



Burning Issues

President's Message

ROAR! It is said that March comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb. Not so at Burning

Tree where things are roaring all month long. We opened the month with our annual *1,000 Sandwiches Day*. The smells of cheese, luncheon meats and bread filled the halls as our students donned gloves and made lunch for those less fortunate than ourselves. We have a *Dine Out at Armand's Pizza* on March 13th. This tends to be a very fun family and community evening. Come *Reach for the Stars* with us at our largest fundraiser of the year on March 24. Invitations for the auction went home in your child's backpack last week. You can pick up an extra at school if yours got lost along the way.

March is also a very busy month for planning for the 2007-2008 school year. If you have children in or entering Pyle or Whitman you have already been asked to select courses for next year. Our PTA must make important choices this month as well. This month we will begin our budget process. We will evaluate this year's programs; think about what went well, what should be continued next year, if there are events or programs that should be given a rest next year, and what new events or programs we should budget for. Who are **WE**? **We** are the entire Burning Tree PTA we need to hear your thoughts and ideas about programs. Tell us what you think. Tell us if you have an idea for something new that we should try next year. Tell us if there is some piece of equipment or program that you think we should fund for the school. The Executive Board wants to and needs to hear from you.

March is also the time that we start looking for the PTA leadership for next year. We are forming a Nominating Committee to consider candidates for next year's executive board (see article later in this *Burning Issues* for details). Not ready to take on a role on the executive board? It is not too early to start thinking about what committees or events you would like to chair or work on next year. Think about what programs were your favorites or your child's favorites throughout the year and help work on them next year to make them even better.

I look forward to seeing everyone at the Adult Fundraising. Please call or email me if you have any questions about opportunities to be involved.

Dorene Rosenthal, PTA Co-President

Teacher Appreciation Luncheon

Thank you to all those people who took time out from their busy schedule to volunteer for the Teacher Appreciation Luncheon, and to all the families who donated strawberries. The BT staff enjoyed the delicious Valentine's Day theme lunch catered by Armand's. Thank you again for making this event such a success!

Kathy Chelst & Julie Goodman, Staff Appreciation Chairs

School-based Programs

Incredibly, we are already looking forward to the spring and on towards the end of the school year. Those of you who own a BT calendar may be wondering about the Spring Fling. This event will be held instead of the Spring Fair this year due to the space issues caused by the gym construction. Rest assured that the Spring Fair will return next year but one look at the back of the school will clarify the position for this year! In an attempt to not cause disappointment for the children, the committee has decided to set aside a considerable sum of money to do something completely different for the BT community. One of the suggestions has been an outdoor movie on that date (Saturday May 5th).

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School-Based Programs *(cont'd. from p.1)*

This is not a confirmed event however, and we are open to other ideas. Anyone interested in either heading up or helping out at this fun day please contact me. This is your opportunity to spend the money that you so generously donate to the PTA.

The end of May heralds the spectacular display of our children's artistic talents. The weeks leading up to the BT Art Festival on May 30th will require a slew of volunteers to mount and hang the children's art pieces. Children wishing to take part in the musical presentation should be planning their performances.

Dine Out With Burning Tree At Armand's Tuesday Night Or Any Night Next Week!

Join other Burning Tree families for our Pizza Night at Armand's on Tuesday, March 13th between 5 and 9pm! Order from the menu or grab the all-you-can-eat dinner buffet featuring pizza, pasta, salad and soup!

Can't make it Tuesday night? Simply bring the attached flyer to Armand's any evening during the week of March 13th - 20th and 20% of your dinner check will still be donated to the Burning Tree PTA! See flyer for directions and details on this fun event.

Volunteers' Corner

Thank you to all the wonderful parents who have helped during recess over the winter months. With the construction dividing the playground and creating two spaces to monitor, your presence has been invaluable in helping keep the children safe.

Now that the warmer weather seems to have reached us, can we tempt other parents to volunteer? We still have many days without the extra eyes that parents provide.

Please, take advantage of these precious years when the children actually love seeing us at school, and get in touch with the Recess Volunteer Coordinator, Lisa Davenport, at (301)263-0932 or lhnorwalk@gmail.com.

If you're not an outdoors person, there are still plenty of opportunities inside. If you can help in the



classroom, please contact one of the Room Parent Coordinators: for Kindergarten to Grade 2, Kristen Farren (301)229-2472 or farrens5@comcast.net; and for Grades 3 through 5, Shyami Desilva (301)320-7876 or sdesilva@usaid.gov. They will put you in touch with your child's Room Parent so you can work out a time and task that best suits your schedule and interests.

Thanks to Kathy Chelst, Julie Goodman and all their helpers for another successful Staff Appreciation lunch in February. The next, and final lunch for the school year, will be held on 26 April. If you'd like to be a part of it, please contact Julie at ggood1992@aol.com.

Also coming up in April is the **Spring Plant Sale** and **BTES clean up** day. Make sure you mark Saturday April 28th on your calendars. For information, contact our wonderful Gardening Committee coordinators Lisa Baker - bakewoman@aol.com or Lisa Davenport - lhnorwalk@gmail.com.

Brenda Conroy, VP Volunteers

Community-Based Programs

Our annual "1,000 Sandwiches Day" was a huge success thanks to the efforts of Britta Battaile and Cathy Houston. Our students made at least two sandwiches each and collectively made about 1,200 sandwiches that were donated to Martha's Table. Thanks to the following parents who came to help that day: Kathy Peterson, Lauren Hodas Cernea, Nikki Decastro, Julie Goodman, Melinda Gray, Gail Haven, Sheryl Isaacs, Cynthia Rosenberg, Barbara Kirschten, Amy Lenkin, Yoshie Yeh, Lisa Orange, Soody Schneider, Kathy Sklar, Allison Ellis and Laurie Thomas. We also owe a big thank you to the Posin/Borkowski family for donating gloves for the kids to wear when preparing the sandwiches. The willingness of the cafeteria staff to let us use the refrigerator and equipment was greatly appreciated and the building services staff was helpful and supportive in saving boxes to load up the sandwiches, and setting up the tables and trash cans. Once again, our school worked together to contribute to our greater community.

Look for more information in future *Friday Updates* on additional Community Based Programs this Spring including a "Cooking for the Homeless" event and another "Burning Tree Elementary School Clean Up" day on April 28.

Wynne Sitrin, VP for Community-Based Programs

Health Corner

Did you know ...



.. It's important for kids to have breakfast every day, but what they eat in the morning is crucial too. Choosing breakfast foods that are rich in whole grains, fiber, and protein while low in added sugar may boost kids' attention span, concentration, and memory — which

they need to learn in school.

Research also has shown that kids who eat breakfast get fiber, calcium, and other important nutrients. They also tend to keep their weight under control, have lower blood cholesterol levels and fewer absences from school, and make fewer trips to the school nurse with stomach complaints related to hunger.

Nominating Committee for Next Year's Executive Board

It's not too early to begin thinking about next year. We are currently forming the Nominating Committee to review candidates for the 2007-2008 PTA Executive Board. The role of the nominating committee is to consider candidates for open positions and to make recommendations to the PTA for these positions. We want to get a representation from all grades to give us the greatest likelihood of considering the best possible candidates for position. If interested in serving on the Nominating Committee, or if you need more information, please contact Jay Kaufman at jfk@kaufmanhome.net.

We also need candidates for next year's executive board. We need a Corresponding Secretary, MCCPTA Representative, Treasurer, VP Fundraising, VP School-based Program and VP Community-based Programs. If you know someone who would be a good candidate for one of these positions please submit their names to Jay Kaufman at jfk@kaufmanhome.net. Self-nominating is also encouraged.

Please note the distinction between these two requests. The first is for the Nominating Committee to recommend candidates. The second is for candidates for the Executive Board. Please specify in your email to Jay your area of interest. Thank you.

Adult Fundraiser

Only two weeks remain until our biggest fundraiser of the year, the auction fundraiser to be held this year

in a private room at the BCC rescue Squad Anastasi Ballroom on Saturday, March 24th from 7-11pm. “**Reach for the Stars**” will feature heavy hors d'oeuvres and beer, wine and margaritas catered by BTES parent and **Barking Dog** restaurant owner, John McManus. Entertainment will be provided by BTES parent Dave Abramowitz and his live band and photographs will be taken by BTES parent Lisa Kammerman (smile for the camera—you may end up in *People* magazine!). The ballroom will literally be a star-studded event featuring over 500 stars brilliantly decorated by our very own BTES students (parents may claim their child(ren)'s stars at the conclusion of the event!).



Our silent auction will begin at 7pm and will feature our teacher donations (would your child like a play date with the second grade teachers or a trip to Build-A-Bear with Mrs. Whalen?). Come bid on a wine basket filled with wine donated by BTES families. And see and bid on the beautiful class art projects that each class has painstakingly crafted. Catalogs will be sent home the week before the auction; please take a look and see all of the fabulous items that you can bid on at the auction. If you cannot attend you can still place a bid; instructions will be included in the catalog.

Our evening will culminate with a live auction emceed by Fox News White House correspondent, James Rosen. He will lead the bidding on items such as “Principal for a Day” and “Assistant Principal for a Day”, a week long Massanutten vacation, Weatherboy or Girl for a Day on the Fox 5 morning news, a Behind the Scenes afternoon at a Washington Redskins practice and a Dinner for Eight at Dr. Chaset's house. At this time we will also draw the winner of our raffle for the 42 inch flat screen TV.



Hopefully you have received your **Reach for the Stars** invitation in your youngest students backpack (look for the yellow envelope); if not, you may use the RSVP sheet included with this Burning Issues. Tickets may be purchased at the door

but if at all possible RSVP's in advance do help us plan for the correct amount of food to provide. Thanks to Co-chairs Lisa Sanfuentes, Tracey Fitzsimmons, Kristen Farren and Santi Karamchetty who have been working very hard to make this a memorable, fun and successful

fundraising event! If you have any questions please feel free to contact any of the co-chairs or myself. Hope to see you there!

Plant Sale

It may be cold now but in a mere month or so it will be time to start planting your garden! Mary Kunst and Lisa Baker are chairing this year’s **Plant Sale**; delivery will take place on Saturday, April 28th. Look for order forms to come home in April!

Original Works

Once again this year you will have an opportunity to turn your child’s artwork into works of art! Place your child’s original artwork onto mugs, t-shirts, magnets, note cards and more. Britta Battaile and Marianne Katinas will be distributing your child’s artwork and order forms in April.

Laura Weiss, VP Fundraising
lauradweiss@msn.com

Under Construction – Gym Update



Things are really coming along on the gym. Check out the design board for the colors and finishes for the new bathrooms. The board is located in the office where volunteers sign in. Stay tuned for information from the Burning Tree Foundation about a fundraising project to purchase a brick to line the sidewalk outside the new gym.

Notice for 4th and 5th Grade Parents about Middle School Math

Do you have questions regarding Middle School Math?

You are invited to Pyle’s presentation The Mathematical Process, Thursday, March 15th from 7-8 pm. The night will begin with an overview of the math program – then individual meetings for the different grades, from incoming 6th graders to outgoing 8th graders. You may attend these smaller sessions according to your interests/concerns/questions. However, please email deboland@yahoo.com to RSVP if you plan to attend and don’t currently have a Pyle student, so we can ensure room enough for all.

Coming This Spring – Quad-cluster meeting on Math Articulation. We will forward the details when they become available

Calendar of Upcoming Events



Tuesday, March 13 – Dine Out Night

Dine Out at Armand’s Pizza

Saturday, March 24 – Adult Fundraiser

Reach for the Star’s at BCC Rescue Squad

Monday, March 26 - Third Marking Period Ends

Tuesday, March 27 – No School

Professional Day

Thursday, March 29

Class & Group Pictures

Monday, April 2 – April 9 – No School

Spring Break

Saturday, April 28 – Spring Clean up day

Spruce up BTES!

Sunday, May 6 -- Brain Tumor Walk in DC

“Soar for Sydney” Team Spirit Walk

The Burning Tree PTA publishes *Burning Issues* monthly, 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, April 13.**