

Message from the Superintendent

By Dr. Jorge O. Ayala

Dear YCOE Staff,

First, I want to take this opportunity to thank all of you for a very successful year. You have worked hard and have served YCOE well, especially the children of Yolo County, who are our primary purpose. I greatly appreciate you and all that you do.

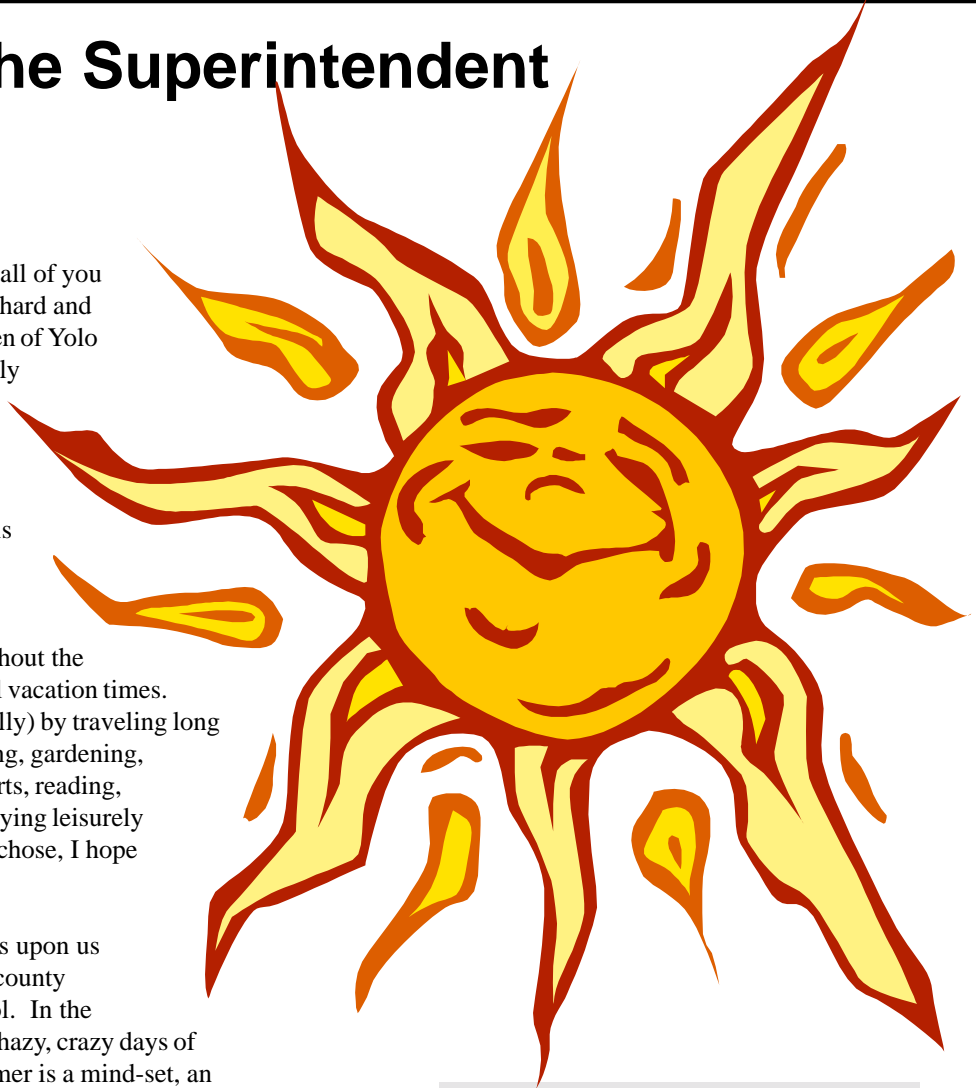
Next, I want to wish you a restful summer. I hope that you take the opportunity to have a summer vacation. A change of environment is always refreshing and gives one a new perspective on life and work.

Some of you will take short vacations throughout the year, others weeks at-a-time during traditional vacation times. Some of you will change your latitudes (literally) by traveling long distances, others will go camping, backpacking, gardening, working on home improvements, playing sports, reading, visiting friends and family, or just simply enjoying leisurely days with no plans in mind. Whichever you chose, I hope you thoroughly enjoy yourselves.

It won't be long before the new school year is upon us and the wheels kick into swift motion as our county schools prepare for another opening of school. In the meantime let's enjoy the moment. The "lazy, hazy, crazy days of summer" as the song goes are upon us. Summer is a mind-set, an attitude that suggests a time of relaxation and reflection. Please do so.

I look forward to seeing you and sharing stories at the staff orientation on the morning of August 23. May your summer wishes come true. Take care.

Jorge



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“ The direction in which education starts a man will determine his future life
 - Plato (428 BC - 348 BC)
The Republic ”

In Your Absence... Hints from Human Resources

At this mid-point in July, many of you have been enjoying the carefree days of summer, while others are just finishing summer school and about to experience some days of well-earned relaxation.

Here, in Human Resources, we are gearing up for the new school year in a variety of ways. As you might expect we are busily hiring new staff and will have a number of new employees to welcome in our next newsletter. We are also getting orientation packets together for our first big day back on Thursday, August 23.

We thought we would take the opportunity at this time to remind you about the procedures to follow when you are going to be away from your job due to illness or other reasons:

1. Always call in your absence to the 24-hour absence reporting line at (530) 668-3727. **(Even if you do not need a substitute, you still must report your absence.)**
2. If you know that you will be away from work prior to the morning of your absence, call the absence reporting line as soon as possible. That way, if a substitute should be required, we have a much better chance of filling the vacancy for the day.

The longer you wait, the more difficult it is to find a substitute.



Calling in the day (or week) before the sub is needed allows substitutes to make necessary arrangements for child care or other commitments they may have. We thank you and your subs thank you!

3. Review procedures that you may have made with your supervisor regarding the reporting of your absence. Be assured that Human Resources will report your absence to your site after you make the call to the absence reporting line.

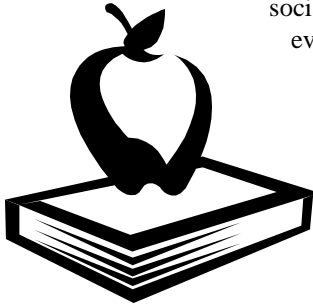
Sometimes when you are sick you don't want to make more than one phone call—that's ok as long as that one phone call is to Human Resources! **Remember the number to call is 668-3727.**

Enjoy the rest of your summer—we'll see you on August 23rd.

Thank you Michelle!

Special thanks to Michelle Tamala and the entire Social Events Coordination team. On July 4th more than 65 YCOE employees with their friends and families enjoyed the RiverCats baseball game and fireworks.

It was truly an extraordinary experience to not only spend time with our fellow employees in a social setting but to also meet everyone's family and friends.



There was a tremendous amount of time spent coordinating this event and the results were terrific. We look forward to the next event.

CALENDAR of Events



July 26

Yolo County Board of Education Meeting

August 15-19

Yolo County Fair

August 16

Yolo County Board of Education Meeting

August 23

All Staff Orientation

September 3

Labor Day Holiday

September 5

Communication Team Meeting

Alfalfa - Ice Cream in the Making

On June 21, Yolo County Office of Education, Yolo County Farm Bureau, UC Davis and CAFA (California Alfalfa and Forages Assn.) co-hosted a unique opportunity for Yolo County teachers and the general public to learn about a key agricultural commodity in Yolo County.

The day began at 8:00 a.m. with registration at the Farm Bureau Office on Kentucky Avenue in Woodland. Panna Putnam, Agricultural and Environmental Education Coordinator at YCOE, started the day by welcoming the participants. Dr. Ayala gave a brief overview of the history and commitment of YCOE to the county's ag and environmental education efforts.

Patricia Stever of Ag in the Classroom followed with information about other agricultural education resources available to teachers in the state. Denise Sagara, Executive Director of Yolo County Farm Bureau went over the day's schedule, details, and information for teachers who had signed up for continuation ed credits from Chico State.

Dr. Dan Putnam, keynote speaker and the Alfalfa specialist for the state of California at UC Davis, gave a PowerPoint presentation on Alfalfa, its history and importance to Yolo County, California, and the nation. Participants learned that "Queen of Forages" (or Alfalfa as it is commonly called) is the second largest cash crop in California (after grape) and if combined with the dairy industry, it is the single largest cash crop in the state. In addition to being one of the best feeds for dairy cows and horses, it is also important for improving soil quality by nitrogen fixation and assisting with processing some agricultural waste products.

After an hour long, in-class overview of alfalfa, teachers and other participants hit the road, thanks to a bus provided by Rich Engel, Director of Outreach and Recruitment in Department of Ag and Natural resources at UC Davis.

First on the agenda was a dairy operation south of Woodland, owned and run by Mr. Jack Kasbergen. Due to the possibility of "Hoof and Mouth" disease, all

participants put on plastic booties before touring the dairy and milking operation. The dairy was large and impressive.

The group next headed out to meet grower Duane Chamberlain at Chamberlain Farms outside of Woodland. Mr. Chamberlain is an alfalfa grower and he talked about growing and marketing alfalfa. Did you know that the horses at the race track in San Francisco are fed by locally grown alfalfa? Rachel Long a UC Davis Cooperative Extension Farm Advisor, taught the teachers to "sweep" for insects, both beneficial and pests, in the alfalfa field. They put them in baggies and identified them later with a matching sheet. Tom Kierney, a retired Farm Advisor, and Joe Rominger, an alfalfa grower and president of CAFA, talked about forage quality vs. quantity and its various uses.

The next step was a delicious lunch served by the Farm Bureau in the shade at Chamberlain Farms. It was a relief to get out of the 105 degree weather into the shade!

The final stop was Crystal Creamery and a tour of the state-of-the-art milk bottling operation, south of Sacramento. This plant produces milk, chocolate milk, yogurt and ice cream.

It was a great learning experience and a fun day! Remember, it is not the CHEESE- it is the ALFALFA!!

Next Commodity Day is June 21, 2002, and the Commodity is WATER. Contact Panna Putnam for more information at 530-668-3713 or putnam@ycoe.org.

Greengate Annual Carnival

The annual carnival was held at Greengate on May 23rd. This event has been held for many years to benefit the children who attend Greengate and their families.

Along with the Greengate staff, other students and staff from Midtown Community School, the Teen Parent Program and Head Start also volunteered their time for the event.

There were many booths for children to visit including bubble blowing, face painting, a bouncing booth and several food booths. Two outstanding food booths included the fresh salsa and chips provided by Adult Living Skills as well as the traditional cotton candy stand.

There was a great turn out of parents and happy children that made this annual event a great success this year.

Gastronomic Delights for the Stomach and the Mind

How would you like to spend your summers eating around the world? Westside Community School students and staff in West Sacramento are doing just that!

The four week summer school class is designed as a culinary academy featuring food themes from four different geographical areas: American, Latin American, European, and Asian students begin each week with a Famous Chef Video introducing the type of cuisine they will study. Daily they use math to figure calories, portion size, doubling/tripling recipes, measurements, and budgeting. As they plan the week's menu, students balance the food groups, cost, availability of ingredients, and time schedules, so they are ready to serve a nutritious, inexpensive meal when the dinner bell sounds.

Students practice their reading and writing skills when developing menus, researching the origins and uses of spices and herbs and developing advertisements for their restaurant projects. Through walking trips to the Farmers' Market on Wednesdays, they are discovering an excellent way to gather fresh produce for healthy living.

All of this preparation pays off on Fridays when everyone gathers into four groups: setup, prep, cooking, and cleanup and then joins together for the culminating event of the week, "The Big Meal". (Hint: This is a good time to stop by with a

fork and paper plate!) Parents may attend and because of the diverse cultures represented in this city, they may also assist students in preparing some their family's ethnic dishes to round out the day's menu.

What more excitement could Westside staff offer students during summer school? Why, gardens and field trips, of course. Trips to the Fourth Street Grill, the Sacramento Co-op and the Golden State Culinary Institute are scheduled to round out students' culinary experience.

Additionally, students are active growers of some of their own produce in the urban garden they have designed under the direction of teacher, Sue Lomax, in back of the school. (See the May 23rd edition of the [News Ledger](#) for the front page article featuring their garden)

Old light fixtures, wash tubs, iceboxes and crates have provided Westside with garden boxes for growing strawberries, peppers, onions, squash, beans, tomatoes, and corn.

Anita Westenbarger, teacher; Brian Guido, instructional aide; and our two aides from the Washington Unified School District for Special Education students, Heidi Hernandez and Robin Pryor, have provided a welcome feast of learning for the summer.

Benefit Concert Held for Support of Greengate Students

A Woodstock-style benefit concert was held on June 23rd in Woodland at Plainfield Station. The benefit concert was the inspiration of Lance Been, a local businessman who had been actively involved as a Greengate parent with his wife while their daughter attended Greengate several years ago. Lance and his former wife Linda Grace both praised the supportive, friendly environment that they found at Greengate. They were appreciative of the efforts of Sherri Carrere, their daughter's teacher at Greengate and Stacie Veliz, and the aide who worked with their daughter. Their daughter Kari is now 18 and attends high school in Elk Grove. Lance had two goals for his benefit concert. He wanted to support the programs that support students with special needs such as Greengate and YES (Youth Employment Services), a post high school supportive employment program. Secondly, he wanted to raise community awareness of students with disabilities.

The first time event was held at the historic Plainfield Station. This famous roadhouse dates back to the 1930s. Behind the charming tavern was a grassy field with shade trees, a lanai, and two stages for the wide range of performers. There was a wide range of talent with the large Davis alumni band, colorful Folkloricio Latino, trick roping, and everything from blues, acoustic rock to jazz to entertain the audiences. Surrounding the spacious lawn were many booths of raffle prizes and

organization booths including the Yolo Sheriff's K-9 Unit, a balloon lady, free snowcones and face painting.

The ambience of the concerts was very much a flashback to earlier times. The Woodland Democrat described the WOODland STOCK (Supporting Talent and Optimism for Critical Kids/Adults) as 12 hours of peace and love for a good cause. Many of the bands included local personalities. Families with young children playing on the grass or approaching the police dogs were in evidence everywhere. The bands clearly enjoyed interacting with the audience. At one point several disabled adults sat in front and were the most demonstrative fans for the performing band. Yolo County Superintendent, Jorge Ayala and Special Education Principal, Sid Bazett thanked the audience and volunteers for their good efforts. The Benefit organizer, Lance Been presented the Yolo County Office of Education a check for \$800 to go to the Greengate Trust Fund. The other benefit recipient was the YES Program that provides socialization and employment opportunities for older special needs youth. Lance plans to repeat the Benefit next May and has many new ideas on improving the participation. Special Education secretary, Pat Harris, attended the event with her husband and friends and reported that they had a great time and will come earlier in the day next year.