



Burning Issues

President's Message

The other day I had the good fortune to serve as a Science Fair Official. This involved making comments, asking questions, and listening to 1st

through 5th graders one-on-one as they described their Science Fair projects. This is my 5th year doing this, and I keep on coming back because it's such a rewarding experience. You can't help but marvel at these amazing Burning Tree students and the variety of projects they presented. This year there were projects about global warming, gravity, mold, tornadoes, cookies, antibiotics, and even one on remote controls! The students had their own unique way of approaching their projects and making their presentations, and it was evident that participating in the Science Fair had been a rewarding experience for them as well.

Volunteering as a Science Fair Official is just one way in which you can see first-hand how diverse, engaging, intelligent, funny and wonderful our Burning Tree students are. Volunteer inside the classroom, on the playground, or for another upcoming event, and you will be enthralled with the students at Burning Tree as well. It's likely that you'll keep on coming back as I do.

The Science Fair is one of the many valuable programs we have here at Burning Tree. How are we able to offer so many educational and rewarding programs? Read on...

Over the next several weeks, you will be hearing a lot about "Reach For The Stars," Burning Tree's largest fundraiser of the year which will be held on March 24th. This event raises nearly half of our entire PTA budget for the year! Now is the time to make donations to the auction, place ads in the auction catalogue, donate a bottle of wine or two for the wine collection, and/or donate your time to help put this event on. Our PTA dollars pay for such things as teacher and staff development, items for the classrooms, playground equipment, books for the media center, computers, and even plants and mulch for the gardens outside of the school. These dollars also fund many important Burning Tree programs such as International Night, the Cultural Arts programs, the Arts Festival and the above-mentioned Science Fair!

So get involved, and let's make this year's Adult Fundraiser one of the best ever!

Stay warm, stay active, and I look forward to seeing you soon.

Olivia Lai, PTA Co-President

Principal's Lunch – Downtown

Even if you work in downtown Washington, DC, you can still be a part of an annual Burning Tree tradition. Please join me next week for the Principal's Downtown Brown Bag Lunch from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Thursday, February 15, at the law offices of **Hogan and Hartson**, 555 Thirteenth Street, NW, Washington, DC 20004. The topic is "**From NLCB to Burning Tree: All Your Questions Answered.**" Please

call the school office at 301-320-6510 to RSVP. Bring a brown bag lunch. Beverages and dessert will be provided. Thanks to Cristina Arumi for arranging this central location for this informal and informative lunchtime discussion.



Reach for the Stars at this year's Auction Fundraiser!

Our "Reach for the Stars" Auction Fundraiser is Saturday, March 24. Walk down the red carpet into the Anastasi Ballroom at the BCC Rescue Squad and walk into a very fun night of live music, margaritas, heavy hors d'oeuvres, free parking and great deals on great auction items!

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Reach for the Stars *(continued from p.1)*

The event is truly a Burning Tree "Family Affair". The food will be catered by "The Barking Dog," which is owned by **John McManus**, Burning Tree parent, and **David Abromowitz's** band, another Burning Tree parent, will be entertaining us with his live band. It's sure to be a very fun night!

We have great auction items! How about winning an opportunity for your child to be "weather-person for a day" on **WTTG's Morning News**? Or, you could win a tour for your children at the **Kids Post**, the Washington Post's Kids Page. You also don't want to miss the teacher offerings – unforgettable outings for your kids with their wonderful teachers!



Some reminders:

- Don't forget to email your auction item to Laura Weiss, lauradweiss@msn.com, so your name and your item can get in the auction catalogue!
- Want to send your child or a teacher the most special message? Put it in the auction catalogue! We're selling "stars" for your messages. \$7 for a small star and \$10 for a large one. See the flyer attached to the Burning Issues for more information.
- We are reaching to make this a great event to benefit our very own stars – all of the Burning Tree students and the staff who make Burning Tree such a great place to go to school!

Tickets will be \$35.00 each – a cost that covers our food and drink cost. We know we will see you there! Thank you, the auction co-chairs, Kristen Farren, Tracey Fitzsimmons, Santi Karamchetty and Lisa Sanfuentes.

Parent Education Opportunities

Is Your Child Twice-Exceptional?

Are you puzzled by your child's school struggles? Does your child seem obviously bright, but unable to achieve academic success? Maybe she is light years ahead in math, but reading below grade level? Or perhaps he can bombard you with information about the Civil War, DNA cloning, lasers, or ancient civilizations, but when asked to write about the same topic, he may produce little or nothing? Outside of class, your child may be a creative problem solver and analytical thinker who can stick to a task that interests him for hours. In school, frustrated by his inability to

demonstrate academic achievement, he may shut down, melt down, or seem inattentive, bored or uncooperative.

One possibility is that your student might be both gifted and talented AND learning disabled (GT/LD). Students who are GT/LD have repeatedly reported school as being a difficult and frustrating experience. It can be puzzling for parents because the child's gifts often mask the disabilities-for years a GT/LD student sometimes can cope with work by sheer brain power. On the flip side, when the disability masks the gifts, teachers may only see your child's inability to read or memorize math facts and never become aware of the student's superior intelligence.

MCPS is a recognized leader in the field of GT/LD education and offers support and special programs for bright students with learning disabilities. If you suspect your child may be GT/LD, please visit the MCPS website for more information <http://www.mcps.k12.md.us/curriculum/enriched/gtld/>. At that site, you can access *Twice Exceptional Students: A Guidebook for Supporting the Achievement of Gifted Students with Special Needs*, which contains a wealth of information about the identification of GT/LD students and how to teach them. If you need further assistance, please contact the GT/LD Specialist, Marisa Stemple 301-309-6272 or marisa_r_stemple@mcpsmd.org. (*The GT/LD Network has provided this information.*)

Science Fair – Thank You

The 2007 Science Fair was a smashing success!

We had 203 students participating with 158 projects, 20 kindergarteners (20 projects), 31 first graders (25 projects), 42 second graders (34 projects), 35 third graders (27 projects), 42 fourth graders (29 projects) and 33 fifth graders (23 projects).

First and foremost, our thanks and congratulations go to the students for making such high quality projects this year. Their presentations were superb and their interaction with the visiting scientists was outstanding. For this success, we thank our principal, assistant principal and teachers for encouraging the students to participate, promoting this event and helping them with ideas and ways to make a science fair project. Many thanks are due to Mr. Paul Hazan and his colleagues from the Washington Academy of Sciences, who, with their enthusiasm and expertise magnified the event and encouraged our students to pursue further their scientific interests. (*Continued on page 3.*)

Health Corner

Did you know ...



..No bones about it . . . vitamin D is the vitamin you need for strong bones! It's also great for forming strong teeth. Vitamin D even lends a hand to an important mineral - it helps your body absorb the amount of calcium it needs. Which foods are rich in vitamin D?

- Milk and other dairy products fortified with vitamin D,
- Fish, and
- Egg yolks.

Science Fair –Thank You *(continued from p.2)*

Also, our thanks to all parent volunteers for their tireless work in setting up, commenting on the projects and helping with lunch coverage. Special thanks are due to Hazel Bradford, Marna Deleon, Karen Espana, Betsy Falloon, Julie Goodman, Michele Greenberg, Aparna Gude, Mustafa Haque, Barbara Hartz, Santi Karamchetty, Nancy Khaghani, Adel Keleti, David Korn, Neeta Kumar, Pi-Yu Kuo, Olivia Lai, Cheryl Liu, Mildred Lucia, Karyn Miele, Fatma Nayir, Deborah Paxson, Lyn Penniman, Mark Rasch, Cynthia Rosenberg, Dorene Rosenthal, Anne Ruskowski, Nic Ryba, Lisa Sanfuentes, Jildyz Saudabayeva, Dale Sorcher, Georgina Val Mas, Karen Van Loon, Shawnta Walcott, Wendy Weinberg, Laura Weiss, Berta Wengle, Reno Wright, Robin Wright and Yoshie Yeh.

Finally, our thanks to all of you, the parents, who embraced and supported the 2007 Science Fair and helped to make it such a great event!

We truly hope we remembered everyone. Sincerely,

Katerina Papaioannou & Lisa Anthony

Lunch With A Scientist- Thank You

The 2007 “Lunch with a Scientist” was a huge success. More than 400 students had lunch in their classes while listening to our guest scientists' presentations and asking them probing questions. We would like to express our gratitude to all our guest scientists who came to our school and made this event so special and memorable for our students!

Our guest scientists included Hannah Bradford (Acupuncture, Herbal Medicine and Homeopathy), Clara Brando (Immunologist, Infectious Diseases), Alan Greenberg (Epidemiologist), Michele Greenberg (Epidemiologist), Lisa Kammerman (Biostatistician),

Matt Katus (Medical Doctor, Brain Pathology and Microbiology), Anu Mehrotra (Pathology), Susan Norton (Ecologist), Jeanne Pettenati (Author, Astronomy researcher), Jamie Pierce (Chemical Engineer), Young Tsau (Biomedicine), Dimitris Vassiliades (Astrophysicist), Jon Vogel (Molecular Biologist) and Wendy Weinberg (Cancer research, Drug regulation).

We would also want to thank our principal, assistant principal and teachers for promoting this event and encouraging students to participate. Finally, our thanks to Dorene Rosenthal and Yoshie Yeh for their help and all parent volunteers who helped with lunch coverage.

Katerina Papaioannou & Cynthia Rosenberg

Calendar of Upcoming Events



Wednesday, February 14 – Valentine’s Day

Classroom Parties 2pm

Thursday, February 15 – Principal’s Lunch

Downtown, Brown Bag Lunch 12:00 – 1:00pm

Monday, February 19th – No School

President’s Day

Friday, February 23 - PTA Exec Board 9:30am

Tuesday, February 27 – Early Release 12:55pm

Thursday, March 1 – Martha’s Table

1,000 Sandwiches Day

Tuesday, March 6 – PTA Meeting 9:30am

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

Principal:	
Dr. Helen Chaset	301-320-6510
Assistant Principal:	
Aaron Tark	301-320-6510
PTA Co-Presidents:	
Dorene Rosenthal	301-229-4940
Olivia Lai	301-365-0417
Newsletter Editor:	
Joe Busch	301-767-9786

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, March 2.**

Under Construction – Gym Update



Building continues at a rapid pace. The Burning Tree Foundation met in January and elected a new board and they will kick off a “Buy a Brick” fundraiser to pay for unfunded gym enhancements. Look for a letter with all the details to arrive in your mailbox soon.

Burning Tree PTA Meeting Minutes

December 5, 2006 at 7:00 p.m.

The meeting was called to order by President Dorene Rosenthal. The October 3, 2006 Minutes were approved.

President’s Report: Dorene Rosenthal reported on the Cluster Meeting she attended yesterday. There is a letter being circulated about the calendar for next year. The Cluster Representative would like to send this letter to the Members of the Board of Education. A Motion was made to support the letter. The Motion passed, and we will support the letter. People can sign up for the Grading and Reporting Chat Room web site. There was a fire last night, and some Farmland Elementary School families were affected. They could use donations. The PTA supplies are in the downstairs closet. We need to find some place to store the show boards for the Science Fair. Middle School Reform comments can be submitted until December 7, 2006. The Middle School Report is online.

Principal’s Report: The gymnasium is in progress. Mrs. Granof is taking one slide a week detailing the construction history. Henley Construction is doing a speedy and well-organized job. They have agreed to work with the first graders on a construction project. The staff is going to do a lot of training this year. The training will be on inclusion, differentiation, writing, character, and technology. They are getting a lot of training here at the school and out. Many on the staff are getting married and having babies. Ms. Israel will be leaving after winter break. Students took a climate survey a week ago. This was an online survey for students in grades 2 through 5. Kindergarten and 1st graders took it by pencil. The staff looked at the results yesterday. The SGA will work with the results from the survey. Montgomery County’s survey is normally for grades 3 through 5. The Professional

Learning Community Institute is continuing to meet. It was decided that the Science Fair could be refined. Some staff members met with the Science Fair organizers to discuss the Science Fair. She thanked everyone for a lovely Book Fair.

Staff Report: Mrs. Granof thanked the volunteers for the Book Fair and all of the books that were donated. The Science Fair was discussed. Mrs. Papaioannou and Mrs. Anthony will be organizing the Science Fair, which is January 31st. January 25th will be the lunch with the scientist. Mrs. Granof offered to help make the Science Fair more student oriented. Classes are doing more science. They have come up with a plan to have the teachers follow up with the children about their Science Fair projects. They will discuss various ideas for the Science Fair with the students. The staff can be more involved by helping children to ask questions and emphasize the importance of the process with the children. Children should keep records of what they are doing.

Vice Presidents’ Reports: Fundraising: Laura Weiss reported that \$420 was made at Dine Out Night. There is another Dine Out Night in January at Parkers. Sally Foster will come in at Budget (\$7500). She thanked the Book Fair organizers for the Book Fair, which has done very well. Major planning meeting is tomorrow night for the Adult Fundraiser. She is looking for a couple of volunteers to help organize art projects for the Kindergarten and First Grades. Volunteers: Brenda Conroy reported that we are struggling for volunteers. She thanked the Gardening Team for their work. She thanked the Staff Appreciation organizers for the luncheon. She thanked Jay Kaufman for the directory. Wynne Sitrin reported that all of the Adopt-An-Angel children have been assigned to a family.

MCCPTA Report: Lisa Davenport reported on the Resolution Regarding Improving Security Conditions at Local Schools. There was a Motion to have Lisa vote in favor of this Resolution. The Motion was approved. Lisa also handed out the MCCPTA FY 2008 Operating Budget Compact.

Treasurer’s Report: Dorene reported for Michael Chelst that the Budget is on target. All fundraisers have been doing well. We made Book Fair target as of Sunday afternoon.

No new business. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted, Amy Lenkin, Recording Secretary

