

Burning Issues

President's Message

What do you wish for?
For Burning Tree, that is!
Make a wish for items or
improvements you think

Burning Tree Elementary School needs and send it to the PTA. The PTA maintains a "wish-list" for items we think can be funded with money we raise. Wish list items can be granted only after a majority vote by the PTA and only if we have excess funds to cover the cost of the item. Last year's wish list items included a new front playground, a climbing wall for the back playground, an upgrade to the media center's television studio and equipment for our new gym. We raise the money to spend it on our kids, the teachers and staff, and your input is very important! Email Lisa Sanfuentes at Lisa.Rizzolo@verizon.net any items you would like to see on the Wish List!

While we're on the topic of wishes and raising money, I wish for a big turnout at the Adult Auction Fundraiser! After the New Year, it's right around the corner on March 1st. This is a very fun adults-only evening, and it's our major fundraiser. I encourage everyone at the school to attend. It's a great excuse to go out, because every dollar you spend benefits our school, and it is a great way to meet new people and connect with people you see in passing every day! Dr. Chaset, Mr. Tark and some of our teachers normally attend, and the teachers in each grade offer wonderful teacher outings that you can bid on for your kids. We also hope each family at the school donates an item to be auctioned!

Cheers! Lisa Sanfuentes, PTA Co-President

PTA Website

As you all know the Burning Tree PTA has its own website -- www.BurningTreePTA.com.

We have tried our very best to get as much interesting information on the site as we can, so you can find: information on upcoming events, minutes of PTA meetings, names and contact information of the PTA executive board members, information on BTnet and PTA membership, information and a lot of flyers/sign-up sheets for all PTA programs, events and committees (school based, community based, fundraising and volunteers programs and events),

plus the contact information for all chairs and co-chairs.

You will find information on a large array of school policies (with a lot of links to the Burning Tree website) from the playground volunteer schedule, to info on the learning center, and from the lunch menu to parent tip sheets. You will also find information on organizations and events in the community. We have set up a list of interesting and helpful resources for both parents and students. In other words: we don't think much is missing!

Please check it out and use it often! And if you would like to add links, flyers, brochures, sign up sheets or anything else you think would benefit the BT community, please let us know, by e-mailing Karen van Loon at karenvanloon@verizon.net.

Lunch with a Scientist

Our **Lunch with a Scientist** event is on Thursday, January 24. It is a wonderful opportunity for interested students to speak with scientists from



different disciplines and learn more about their work. The scientists come to the students' classrooms and talk to them during lunchtime.

If you are a scientist, or if you know of someone who would like to share a lunch hour with a small group of students, please let us know at your earliest convenience.

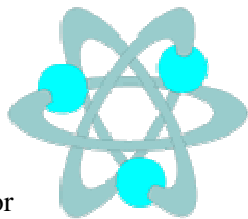
For more information please contact Katerina Papaioannou at (301) 229-4286 or mkpapaioannou@yahoo.com or Michele Greenberg at (301) 320-4480 or mimizg@verizon.net.

Inside This Issue:

Adult Fundraiser	3
Fundraiser Events.....	2
Math Day Flyer	6
President's Message	1
PTA Minutes	5
Science Fair.....	2
Sister School- Winter Clothes.....	4
Volunteer Corner.....	3

The Science Fair is Coming -- January 30, 2008

Mark your calendars now, and prepare to be informed and amazed by the fantastic projects on display at the **2008 Burning Tree Science Fair**. Wondering how do submarines work? Pondering whether music affects heart rate? Which combination of acid and base produces the most gas and why? There is no telling what questions will be asked and answered at the 2008 Burning Tree Science Fair.



The Science Fair is a fun way for kids to explore science and the world around them. Our young scientists will display their projects and describe their work to Science Fair Officials on Wednesday, January 30, 2008 (snow date: Thursday, January 31). Remember, all students are welcome to participate and everyone who does is a winner in our non-competitive fair.

A Science Fair packet of information was sent home last week. The packet includes an entry form, Science Fair "Do's, Don'ts, and How-To's," the schedule of events, a volunteer form and a showboard order form. As in the past, the Science Fair is largely financed through the sale of showboards. We charge \$5 each and we will take the first round of orders through Friday, December 14. We will be delivering them to classrooms on Monday, December 17, to be taken home by students. Additional deliveries will be made in late December and early January while our supplies last.

Materials with lots of great ideas for Science Fair projects are being set aside in the Library. Ask your teachers or call one of us – we have lots of ideas to help you started. Some students love elaborate projects that require a lot of planning and preparation. Other projects are simple displays of interesting information put together in an afternoon. Some students work alone, others work with a friend. There is no wrong way to go about this – any project for which a student learns something and shares that knowledge is the perfect project for the Burning Tree Science Fair.

If you have questions or want to volunteer to be a Science Fair Official or help in some other way, please contact Katerina Papaioannou at (301) 229-4286 or mkpapaioannou@yahoo.com, or Michele Greenberg at (301) 320-4480 or mimizg@verizon.net.

Please also watch for further Science Fair information in future editions of Burning Issues and the Friday Update.

*Katerina Papaioannou and Michele Greenberg,
Science Fair Co-Chairs*

Fundraising Events Under Way...

Sally Foster Final Update

Many, many thanks- again – to Ellie Abramowitz and Jamie Pierce for their commitment to raising money for our school! Thanks to them, and the many families who bought our excess Sally Foster cookie dough, we raised an additional \$510 this week, bringing our total Sally Foster profit up to \$6,600 for the year!

If you missed the opportunity to purchase Sally Foster products during our catalog sale or just wish you had purchased more...It is not too late! Burning Tree will still earn 50% profit until January 15, 2008. Go to www.sallyfoster.com to view the products and place your order. At the checkout screen, key in our account #498966 so BT gets credit.

Fix N' Feast

Our first BTES Fix N' Feast was a huge success! In just an hour and a half we raised close to \$550! We enjoyed talking with each other, drinking wine, making up to three delicious meals for our families and raising money for BTES. Thanks so much to Liza Fues for sharing this great fundraising idea with us and for making it happen! Stay tuned, because we are planning another Fix n' Feast in March.

Book Fair at Barnes & Noble and Dine-Out at Armand's

Many thanks to our Book Fair co-chairs Jeanne Pettenati, Debby Rubin, Heidi Grunwald, and Sharon Curry for organizing such a magical night at Barnes and Noble, your hard work really paid off! The night was a great success and everyone really enjoyed themselves—listening to stories, shopping, playing games and visiting with other BT families! Thanks to Dr. Chaset and the teachers who read a story—always a highlight of the night - and to all the families who generously supported our school by attending this events and purchasing Wish List books for our teachers, the media center and Broad Acres school. Over 300 Wish List books were purchased!

Thanks also to Nancy Sandler for organizing our Book Fair Dine Out. A real success and a new tradition! Thanks also to all the BTES families who joined us at the Armand's Dine Out --your attendance and appetite helped us to earn \$175.00! The owner also remarked on how well behaved our children were. Watch for information about the next Dine-Out at Parker's, in Bethesda, on Tuesday, January 15th!

Adult Fundraiser— A Taste Of Italy— Start Planning Now!

Our biggest school fundraiser will be held on March 1, 2008 at Maggiano's Restaurant in Chevy Chase, DC. This year's Adult Fundraiser is almost a month earlier this year so we need every Burning Tree Families to start planning NOW to donate items or services to this event and sending their completed donation forms to school (a donation form and a flyer with auction ideas can be found in last week's *Friday Update* and on the PTA web site). And while you are out doing your holiday shopping, or having a meal, please ask these businesses to support our school by making a donation to Burning Tree's Fundraiser. Many local businesses have made donations in the past and will be happy to support our school.

Once again at the Adult Fundraiser we will be auctioning wine bottles donated by Burning Tree families. Collection of wine bottles will begin right after winter break so make sure to purchase an extra bottle or two of wine the next time you are at the wine store! Look for more information in upcoming *Friday Updates*.

Make Your Holiday Shopping Count!

I admit it, I like to shop on-line. Now this holiday season I'm making every dollar count because I registered at SchoolPop.com. Now, every time I shop on-line at one of the hundreds of stores that participate, I feel good about spending my money because I know a portion of it is going to Burning Tree. Just register at www.schoolpop.com (it takes about 3 minutes!) and every time you make a purchase at a participating retailer on-line, BTES gets a percentage of the sale. There is NO extra cost to you- and it can add up to BIG bucks for BT!

Also, remember to register your Giant and/or Safeway cards. If you are entertaining guests this holiday season- and buying extra food- make sure BTES benefits. Register your Giant card at

<http://www.giantfood.com/aplus> and use our BTES school code of 0666; Safeway cards can be registered on www.escrip.com or contact Amy Lenkin amylenkin@millandlong.com and she will help you with this process.

And if you shop at Target (and who doesn't!) be sure to designate BTES to receive a percentage of your purchases if you shop with a Target Visa card. Visit target.com/tcoe or call 1-800-316-6142 to designate our school as part of their TARGET TAKE CHARGE OF EDUCATION program.

Thanks for your ongoing support of BTES's fundraising programs.

Cindy Campbell, VP Fundraising

Volunteer Corner

Burning Tree Directory

On behalf of all Burning Tree families who received our wonderful new directory last month, a huge thank you to its editors, Liza Fues and Dale Sorcher.

Liza and Dale have poured many hours into the Directory over several years and we are enormously grateful for their efforts.

Staff Appreciation Lunch

Thanks to Kathy Chelst and Beth Martino for coordinating November's Staff Appreciation lunch and thank you to everyone who contributed food and/or time to make it such a success. Our teachers and staff always enjoy these meals – and the parents' appreciation that they demonstrate.

Playground Volunteer Guidelines

Thank you to Dr Chaset and Mr Tark for hosting the Playground Volunteer Brunch last month. It was wonderful to celebrate one of the great achievements of this school year – the enormous contribution parents are playing in the playground every day.

The get-together was also an opportunity to discuss the revised Playground Volunteer Guidelines which clarify parents' role. If you have not seen the new guidelines, please contact Sharon Tompkins for a copy at stompkins@lewisandtompkins.com

Have Lunch with your Child!

If you feel the cold but still want to help with lunch and recess, why not consider volunteering in the lunch room? The December and January roster is being coordinated now. If you're interested, or have any questions, please contact me. (*Cont'd next page.*)

Finally, as we come to the end of the first half of the school year, may I extend my sincere thanks to all of you who have volunteered at Burning Tree this year, and wish everyone a very happy holiday season.

*Brenda Conroy, VP Volunteers,
brenda.conroy@gol.com*

Book Fair -- Thank You

Thanks to all the Burning tree staff and families who helped to make last week's Burning Tree Book Fair a success! Burning tree students and their families enjoyed hearing teachers and staff read some of their favorite stories on November 29, the kickoff night. Thanks to Dr. Chaset, Mr. Tark, Mrs. Granof, Mrs. Rhodes, Mr. Wells, Mrs. Hurwitz, Mrs. Richter and special guest author Diane Heiman for taking time to read to the children that night. Children also played Think Fun games, selected wish list books for teachers and staff, enjoyed prize drawings and mingling with their friends. And thanks to all the families who did some holiday shopping during book fair week.

Thanks to your generosity we were able to provide teachers and staff with over 200 wish list books. Many of these books are now in your children's classrooms and the media center. In addition, we were able to provide Broad Acres with all of their wish list choices.

Thanks to all our volunteers who helped make the evening a success—Roy Fried and daughters Marisa, Kara, and Audra, Laura and Tyler Weiss, Lisa Fues, Cindy Campbell, Elissa Ginsky, Dorene Rosenthal, Brenda Conroy, Melinda Gray, Marcy Ruderman, Lisa Sanfuentes, Carmen Serna and Kelly Rose.

Finally, it has come to our attention that some book fair purchases were made without Burning Tree getting credit for them. Please check your receipts to make sure that they have book fair # 145276 listed on top.

*Debby Rubin, Heidi Grunwald, Sharon Curry,
Jeanne Pettenati, Book Fair Committee Co-chairs*

Latest News from Broad Acres – Winter Clothing Drive Extended until December 18

Thanks to all who participated in the winter clothing drive for the Broad Acres community. Although the drive was to end on December 14th, we are extending it until Tuesday, December 18. If you have not had a

chance to bring in your gently-used, clean, warm clothes for both adults and children, especially outerwear – such as coats, boots, hats, mittens, and scarves, there is still time to do so. Clothes can be dropped off in the BT lobby in either a large shopping bag or a box.

Also, many thanks to those who donated books on Broad Acres' wish list at our Book Fair at Barnes and Noble. Your support is greatly appreciated. Thank you.-

*Sister School Liaisons - Sheryl Isaacs, Wynne Sitrin,
and Karen Judson*

Armand's Dine-out Update

Thanks for all who joined us at the Armand's Dine Out for fabulous pizza, delicious pasta and delectable wedding soup! Your attendance and appetite helped us to earn \$175.00! The owner also remarked on how well behaved our children were. Watch for information about the next Dine Out at Parker's, in Bethesda, on Tuesday, January 15th!

Teacher Appreciation -- Thank You...

To all those people who took time out from their busy schedules to help out at the Teacher Appreciation luncheon on November 16. Thanks to all the families that were so generous in their donations of delicious deserts & drinks. We could not have had such a successful event if it wasn't for all of you!

*Kathy Chelst & Beth Martino, Teacher Appreciation
Luncheon Co-chairs*

Burning Issues is published monthly by the Burning Tree PTA, usually the week following each PTA meeting.

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We welcome your contributions and suggestions. Please send your articles via e-mail to Joe Busch at jbusch@urban.org or call him at 202-261-5569. The deadline for the next newsletter is **Friday, January 4.**

Burning Tree PTA Minutes – December 4, 2007 at 9:30 a.m.

The meeting was called to order by President Olivia Lai. The October 2, 2007 minutes were approved.

President's Report: To date, 319 out of 391 families have joined the PTA. Families who have not yet joined have received reminders. Karen van Loon was not present but asked Olivia to request that anyone chairing a school event needs to send their information to her so that she may post it on the PTA website. A Community Connections page will be added to the web site listing community resources such as children's programs and sports teams. To add something to Community Connections, email info to Karen who will forward to Exec. Board for approval. Also forward any interesting websites to Karen for use in the Resources page, which refers families to helpful educational web sites.

Report on Whitman Cluster Meeting: Dorene Rosenthal, Ex-Officio, reported on Whitman cluster meeting. The cluster works together to set priorities and then cluster coordinator testifies before the Board of Education and County Council on the proposed operating and capital budgets. They discussed issues to be presented for the Capital Improvement Plan as well as how to mobilize efforts in the cluster before presenting to County Council. Assessments were also discussed. How should they gather data on issues of testing? How much testing is going on? Does it take away from teaching time? Schools are gathering information on these issues. Bannockburn Elementary will host a talk on the math curriculum on Jan. 8 at 7:30 p.m.

Principal's Report: Mrs. Shapiro, 5th grade teacher, thanked everyone for the wonderful staff lunch. She also enjoyed the Book Fair at Barnes and Nobles. Staffing update: Dr. Chaset stated that there are 3 additional para educators. Reece Walsh has been hired on a part time temporary basis, Karen Seebolm has been hired as a 1-1 support for a learning center student, and a 3 and ½ hour position has been given to Joan Ishimoto for playground time and as a para educator.

The Burning Tree Educational Foundation wish list items all include upgrades in technology: 1st: a sound system for the all purpose room 2nd converting to wireless for the building 3rd: classroom LCDs and ELMO (a document camera) 4th: classroom laptops and 5th: a Prometheus Board for each grade level. The Foundation has also sent

out letters of request for donations to various embassies, given that many of their children attend our school. Superintendent's Budget will be announced on December 13 at Rockville H.S. at 7:30 p.m. We have been made aware that there will be a hiring freeze. This will be a tough budget year.

Jay Kaufman, former PTA President of Burning Tree, and current Pyle and Whitman parent, made a request of the PTA to donate \$1000 for new acoustical shells for Whitman auditorium. Shells are \$2000 each and approximately 10 of them need to be replaced. He is hoping to raise \$12,000 from the Whitman cluster schools to go towards their acquisition. The Whitman music department has raised a third of the money needed to replace all the shells. He believes the Whitman cluster community benefits by showing support for the arts, providing a safer and acoustically appropriate environment for all activities that take place on the Whitman stage, and Burning Tree's 4th and 5th graders use the Whitman stage for instrumental performances and fifth grade farewell. A motion was approved to donate \$1000 towards acquisition of the shells.

Treasurer's Report: Lisa Norwalk reported that we are fine with cash balances. Each class will receive \$100 for rainy day activity equipment, such as games, cards, etc. Ms. Loftus was present and detailed how she would use Foundation funds and \$7,000 from PTA (funds allocated for gym enhancements end of last school year). She placed an order for audio/visual equipment in order to show instructional videos. Her biggest item on her wish list is a sports wall. Children hit balls at it, like in softball, or soccer, and it electronically keeps track of scores. In addition, a motion was approved to provide \$3000 to extend current climbing wall on back playground due to \$3000 savings from cost of digital TV studio.

Vice Presidents' Reports: Fundraising: Cindy Campbell thanked Ellie Abramowitz for helping raise money for Sally Foster by selling cookie dough. So far, sales through Sally Foster have helped raise \$6,392.20. Bingo night successfully raised over \$2,800 and the Dine-Out Fix-n-Feast raised \$530 in two hours. A second Fix-n-Feast will take place some time in March. Heidi Grunwald reported that the Book Fair at Barnes and Nobles went well. Many people were seen buying books, yet the money raised was less than usual. It is possible that at check out, not all sales were attributed to the event. Heidi asked that all people who bought books at the book fair

please look at their receipts and see if it says "Book Fair" at the top. If not, she will collect receipts and bring them to Barnes and Nobles so that Burning Tree can be compensated. Volunteers: Brenda Conroy thanked Liza Fues and Dale Sorcher for working so hard on the school directory. Next year, a new team will be needed. There are now revised guidelines for parent volunteers helping on the playground. Community Based programs: Vicki Herson was not present, but her information was presented. The clothing drive for Broad Acres is

taking place, as well as Adopt an Angel. Both programs were very successful in the past. Michele Greenberg and Katerina Papaioannou said that flyers will go out this Friday regarding the Science Fair, which will take place on Jan. 30. Lunch with a scientist will take place on Jan. 24.

No new business.

Respectfully submitted,

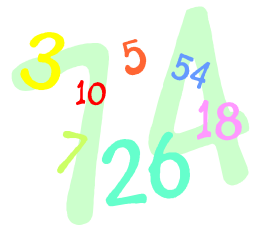
Michele Zweig Greenberg, Recording Secretary

Leap into Math at Burning Tree



The **Math Day Carnival** is back! It will take place at Burning Tree on Thursday, February 28, 2008. Math Day is an all day carnival held in the All Purpose Room. There are 14 booths designed to challenge, explore and entertain all ages through various math games. This year's Math Day is a celebration of math and the Leap Year. We need many volunteers to make Math Day a success. Please check your calendars, and come on out and help us!! Here is what you can do: You

can volunteer for one or more time slots helping out in a booth, and/or you can volunteer during lunch hour to supervise the children in their classrooms. Please check the *Friday Update* for a schedule of classroom visits to Math Day so you will know when your child will visit the Math Day Carnival. Please contact Amy Lenkin 301-365-4123 amylenkin@millerandlong.com, Nic Ryba 301-229-6637 nicryba@hotmail.com , or Sheryl Isaacs 301-365-2721 bobsherylisaacs@aol.com with questions and to sign up to help make Math Day a success. Or, please fill out the form below and return to school in an envelope marked Math Day to request your time slot.



Yes, sign me up to volunteer on Math Day!

Name: _____

Home Phone: _____

E-mail address: _____

Child's teacher and grade: _____

Please let us count on you to make Math Day a success!!