

Burning Issues

President's Message

I was surprised and saddened to hear that this will be Dr. Chaset's last year as principal of

Burning Tree. This is my 7th year at the school, and Dr. Chaset has been at the helm throughout all of my years here. She has always made herself available to the parent community to address our concerns, large or small, and has truly been a partner to the PTA. She has embraced the diversity at our school, led Burning Tree's goals of differentiation and inclusion, been an advocate for Burning Tree on many levels, encouraged staff to use creativity in their teaching, and fostered a genuine partnership among staff and the Burning Tree parent community.

Of course, this is really just the tip of the iceberg of all that Dr. Chaset has accomplished and given of herself throughout her eight years at Burning Tree. She will certainly be missed, but her guidance over the years will enable the staff and parent community to move Burning Tree forward so that it remains such a unique and special place.

We would like to coordinate a proper "send-off" at the end of the school year for Dr. Chaset. Please let Lisa Sanfuentes or I know if you would like to participate in the planning of this event.

The search is now on for a new principal. This week Lisa Sanfuentes and I met with Dr. Frank Stetson, our community superintendent, to discuss the hiring process for Burning Tree's new principal. Dr. Stetson will be conducting a parent meeting on Thursday, April 3rd, at 7pm in the Media Center. This meeting is open to all Burning Tree parents and will offer you the opportunity to specify the qualities you are seeking in our next principal as well as the opportunity to get any questions answered. We encourage you to attend so that you can be a part of this hiring process. Please contact Lisa or myself if you have any questions or concerns, and we look forward to seeing you on April 3rd!

**BTES Education Foundation's
 Second Bricks Campaign is underway.
 Deadline May 1st. see page 5.**

Dine Outs

Make dough rise! Join us at our last Dine Out of the year at Ledo's Pizzeria on River Road on April 14th and 15th. Thanks Nancy Sandler for organizing these!

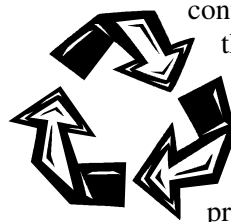
Plant Sale

Help us grow some green! Buy all of your spring and summer flowers and vegetables at our annual **Plant Sale on April 26th**. We use the same grower as many local nursery so the plants are top quality! Thanks Lisa Baker and Mary Kunst for running this again!



Trash-Free Lunch Day

Trash-Free Lunch is on Tuesday, **March 18**. This is being sponsored by Burning Tree's Green Team. The class that has the least amount of trash at lunch on that date will win a prize. We encourage students to bring their lunches in a reusable lunch box and to avoid plastic, paper, plastic utensils, and non-reusable drink containers as much as possible. Reusable



containers, recyclable bottles and cans, thermos containers, and aluminum foil are all acceptable. We hope all the students will help Burning Tree be trash free on March 18 and help their class win a great prize. And we also want to remind

everyone that they should try to bring trash-free lunches every day -- not just on March 18! We recommend you discuss this with your entire family and see how the parents can participate at home and in their offices!

Inside This Issue:

1,000 Sandwich Day Update.....	4
Burning Tree Educational Foundation	5
Calendar	5
FUNdraising Updates.....	2
Jump Rope for Heart	3
Plant Sale	1
President's Message	1
Math Day Thanks.....	4
Trash-Free Lunch Day	1

FUNdraising Updates:

March:

A Taste of Italy, Adult Fundraiser

Bravo and Grazie mille! We couldn't be happier with the success of the Adult Fundraiser, A Taste of Italy, held two weeks ago. In one fun-filled, community-building evening, we raised nearly 50% of the PTA's budget! Although the numbers are not final yet, we know we raised more than the \$23,000 budgeted! More detailed numbers will be provided in the April Burning Issues. Thanks to more than 200 parents, teachers, staff and friends of BTES who came out that night to support our school.

There were so many families and local/national businesses that supported Burning Tree by donating a silent auction item, a bottle or two (or three!) of wine, or making a cash donation. Without this support, there would not be an auction. Thank you SO, SO much for this support.

There are many parents I would like to thank for helping to make this evening a smashing success. I want to begin with a heartfelt and huge thank you to my amazing co-chairs, Erin Deric, Surya Shah and Michael Chelst. We spent many hours working together on this event; it was a personal pleasure for me to organize this fundraiser with such dedicated, hardworking and professional people. I am so impressed that both Erin and Surya are new to the school- as moms of Kindergarteners. They stepped in and took on the huge task of helping to organize this Fundraiser. And thank you to Michael, who stepped in early last summer and agreed to co-chair this event, even though at the time there was no one else who had agreed to help! He also came up with the fabulous idea to have Maggiano's as the venue sight and moved quickly to book it.

Along with my co-chairs, we would like to extend an enormous thank you to both Joe Busch and Laura Weiss for all of their help and hard work. Joe did an amazing job writing and producing our first ever on-line Program book (I'm sure he'll miss the 30 emails a day from us!) plus the bid sheets and congratulation's certificates. Laura provided endless advice, single-handedly took over 2nd and 5th grade class art, and literally saved us by handling all aspects of the closing process.

Grazie mille to the following people also for overseeing other areas of the auction--thanks to Teresa Halabi and Sara Lacombe for co-chairing the wine donations and to Jon Garcia for writing the

wonderful descriptions' for the program book; to Marci Ruderman on her outstanding job finding and coordination the volunteers the day and night of the event; to the following parents for creating and executing such beautiful "works of art" with our children Kindergarten :Farish Perlman, Karen Johnson, Karen Feuerstein, Lisa Ginns, 1st grade: Santi Karamchetty, Anne Tucker, Mary Zambri, 2nd grade: Laura Weiss, 3rd grade: Cindy Campbell, Illissa Flamm, Amy Lenkin, Teresa Halabi, 4th grade Farish Perlman,

Sharon Curry, Heidi Grunwald, Karyn Miele, Susan Galego and 5th grade Laura Weiss; to Ira Feldman for getting our dynamite auctioneer – Camilla Carr; to Laurie Mackey, Nancy Samit and Ira Feldman for getting additional auction items, to all of the parents who volunteered with set-up the day of and at the actual event – we couldn't have run the event without you!; to Dave Abramowitz for emceeding and providing great music with his band Down with the Man; to Karen van Loon for handling all aspect of Web Assistance and finally, to Farish Perlman and our Co-PTA Presidents Olivia Lai and Lisa Sanfuentes for jumping in and helping whenever we needed it!

Last, but certainly not least, thank you to our wonderful teachers, staff and Dr. Chaset and Mr. Tark for their support. It was a very special night!

Original Works

If you haven't already sent in your order form for Original Works (they were due today 3/14) please make sure to send it to school on Monday! This is a great way to preserve your child's special art work an item such as a mug, magnets, note cards, or hand towels. I love every morning having a cup of coffee in a mug with one of my child's artwork from throughout the years! Thanks to Britta Battaile and Marianne Katinas for organizing this popular annual art fundraiser again! Please contact them if you have questions at Brittabatt@msn.com or boysnlabs@comcast.net

April:

See Dine-Out & Plant Sale items on page 1.

May:

Spring Fair

Mark your calendars- if you haven't already- for Saturday, May 17th from 12:00-4:00 for our annual, beloved, Spring Fair. If you've never been to BTES' Spring Fair, it's a fun-filled family day full of

carnival games, moon bounces, prizes, great food and a giant slip and slide! Thanks to Ellie Abramowitz and Kristen Farren working to make this day a great success. To help with this fun event, contact Ellie at 301-365-0543 or Kristen at 301-229-2472.

Ongoing Fundraisers

It's not too late to support Burning Tree with our easy "Ongoing fundraisers". Take a second to register your credit card or shoppers' card at one or more of these businesses. It will cost you nothing and could raise thousands of dollars for BTES if every family would participate! Please call me or Amy Lenkin if you have additional questions or concerns about any of these programs:

www.Schoolpop.com (for on-line shopping);
www.giantfood.com/aplus (for Giant, BTES's code is #666), www.escrip.com (for Safeway, BTES #6480304), and www.target.com (for Target stores).

Thanks for all your fundraising support!

Cindy Campbell, VP for Fundraising

Thanks for Your Help at *A Taste of Italy!*

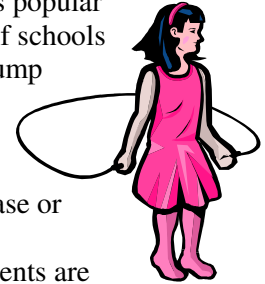
Thank you so much to the parent volunteers that helped with various jobs--and some double shifts--the night of BT's adult fundraiser. It couldn't have been done without you. You willingly gave up a little of your night to help ensure this event was a huge success for Burning Tree.

Lisa and Antoine Sanfuentes, Tim Hannegan, Melinda Gray, Ellie Abramowitz, Farish Perlman, Tanya and Scott Kreter, Yvonne and Kevin Van Lowe, Robin Owens-Wright, Reno Wright, Mary Kemper, Olivia Lai, Kathy Chelst, Sharon and David Tompkins, Laura Weiss, Patti Klepp, Jildyz Saudabayeva, Nancy Samit, Laurie and Steve Mackey, Katerina Papaioannou, Debby Rubin, Liza Fues, Karen and Bobby Sepucha, Dale and Alan Sorcher, Jennifer and Rich Katz, Karen and Adam Feuerstein, Ilissa Flamm and Tucker Bernard, Vicky and Michael Herson, Ruth McDonald, Elisa and John Bragale Pam Gibbs, Celine McGowan, Britta Battaile, Mary Zambri, Brenda Conroy, Mary and Oliver Jacquotte, Jamie Pierce, Aaron Ruderman, Tracey Fitzsimmons, Gail Reizenstein, Kirsten Martin and Allison and Simon Ellis.

Grazie from Marci Ruderman and A Taste of Italy Co-Chairs, Cindy Campbell, Erin Deric, Surya Shah and Michael Chelst!

Jump

During the week of March 10, Burning Tree ES held its **Jump Rope for Heart (JRFH)** event during physical education classes. This popular event takes place in thousands of schools all over the country. Students jump rope and collect donations from their friends and family. Our efforts help other kids and adults who may have heart disease or stroke. By participating in this community service project, students are showing social responsibility as they help others.



Jump Rope for Heart is co-sponsored by the American Heart Association and the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance. It is a school fitness and education program. It teaches the value of cardiovascular fitness while raising money for research into heart disease and stroke. These diseases are our nation's No. 1 and No. 3 killers.

Ms. Loftus is setting a new challenge this year. She will dye her hair pink if 90% (or greater) of the BTES students participate with a donation of \$1.00 or more. Dr. Chaset promises to dye her hair red if we reach the 95% participation level!

Donation money due date is April 1st. I think we can have 100% student participation. Think Pink! Think Red!

Please ask your child about the JRFH collection envelope and help them collect their donations. Your family might be interested in using the on-line site at www.americanheart.org/jump.

If possible, please convert any paper/coin money to check and place in the collection envelope. If the envelope is lost, any clearly labeled envelope is fine. Thank you for your support.

Volunteers' Corner

Special thanks to all the parent volunteers who contributed so much to our school community over the past weeks. February and March have been exceedingly busy months for our volunteers. In addition to the **Adult Fundraiser**, the **Science Fair**, **Math Day** and **2nd Grade Concerts**, parents have been busy throughout the school.

Thank you to all the room parents for coordinating such fun **Valentines' Day** parties for every class. Thank you to all the parents who helped make the day such a success for the children.

Thank you to Kathy Chelst and Beth Martino, as well as their team of helpers, for **February’s Staff Appreciation Lunch**.

Thank you to Nic Ryba, Olivia Lai and Vicki Herson for staffing the Health Room when Mrs. Bouhafa was attending training.

Thank you to the volunteers who help in the Media Center, Lunch Room and playground every month in addition to supporting annual school events.

And last, but never least, special thanks to the Landscape and Grounds Committee members who have endured snow, ice, wind and rain to keep the grounds safe and attractive throughout winter and who are now working hard to prepare for Spring.

Finally, the PTA strives to ensure that we get the very best return on the investment of time and energy our volunteers contribute to the school. To this end, the Executive Board has decided to conduct a review of the roles and responsibilities of our wonderful network of Room Parents. We want to ensure that being a room parent is rewarding and not over demanding, and that all parents have an opportunity to participate in the classroom.

If you would like to contribute to this process, please let me know. Comments, criticisms and ideas are welcome from everyone – not just current room parents. You may email or telephone me or, if you would prefer to comment anonymously, you may leave a letter for me in the PTA basket in the school lobby.

I plan to hold an open meeting in April to discuss all the feedback we receive. From this meeting we will forward recommendations to the Executive Board and the PTA community. I hope you will consider participating in this process.

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

Math Day

We would like to thank everyone for helping to make Math Day such a success. Everyone had fun, and Burning Tree raised over **\$540.00 for Pennies for Patients!** Math Day would not be possible without the amazing booth heads who planned and created fabulous booths for the children. This year’s booths were terrific, and a special thanks goes to the following booth heads: Ruth McDonald, Kristen Martin, Jo Chang, Heidi Grunwald, Katerina Papaioannou, Ellie Abramowitz, Jim Pastoriza, Jan Shelburne, Barbara Notley, Dale Sorcher, Linda

Blumberg, Ted Torrey, and Agnes de Gonneville. In addition we thank Dr. Chaset, Mr. Tark, and the Burning Tree staff for their assistance, Wynne Sitrin for coordinating the Math Day volunteers, and Dorene Rosenthal for all of her help and advice. Other special thanks go to Judy Shapiro for the great job of coordinating the wonderful fifth grade volunteers, and to the fifth graders themselves for working at the booths on Math Day. Last, but definitely not least, thanks to the following volunteers for their time and support: Sharon Curry, Cindy Boinis, Karen Feuerstein, Patti Klepp, Rosemary Mitchell, Elissa Ginsky, Melinda Gray, Joan Ishimoto, Marna Deleon, Betsy Hudis, Sheryl Steinberg, Cindy Campbell, Christine Brake, Jodie Rasch, Nancy Samit, Kelly Levy, Kristen Farren, Aisha Haque, Jennifer Katz, Mary Zambri, Nikki de Castro, Cathy Houston, Lisa Ginns, Santi Karamchetty, Olivia Lai, Tracey Fitzsimmons, Kathy Sklar, Marci Ruderman, Berta Wengle, Lisa Norwalk, Georgina Val Mas, Merilu Enciso, Young Tsau, Utae Mivra, Michelle Halloway, Surya Shah, Jill Hazan, Brenda Conroy, Debby Rubin, Andrea Tedesco, Kristin Cooke, Kim Nordheimer, John Lee, Gail Haven, Julie Garcia, Courtney Nowell, Nina Fisher, Nora Meijia, Anne Ruskowski, Analia Stadthagen, Jeanne Pettanati, Bud Doran, Sophie Rixe, and Allison Ellis. If we’ve left anyone out, please know it was not intentional.

Sheryl Isaacs, Nic Ryba, Amy Lenkin

1,000 Sandwiches

Make that 1,500! During the school day Thursday, every Burning Tree Student participated in “1,000 Sandwich Day” to benefit Martha’s Table, a non-profit group providing daily meals to over 1,300 hungry and homeless people living in our area. Students donated the meat and cheese for the sandwiches and spent part of their lunch break assembling the sandwiches. The students prepared over 1,500 sandwiches! Thanks to all the parent volunteers who made this annual event a huge success. A special note of thanks goes to our co-chairs Cathy Houston and Britta Battaile for organizing this important activity as well as Ruth McDonald, who will be a co-chair next year, and to Dave Ihrrie, who graciously delivered all the sandwiches to Martha's Table.



Burning Tree Foundation

The BTES Educational Foundation has started a campaign to raise funds for upgrading technology at Burning Tree. The foundation, working with the BTES Faculty and PTA, will focus their fundraising activities to support technology improvements at BT, along with grant opportunities for teachers to hone their technology skills. The mission of the foundation is to be a complementary partner with the PTA working together to address the needs of the BT Faculty and Community.

Also, the Foundation's second brick campaign will finish up on May 1st. The second walkway will be installed this summer. Engraved bricks are a great way to leave your mark, say thanks to a teacher, or leave an inspiring message for future students. Each brick can be with engraved with up to three lines; each line can consist of up to 17 characters (Each space and punctuation mark count as one space). Bricks cost \$75, checks should be made out to BESEF. The proceeds from the brick campaign support the purchase of health and fitness items to be used in the new gym. If you wish to purchase a brick, flyers are available in the PTA box, or you can access the flyer on the PTA website.

To learn more about the foundation, please contact Joe Busch at jbusch@urban.org or by phone at 301-767-9786. The foundation meets on the first Monday of the month and all are welcome to attend.

BTES ROCKS!
We ♥ the Frogs!

2,4,6,8
We really
Appreciate BTE!

Thanks for making
Every Child's
Dreams Possible!

Just another
Brick in the Walk

Calendar of Upcoming Events



- Tuesday, March 18**
Trash Free Lunch Day
- Friday, March 21 -28– No School**
Spring Break
- Thursday, April 3**
Martha's Table Sandwiches
- Friday, April 4**
Third Marking Period Ends
- Monday, April 7 – No School**
Professional Day
- Monday, April 14 & 15 – Dine Out**
Ledo's Pizzeria on River Road (2 nights!)
- Saturday, April 26**
Plant Sale
- Saturday, May 17**
Spring Fair!

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, April 4.**

