

Burning Issues

President's Message

How special is our Burning Tree community? Read on...

A couple of Saturdays ago, I woke to the sound of pouring rain. My heart sank because **Beautify Burning Tree** was taking place that morning – rain or shine! Lisa Baker and her landscaping and grounds “crew” had spent hours preparing for this event, and I wondered how many Burning Tree families would venture out in this weather. As 9am rolled around, to my surprise many parents and students started arriving at the school with rakes and gloves in hand. As the morning wore on, more and more families joined the effort, the rain stopped, and the skies grew brighter. Ultimately, over 150 parents, students and alumni joined together and mulched, weeded, planted and beautified the BT grounds!

International Night was as spectacular as ever and was yet another demonstration of our incredible community. This year close to 40 countries were represented! Thanks to Karen van Loon and the dedicated co-chairs of the event, those families in attendance were given the opportunity to see the awe-inspiring Parade of Nations, learn about many different cultures, taste a variety of foods, and embrace our wonderfully diverse BT community!

It is also exciting to see our PTA dollars at work with the installation of the new kindergarten playground and climbing wall in the back playground!

“Fabulous...awesome...I love it...” are just a few of the comments I have heard from Burning Tree students and parents. This all came about because so many BT parents raised funds for the PTA last year by joining the PTA as well as participating in fundraisers. Many of you also attended PTA meetings where you voiced your opinions and had an active role in determining how we should use our excess PTA dollars, and then a few of you took the initiative to form a playground committee to get it done. It really took a community effort to get this accomplished!

I am also very touched by the outpouring of support that our community has given to others. We have donated food to the Manna Food Center, participated in the Walk for the Homeless, collected sandwiches for Martha’s Table, collected donations for UNICEF, as well as

supported our sister school, Broad Acres Elementary School in Silver Spring.

My heartfelt thanks go out to all of you for your participation in every way, great or small. Your efforts make Burning Tree the extraordinary community that it is! I wish you and your families a wonderful Thanksgiving holiday, and I look forward to seeing you at the **Book Fair** on November 29th, if not before.

Olivia Lai, Co-President

Book Fair at Barnes and Noble

Start your Holiday shopping list now since out next community-oriented FUNdraiser **Books Are Magic** is right around the corner.

Jeanne Pettanati, Debby Rubin, Heidi Grunwald and Sharon Curry are busy planning what promises to be another successful Book Fair at Barnes and Noble in Rockville on **Thursday, November 29**. Please make sure you plan to join us and read the “**Books Are Magic**” article in this Burning Issues to learn more! (Don’t forget the Dine out at Armand’s in Rockville on November 29! Books and Pizza, does it get any better?)



Teacher\Staff Appreciation Luncheon

Let’s give thanks and show our teachers and Burning Tree staff how much we appreciate all that they do. A delicious luncheon is being planned for Friday **November 16 at 12 noon**. Please email Kathy Chelst at chelst5@yahoo.com or Beth Martino at bnmpmartino@verizon.net to volunteer for set up, cleanup, drinks & desserts.

Kathy Chelst & Beth Martino, Teacher Appreciation Luncheon Co-Chairs

Inside This Issue:

Books are Magic	4
FUNdraising Events	2&3
Learning Center Series	3
President’s Message	1
Volunteer Corner	2

Volunteer Corner

October was a big month for our parent volunteers. Firstly, thank you very much to all our wonderful Room Parents for coordinating the Halloween parties. Halloween is such a special day at Burning Tree but it wouldn't be possible without all the moms and dads who organize the parties and the helpers who assist the children into their costumes and join in the party games. I hope you all had as much fun as the kids.

Thanks too to Maria Lopez Silvero and Debby Rubin who helped Blanton Studios take the student photos this year. Blanton was very grateful for your help readying the children for their portraits and I know we parents will be very appreciative when we see the results.

Finally, a huge thank you to Lisa Baker, Lisa Norwalk Davenport and the whole Landscape and Grounds Committee for organizing such a successful Beautify Burning Tree Day. We had a phenomenal turnout and achieved an enormous amount. The school spirit was so high that it felt like the Spring Fair – just with mud and mulch! Congratulations and thanks to everyone who attended.

Looking ahead to the rest of November, thanks to all the parents who have signed up to ensure a full roster for recess this month. There are still opportunities to volunteer in the lunch room if you prefer to be indoors as the weather cools.

And please note that the next Staff Appreciation Lunch is Friday, November 16th. Please contact Kathy Chelst chelst5@yahoo.com or Beth Martino bnmpartino@verizon.net if you can help set up, clean up or by donating drinks and desserts.

Brenda Conroy, VP Volunteers

FUNdraining Events Under Way...

Sally Foster Catalogue Orders Arriving Today! (But Not Cookie Dough)

Make sure to stop by the All-Purpose room to pick up your Sally Foster order and prizes while you are up at school for your parent-teacher conferences today and next Monday. Unfortunately, however, due to a Sally Foster processing error, cookie dough orders will not be arriving until Wednesday November 28th. If you purchased cookie dough a letter of explanation should have come home in your child's backpack this week. We are VERY sorry for the delay and any inconvenience it causes you with the holidays approaching.

We will also have extra cookie dough for sale at the PTA Executive Board Meeting on November 29th and at the PTA meeting on December 4th. Look for more information on this in upcoming Friday Updates. 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! **SallyFoster.com is open through January 15, 2007**, and our school can still earn 50% profit on all orders placed on our behalf. It's simple. Just 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.

As we wrap up the official part of this fundraiser, I want to extend my heartfelt gratitude again to Ellie Abramowitz and Jamie Pierce who spent more time on this fundraiser than they should have had to! And, despite some problems with "Sally" **we still raised almost \$6,000 for BTES!**

Bingo Night

We kicked off our fall community-oriented FUNdraisers with a bang at Bingo Night! Thanks to Laura Weiss, Christine Brake and Tracey Fitzsimmons for organizing and running a fabulously fun and successful event! There are two things you can always count on at Bingo Night...it will be loud and it will be a blast! Thanks also go to the volunteers who helped throughout the evening and special thanks to Mr. Tark for his spirited introduction, Santi Karamchetty for organizing our student volunteers and to our fabulous emcee Joan Wolf-Chiaverini (where did she get that suit!) and Benjamin Katz (last year's "Adult Fundraiser Bingo Caller" winner) for his hilarious round of bingo number calling. With the great planning of Laura, Christine and Tracey, and the involvement of many BTES families, close to \$3,000 were raised for our school!

Fix N' Feast

One week before this event happened (when this article was written) we already had 22 people signed up to attend this new event—that is a quick \$460 for BTES! Thanks to Liza Fues to organizing this successful win-win event. BTES families went home with ready to eat dinners and BTES earned easy money! Stay tuned for final numbers in the December Burning Issues.

Dine out at Armand's before the Book Fair

You'll probably be in a rush to get to the **BTES Book Fair at Barnes and Noble** in Rockville and be tired of cooking after Thanksgiving, so... plan ahead now to

take the night off of cooking! On Thursday November 29th enjoy dine-in or carry-out cuisine from **Armand's Chicago Pizzeria in Rockville** (on Halpine Road) before you head over to the Book Fair. It couldn't be easier to support BTES this night—eat at Armand's and then just cross over Rockville Pike and join us at Barnes and Noble where Books are Magic. Just think, a portion of all the money you spend that night will go to BTES!! Thanks to Nancy Sandler for organizing this!

Adult Fundraiser — A Taste of Italy — Call To Action!

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 to start planning for it NOW. We especially need volunteers to help with Class Art projects and on our Solicitations Committee. Committee members are mainly responsible for collecting 5 (or more) Donation items by December 31st. Please contact me, Cindy Campbell, at CampbellHannegan@comcast.net if you can give us either a little or a lot of your time and energy. Thanks to Michael Chelst, Erin Deric, and Surya Shah who are co-chairing this year's fundraiser with me.

Shop for Our School

Many thanks to Amy Lenkin (for running this) and to the 119 families who have already registered their Giant and/or Safeway cards. That's more than 50 families than signed up at this same time last year! This has already earned BTES \$490! Way to go Amy and BTES families! If you haven't registered your card yet, please do! It won't cost you a thing and it all adds up to a great deal of money that goes straight to BTES. Register your card at <http://www.giantfood.com/aplus> and use our BTES school code of 0666. If you would like to support our sister school, Broad Acres, include their code of 0867 as a second school. Safeway cards can be registered on www.escrip.com or contact Amy Lenkin amylenkin@millandlong.com and she will help you with this process.

Schoolpop.Com: Start your holiday shopping early this year and do it on-line to raise money for BTES! Just about every store you can think of is located here- stores like Sports Authority, Banana Republic, Children's Place, Barnes and Noble- to name a few! 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!

Thanks again to all these committee chairs for their hard work and thanks to all our BTES families for their support! Please call or email me if you have questions or would like to help with any fundraising events CampbellHannegan@comcast.net or 301-365-0257.

Cindy Campbell, VP Fundraising

The Learning Center Series (Article #2)

The Learning Center is a part of Burning Tree Elementary School that every parent and child should take the time to understand and embrace together.

Children with special needs face many challenges and obstacles. These children will have an easier time navigating the world if the people in their lives take the time to understand them. The children, teachers, and parents at Burning Tree can make a big difference in their lives by learning more about the children with special needs in their school. When children take the time to learn about other children in their school, they will be supporting their peers, making new friends, and ultimately strengthening their own character. Parents can help their own child understand what it feels to be different and how nice it feels to be understood and accepted.

The best way to teach a child about tolerance and acceptance is by encouraging them to take the time, and make the effort, to understand and respect others. That way, they will learn empathy and compassion and will learn to treat people the way they would like to be treated themselves.

When another child, parent, or teacher embraces your "special" child as a whole and accepts that child for all s/he is and not for all s/he isn't, great things happen all around!

The following are some resources (books and website) to use in helping you and your child understand and embrace differences in each other:

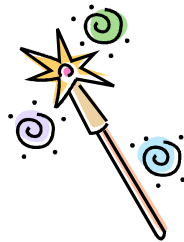
1. *In Jesse's Shoes: Appreciating Kids w/Special Needs* by Beverly Lewis
2. *Rules* by Cynthia Lord
3. *What's wrong with Timmy?* by Maria Shriver
4. *Let's Talk About it: Extraordinary Friends* by Fred Rogers
5. *Including Students w/ Special Needs: A Practical Guide for the Classroom Teacher*

Website: www.autismspeaks.com

Book Fair – Books are Magic

Books are magic! That's the theme of this year's Burning Tree Book Fair, which will be held at **Barnes & Noble** on Rockville Pike **November 29th through December 5th**. During this week-long event, 20% of the money you spend at Barnes & Noble goes directly to our school. So please plan ahead and do your holiday shopping at the Book Fair. Remember Barnes & Noble has a great selection of games and music as well as books.

During the week of the Book Fair, Barnes & Noble plays host to many special Burning Tree events. The fun begins on Thursday Nov. 29th with Opening Night. Opening Night festivities begin at 6:00 pm and run through 8:30 pm. There will be Story Time with teachers reading their favorite books. A special **Think Fun Games Night** will be set up just for Burning Tree so our kids can play some of the many brain building games available at Barnes & Noble. These activities, plus **half hourly prize drawings and a few surprises**, will provide distraction for the kids, while mom and dad shop.



Opening Night is also your first chance to get a glimpse of teacher "wish list" books. Our teachers and staff have selected books that will enrich their classrooms. Burning Tree families will have an opportunity to purchase "wish list" books, inscribe them, and donate them to our school.

If you can't make it to Opening Night, maybe you can attend the **Principal's Coffee, the next morning, Friday, Nov. 30th, at 9:30 am**. (Of course, if you are a real book junkie, you can do both!) At this morning event, Dr. Chaset will be at Barnes & Noble chatting with parents over coffee and breakfast treats. Dr. Chaset is always ready to discuss the importance of reading in our children's lives. Join us on Friday and shop while the kids are at school.

The Book Fair committee is working hard to make the week magical and we have a few "tricks up our sleeves." We are scheduling special guest speakers, including local authors. **Keep your eye out for Book Fair news and shopping vouchers in the backpacks, on BNet, and on the PTA website: www.burningtreapta.org**. The Book Fair is an easy way to help our PTA raise money. Present your Burning Tree voucher or mention our school when you pay, and a donation will be automatically made to our school.

Remember the Book Fair runs for an entire week from Nov. 29th through Dec 5th, and Barnes & Noble is open

from 9 am until 11 pm every day. Books are magic, let reading cast a spell on you!

Co-Chairs: Jeanne Pettenati, Debra Rubin, Sharon Curry and Heidi Grunwald

Congratulations Allison Chelst!

Allison a 5th grader in Mrs. Laura Flicker's class was chosen to attend Human Rights Camp which took place on October 19-21 at Camp Letts near Annapolis. Ten 5th grade boys & girls from throughout all of Montgomery County were selected on the basis of teacher recommendations and personal essays to take part in this weekend. The goal of the weekend was that each student brings back to their school a better understanding of how we can accept each other for our differences and all work together.

International Night - Big Success

Even though it was incredibly hot in the school, more than 450 people enjoyed this year's International Night on October 18. The parade was amazing: to see all these kids in their native clothing, parading very proudly, it is quite a sight! The booths were - as always - incredible. A big thank you to all the families that set up a booth and gave us an opportunity to enjoy their culture (and their food). The performances were fabulous, what a talented bunch of students Burning Tree has! And a thank you to the International Night committee: Nikki DeCastro, Maria Lopez-Silvero, Tanaz Jalinoos, Allison Ellis and Karen van Loon.

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:

Olivia Lai 301-365-0417

Lisa Sanfuentes 301-320-6214

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, December 7**.
