



A Supplement from the...

Palm Springs Unified School District

Serving Cathedral City, Desert Hot Springs, Palm Desert, Palm Springs, Rancho Mirage & Thousand Palms December/January 2017

Elementary Schools Will Have Slight Schedule Change After Winter Break

Palm Springs Unified School District's elementary schools will have adjusted start and/or dismissal times when students return from winter break on Jan. 9, 2017. The new schedule will allow for increased instructional time for students each day. The adjustments will mean an average of an additional five hours per month at the elementary sites.

"We are pleased that we were able to negotiate the new schedule with our teachers in order to add instructional minutes for our students," said Supt. of Schools Sandra Lyon. "We apologize for any inconvenience the slight change in start and/or end times may create, but we know that more time for learning is of great benefit for our students."

All elementary parents and guardians received a letter from Lyon earlier this month to inform them of the schedule change. Parents or guardians of students who receive bus transportation were provided with a separate letter regarding time changes for pick-up and/or drop-off times at bus stops. Elementary schools have also posted new bell schedules showing recess and lunch times on their websites, which can be accessed through the PSUSD website at psusd.us. The new schedule for elementary schools is listed below.

School	Effective 1/9/17	
	Start	End
Agua Caliente	7:45	2:35
Bella Vista	8:40	3:30
Bubbling Wells	8:40	3:30
Cabot Yerxa	8:40	3:30
Cahuilla	8:40	3:30
Cathedral City	8:40	3:30
Della Lindley	8:40	3:30
Julius Corsini	8:40	3:30
Katherine Finchy	8:40	3:30
Landau	7:35	2:25
Rancho Mirage	8:40	3:30
Rio Vista	7:35	2:25
Sunny Sands	8:40	3:30
Two Bunch Palms	8:40	3:30
Vista del Monte	8:40	3:30

PSUSD Dedicates New Richards Center for the Arts

Palm Springs Unified School District and the Foundation for PSUSD held a recent dual celebration to mark the \$17 million renovation to the former Palm Springs High School Auditorium and the dedication of the new Richards Center for the Arts.

October 26 was proclaimed "Richards Center for the Arts Day" in the city of Palm Springs by Mayor Rob Moon at the ceremony attended by nearly 150 people who expressed pride and pleasure in seeing the interior upgrades and renovations combined with the retaining of the exterior building and interior design features of the original historic building.

Following welcoming music by the Palm Springs High Orchestra and performance of the National Anthem, with saxophone solo by PSHS student Maddie Barton, under the direction of Dr. Jason Powell, Supt. of Schools Sandra Lyon welcomed attendees and accepted proclamations and congratulatory certificates from representatives for Congressman Dr. Raul Ruiz, Assemblyman Chad Mayes and Riverside County Fourth District Supervisor John Benoit. Others offering congratulatory remarks and documents included Senator Jeff Stone, Rancho Mirage Mayor Richard Kite and Moon. Other event speakers included Board of Education President Shari Stewart and Palm Springs High Principal Ryan Woll.

Foundation Executive Director Ellen Goodman introduced Rick Moore, representing his mother, Rozene Supple, who has pledged \$2 million to establish an arts endowment and rename the auditorium the Richards Center for the Arts, in honor of her family. Moore then presented a symbolic "big check" for \$2 million to the Board of Education.

The renovations to the auditorium, originally built in the late 1950s, were primarily focused on seismic alterations of the structural foundation. Because the exterior walls are historic, this was accomplished by removing all seating and concrete floor inside, digging down 20 feet and adding additional concrete to the structural footings. The roof was completely removed and replaced with seismically safe attachments, and all new plumbing and electrical systems were installed. Funding included \$4.8 million in state seismic retrofitting funding, and the remainder from the District's Measure E bond funding. An additional \$582,000 came from the city of Palm Springs Measure J funding for new sound and lighting equipment.



Rick Moore presents check for \$2 million to the Board of Education on behalf of his mother, Benefactor Rozene Supple. Pictured, from left, Moore, Supt. of Schools Sandy Lyon; Board members Richard Clapp and Karen Cornett; outgoing Board Member Shari Stewart; and Board Member James Williamson.

Following the cutting of a commemorative ribbon at the conclusion of the ceremony, event attendees were invited to tour the facility and enjoy a catered reception backstage.

PSUSD Has New Board of Education Member



Thousand Palms resident Madonna Gerrell is Palm Springs Unified School District's newest Board of Education member and took the oath of office earlier this month at the Board's reorganization meeting.

An English Learner Teacher on Special Assignment in the Coachella Valley Unified School District, Gerrell has lived in the Coachella Valley for 33 years and is married to Don, a general contractor, and the mother of two daughters who graduated from Cathedral City High School. Her daughter, Donnie, is currently studying to be a teacher at Cal State San Bernardino Palm Desert Campus and is an instructor for DIGICOM.

"For the past 24 years, I have had the dream of running for

school board," said Gerrell. "I want to bring my knowledge, training, background and education to the educational community and serve as an advocate for our teachers, parents and students. My two daughters had an amazing education in PSUSD, and I am so very appreciative for the administrators, counselors, teachers, secretaries, custodians, security staff, mentors and educational leaders that helped to support them in their educational journey. As a lifelong learner, I look forward to growing by learning more about PSUSD and being a change agent for our community."

Gerrell replaced Shari Stewart as the Trustee Area 1 Board of Education representative. Stewart chose not to run for re-election after 17 years of service on the school board. Richard Clapp also begins his third term on the board. He ran unopposed in the November election.

District Digest



Ready To Respond: Forty two juniors in the Public Safety Academy (PSA) at Desert Hot Springs High School recently completed their Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) certification following a culminating practical skills earthquake response exercise including damage assessment, light search and rescue and medical triage. Student actors simulated injuries including broken bones, so students could treat with minor medical aid. The 20-hour CERT training was led by Ralph Mesa, of the Riverside County Emergency Management Department (EMD).



Honoring 17 Years of Service: The Board of Education recently presented outgoing board member Shari Stewart, third from right, with a modern piece of art to thank her for her 17 years of service as a PSUSD Board of Education member. Stewart decided not to seek re-election in this year's election. Madonna Gerrell is Trustee Area 1's new representative. Congratulating Stewart are, from left, Board Members James Williamson, John Gerardi, Karen Cornett and Richard Clapp; and Supt. of Schools Sandra Lyon.



State Administrator of the Year: Palm Springs Unified's Director of Student Services Jane Mills, center holding award, was recently honored by the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA) for being named the state Pupil Personnel Administrator of the Year. Congratulating Mills are, from left, former Raymond Cree Principal Dr. Tracy Piper, Parent Coordinator Dr. Ingrid Lin, Supt. of Schools Sandra Lyon, Mills' daughter Maya Brewer, Assistant Supt. of Educational Services Dr. Mike Swize, Director of Secondary Instruction Dr. Anne Kalisek, Director of Elementary Instruction Dr. Denise Ellis, Data Systems Training Specialist Victoria Kehoe and Coordinator of Communications and Community Outreach Joan Boiko.



Lady Rattlers Win First CIF Title: Rancho Mirage High School's Girls Tennis Team recently became the school's first team to win a CIF championship title.

Reduce, Reuse, Recycle: Deanna Pressgrove, who works for the city of Cathedral City, was able to provide t-shirts for the Cathedral City Elementary's School's Student Council and Garden Committee for a t-shirt reflecting the school's "Reduce-Reuse and Recycle" theme. Organized by Rosalind Orduno, who helps out with both groups, the school held a design contest for the t-shirt designs. The winner was fifth grader Zayuri Sanchez, left. Runners-up were, from left, Jasmine Monjaras, Melissa Hernandez and Yadhira Espino. The designs can also be seen on the site's trash receptacles.



CVC Wins County Models of Excellence: Cielo Vista Charter was one of the 14 honorees at the recent Models of Academic Excellence and Innovation Ceremon at the 14th Annual Riverside County Education Summit. The team was recognized for its "Universal Achievement Through Data-Driven Decision Making" program. Pictured, from left, are Riverside County Supt. of Schools Kenn Young, CVC teacher Doris Rodriguez, Academic Coach Juanita Perezchica, CVC Board Member Valentina Stier, Co-Principals Jennifer Geyer and Devlinn Clinton, Academic Intervention Coach Joy Swize, School Counselor Roxanna Angles, PTG President Cara Van Dyke and Supt. of Schools Sandra Lyon.



Spirit of Sands Band Headed to London: Palm Springs High's Spirit of the Sands Band has been invited to perform in London's New Year's Day Parade in 2018. Lord Mayor of Westminster Robert Davis, pictured seated, bottom, second from right, with Spirit of the Sands Director Brian Ingelson, rear in suit, and members of the band, recently visited PSHS to issue the invitation. The band will perform for 750,000 people live and another 350 million world-wide via television during the parade.



Assistance League Clothes 1,000 PSUSD Students: The Assistance League of Palm Springs Desert Area once again stepped up to help PSUSD students in need. The group donated 1,000 bags filled with underwear, socks, shirts and shorts through their "Operation School Bell" program. Assistance League members teamed up with PSUSD community liaisons to fill the bags for warehouse delivery to the schools.



Raising Funds for Scholars: California Retired Teachers Association Division 89 (CaRTA) recently held its annual "Dollars 4 Scholars" mixer and silent auction at the home of Dr. Craig Borba, right, and his wife, Dr. Michele Borba. Pictured with Borba is retired Raymond Cree Counselor Bob Worswick. Proceeds benefit PSUSD graduate scholarships. Wine, beer and appetizers were provided by Adult Customized Tours (ACT).



Juniors Take Float Honors in CCHS Homecoming Parade: The junior class' Rio Carnival float took top honors at Cathedral City High School's recent "World Fest - Celebrating International Festivals" themed parade. Judges for the parade were Principal Guillermo Chavez and Supt. of Schools Sandra Lyon, who was also the parade's Grand Marshal.

PSUSD Board of Education		
John Gerardi <i>President</i>	James Williamson <i>Clerk</i>	
Madonna Gerrell	Richard Clapp	Karen Cornett
PSUSD Administration		
Sandra Lyon, <i>Superintendent</i>		
Mauricio Arellano, <i>Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources</i>		
Brian Murray, Ed.D., <i>Assistant Superintendent, Business Services</i>		
Mike Swize, Ed. D., <i>Assistant Superintendent, Educational Services</i>		
<small>This Palm Springs Unified School District report to the community is published bimonthly by the Palm Springs Unified School District, 980 E. Tahquitz Canyon Way, Suite 101, Palm Springs, CA 92262 Editor: Joan L. Boiko • Phone: 760-416-6010 • Email: jboiko@psusd.us • Website: www.psusd.us</small>		



Seniors Take PSHS Homecoming Float Honors: The class of 2017 took first place honors in Palm Springs High School's Homecoming Parade themed Marvel Heroes. Entries included the seniors' Spiderman, The Hulk, Iron Man and Captain America. Grand marshals for the parade were Supt. of Schools Sandra Lyon and Palm Springs Mayor Rob Moon.

PSUSD Foundation Benefit Concert Set for Jan. 19

The Foundation for the Palm Springs Unified School District will host a benefit concert in the newly opened Richards Center for the Arts on Thursday, Jan. 19, 2017. Featuring the pop music group PostModern Jukebox, the event will also launch the Foundation's "Grab Your Seat" commemorative naming initiative for the Center.

PostModern Jukebox is a rotating music collective known worldwide that creates twists on today's pop music hits, reimagining modern songs into different vintage genres, especially swing and jazz. Tickets range from \$75 for rear orchestra to \$125 for front orchestra and are available at psusd.us/the-foundation or by calling (760) 416-8455.

The band covers songs by artists ranging from Lady Gaga and Katy Perry to the White Stripes. Over the years, the group has featured more than 70 different performers and has toured four continents. The January 19 event will be their Coachella Valley debut.

The benefit is co-chaired by Harold Matzner and Helene Galen, and event ambassadors include Michael Childers, Terri Ketover and Ann Sheffer. Debbie Green, of Deb Len Productions, is producing the event.

The "Grab Your Seat" initiative is the cornerstone of an ambitious five-year capital fundraising campaign

for arts education in Palm Springs Unified. The program provides patrons the opportunity to name a theater seat, gallery space or other building amenity in their or a loved one's honor, marked by commemorative plaques, nameplates and custom lettering.

"We are delighted to celebrate the opening of this wonderful new venue with world-class entertainment of this caliber," said Ellen Goodman, executive director



PostModern Jukebox will perform at PSUSD's Foundation benefit on Jan. 19, 2017.

of The Foundation. "The PostModern Jukebox benefit concert is a powerful way to bring attention to our 'Grab Your Seat' initiative. This will be a fantastic and fun evening, unlike anything else going on this season."

The newly opened Richards Center for the Arts was named by lead donor and Palm Springs philanthropist Rozene Supple. Designed in 1958 by architect E. Stewart Williams, it recently underwent a multi-million-dollar renovation that reinvigorated and retooled the Valley film, concert, and theatrical venue into a state-of-the-art performance space for students and Valley culture-lovers alike.

"This historic building has served the Coachella Valley for nearly 60 years, and has hosted world-class popular and classical entertainment of all kinds, including the Palm Springs International Film Festival," explained Goodman. "We are thrilled to provide the public with the opportunity to be a visible part of the revamped facility through our seat-and interior amenity-naming campaign. Our 'Grab Your Seat' naming initiative now enables donors to directly enhance the education and the lives of district students and helps make possible arts education of all kinds in our region for decades to come."

Members of the public can name a seat in the auditorium for \$500. For more information on seat or other naming opportunities, contact Goodman at (760) 416-8455 or e-mail egoodman@psusd.us.

Message from the Superintendent

Lots to Be Proud of During This Holiday Season



I hope you are all enjoying the holiday season and winter break with your families. As I near my six-month mark here in the Palm Springs Unified School District, I wanted to take this opportunity to reflect on why I feel our students, staff, parents and community members should be extremely proud of this District and what is happening here.

As I've visited our school sites, meeting with teachers, administrators and support personnel, it is apparent how very much our staff members truly love being a part of our PSUSD family and how much they care about our students. Sometimes the words that are iterated do not reflect the genuine feelings. When PSUSD staff members talk about their jobs and how

much they love what they do, you know it is for real from the gleams in their eyes to the gesture of putting their hands to their hearts as they express themselves. It is so gratifying to be at the helm of a team who cares as much as ours does.

In addition to our caring staff, we have a Board of Education comprised of people who couldn't be any more committed to doing what's best for our students. That, of course, should always be first and foremost. It isn't always the case. The members of the PSUSD Board of Education are truly dedicated to that mission, and it is demonstrated by the questions they ask, the ideas they bring forward and the actions that they take. Our students and staff are fortunate to have such outstanding, innovative and forward-thinking elected leaders who have our students' best interests at heart each and every day.

As I continue on my journey of getting to know the people, places, programs and activities that make up PSUSD, I guess you can tell that what I've seen, heard and felt so far further justifies my initial impressions when I started here in July. This is a District filled with staff members and community members who give their all with the shared goal of academic success for each of our nearly 23,000 students. I couldn't be more proud to be a part of it and am looking forward to working with our team to move us even further ahead.

I wish all of you a wonderful holiday and a happy and healthy 2017!

Sandra Lyon
Superintendent of Schools