

Have you heard about the National PTA’s Membership Challenge yet? If not, read on for the details. If you have, we encourage you to continue working towards the goal of 14 new members between now and May 31st.

The National PTA has launched their Membership Challenge “14 in ‘14.” For every 14 new members that sign up between February 1st and May 31st, your local chapter is eligible for a chance to win $1,000!

“We’ve recruited at least 14 new members within this time frame!? How do we enter to win!?” Download the entry form at http://www.pta.org/today. Complete one “Official National PTA 14 in ‘14 Entry Form” per 14 new recruits and submit it along with your State PTA membership dues report. It’s that easy!

There will be 14 chapters that win $1,000 each. The winners will be drawn at the National PTA Convention & Exhibition in June.

Still have questions? Don’t hesitate to contact the Montana State PTA office for details.

Heather Wright
Montana PTA Membership Chair

WHAT ABOUT THE “T”

Did you know that nationally, teachers only make up 10% of our membership base? Pretty alarming since they are such an integral piece of the Parent-Teacher Association.

National Teacher Appreciation Week is May 6-10. Let’s take this opportunity to share with our educators the history, values and mission of PTA/PTSA. Maybe some are truly not aware of the support and resources their local PTA/PTSA unit(s) have to offer? Perhaps they are unaware of how much their participation truly impacts their students and families? Have you extended a personal invitation to each teacher within your unit to attend a PTA sponsored event or has it just been assumed that they know that they are welcome and invited to attend? Have you shared with existing members some of the known challenges our teachers are faced with such that we can begin working with them to help improve and support their efforts?

Montana State PTA is asking that you make a special effort not only during National Teacher Appreciation Week, but throughout the year, to recognize, communicate and support our teachers. Our efforts won’t go unnoticed and they may very well serve as another recruiting tool and membership building opportunity.

In an effort to support our local units engage and support our teachers, Montana PTA has created a board on our Pinterest page with many posts that will inspire, encourage and launch your enthusiasm in reaching out to those teachers that are not either active PTA/PTSA members or are not PTA/PTSA members at all. We can work to grow membership by recruiting our teachers, and together we can all make a difference working for our children’s future and striving for the best educational experience possible for them.

Heather Wright
Montana PTA Membership Chair
CONGRATULATIONS to all of the Montana 1st Place winning students!

A BIG THANK YOU TO THE REFLECTIONS CHAIRS along with their PTA for supporting this program and allowing their students to shine!!

Invitations will be sent to 1st place students to attend the Convention Reflections Showcase held in their honor October 4th in Billings, where they will receive their award and certificate (will be mailed if unable to attend after convention).

Jennifer
Montana PTA Reflections Chair

1st place winning music entry omitted in the March newsletter!

CONGRATULATIONS JULIA!!!

Julia Lave 6th Grade Poly Drive PTA Billings

2014-2015 Reflections Theme:
The world would be a better place if...
# 2014 Reflections 1st Place Winners

**CONGRATULATIONS!**

## LITERATURE:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>PTA</th>
<th>City</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eileen Kosnar</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>Boulder Elem PTA</td>
<td>Billings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ali Hirsch</td>
<td>5th</td>
<td>Whitefish PTA</td>
<td>Whitefish</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maggie Jorgersen</td>
<td>7th</td>
<td>Lincoln PTSA</td>
<td>Lincoln</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anna Fehrs</td>
<td>12th</td>
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## FILM PRODUCTION:

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regan Tintzman</td>
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<tr>
<td>Danika Tintzman</td>
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## MUSIC:

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<tr>
<td>Eli Crist</td>
<td>Kindergarten</td>
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<td>Benjamin Hodson</td>
<td>3rd</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cassidy Grady</td>
<td>10th</td>
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<td>Whitefish</td>
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<tr>
<td>Julia Lave</td>
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## VISUAL ARTS:

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aspen Britt</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>Bigfork School PTA</td>
<td>Bigfork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chloe Davies</td>
<td>4th</td>
<td>Arrowhead Elem PTA</td>
<td>Billings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finny Manchala</td>
<td>7th</td>
<td>Somers/Lakeside PTA</td>
<td>Somers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julien Leroux</td>
<td>9th</td>
<td>Whitefish PTA</td>
<td>Whitefish</td>
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## PHOTOGRAPHY:

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<th>Name</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mallerie Stromswold</td>
<td>6th</td>
<td>Boulder Elem PTA</td>
<td>Billings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mackenzie Cummings</td>
<td>4th</td>
<td>Hellgate Elem PTA</td>
<td>Missoula</td>
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<td>Lauren Cogdill</td>
<td>12th</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gracyn Martell</td>
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<td>Meadow Lark PTA</td>
<td>Great Falls</td>
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## DANCE:

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ava Tooke</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Hellgate Elem PTA</td>
<td>Missoula</td>
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<tr>
<td>Regan Tintzman</td>
<td>7th</td>
<td>Whitefish PTA</td>
<td>Whitefish</td>
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REFLECTIONS WINNERS — PHOTOGRAPHY

Mallerie Stromwold
Boulder PTA
Billings

Gracyn Martell
Meadow Lark PTA
Great Falls

Lauren Cogdill
Whitefish PTA

Mackenzie Cummings
Hellgate PTA
Missoula

Mallorie Stromswold
Boulder PTA
Billings
REFLECTIONS WINNERS — VISUAL ARTS

Julien Leroux
Whitefish PTA

Chloe Davies
Arrowhead PTA
Billings

Finny Manchala
Somers / Lakeside PTA

Aspen Britt
Bigfork PTA
PTA Reflections® Program

NATIONAL AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Outstanding Interpretation Awards – 1 Award per Arts Category and 1 in Special Artist Division

Each Outstanding Interpretation Award recipient receives:

◊ An expense-paid trip for him or herself and one adult to the National PTA Convention
◊ An $800 arts education award from National PTA
◊ A gold-plated Reflections medallion
◊ A certificate and letter signed by the National PTA president
◊ Recognition in the annual PTA Reflections online gallery

In addition:

◊ A $200 arts education award is given to the student’s local PTA by National PTA

Awards of Excellence – 3 Awards per Division of Each Arts Area and 1 Special Artist of Each Arts Area

Each Award of Excellence recipient receives:

◊ A $200 cash award
◊ A silver-plated Reflections medallion
◊ A certificate and letter signed by the National PTA President
◊ Recognition in the annual PTA Reflections online gallery

Awards of Merit – Up to 5 Awards per Division of Each Arts Area

Each Award of Merit recipient receives:

◊ A silver-plated Reflections medallion
◊ A certificate and letter signed by the National PTA president
◊ Recognition in the annual PTA Reflections online gallery

Honorable Mentions – All Remaining Students Reaching National Level

Each Honorable Mention receives:

◊ A certificate and letter signed by the National PTA president

Notification to Students

National award recipients will be notified via email by National PTA in May. National awards and certificates are mailed after the National PTA Convention, by the end of July. Any awards or certificates returned to the National PTA office due to insufficient or incorrect addresses will be mailed to the appropriate state office.

Return of Artwork

Entries that receive national awards will be featured in the online National PTA Reflections Program Gallery at PTA.org/Reflections. The National PTA will make every effort to return photograph prints and visual artwork within two years. The National PTA office receives electronic files/digital entries in film production, dance choreography, literature, music composition, and photography and these are not returned. Please contact your State PTA for its artwork return policy.

For more information on Art Exhibitions and Awards, visit PTA.org/Reflections
## Officer Reporting Form

### 2014-2015

**OFFICER REPORTING FORM**  
For Units and Councils  
**Required**

### Unit/Council Name:

Permanent PTA Unit/Council Address (School address or PO Box):

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Address</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>Zip</th>
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- **REQUIRED completion and return of this form for unit to be in “Good Standing” with Montana and National PTA.**
- **Send to:** Montana PTA Office, PO Box 1269, Laurel, MT 59044 OR ptamontana@rbbmt.org by June 1st. *If officers change during year, submit new information to the office immediately.*
- **Only units that have returned this form will receive membership cards and resources**
- **All officers listing an e-mail address will receive the Montana PTA Voice newsletter via e-mail.**
- **All officers will be entered into the National PTA online membership database.**

### President’s Name:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Term Start Date</th>
<th>Term End Date</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>E-Mail address</th>
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### Treasurer’s Name:

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### Secretary’s Name:

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### Vice President’s Name:

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<th>Term End Date</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>E-Mail address</th>
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**If you have more than two Vice Presidents or other board positions, please attach additional form.**
ADVERTISING in the MONTANA PTA VOICE Newsletter:
Would you or do you know of someone who would be interested in advertising in this newsletter? If so, please contact the Montana PTA office at 406-628-9007 or ptamontana@rbbmt.org for rates and information. All advertising is subject to approval by Montana PTA. Montana PTA reserves the right to reject any advertising it feels is not in keeping with the character, goals, and purposes of PTA.

"Disclaimer: Articles and advertisements in The Voice do not necessarily represent the viewpoints or policies of Montana PTA. Montana PTA does not endorse non-PTA products or services mentioned in the publication."

board of directors

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Treasurer:
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President Elect:
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Program: VACANT
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Diversity: VACANT
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Membership: Heather Wright
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Reflections: Jennifer VanVoast
(406) 974-0100
stonewarebyjennifer@msn.com
INSIDE THIS ISSUE

President’s Message
Annual SOS Report Filing Deadline
Treasurer News
PTA Mission
Objects of the PTA
President-Elect News
President’s Call
Advocacy News
Membership News
YVPTA Council Spring Training Date
Reflections News
2014 Reflections 1st Place Winners
Reflections Winners—Photography

Reflections Winners—Visual Arts
National PTA Reflections
Awards & Recognition
2014-15 Officer Reporting Form
Advertising in Voice Newsletter
Board of Directors List

Page 1
Page 2
Page 2
Page 2
Page 3
Page 3
Page 4
Page 5
Page 6
Page 6
Page 7
Page 8

Page 9
Page 10
Page 11
Page 12
Page 12