

# Burning Issues

## President's Message

It's really happening! Or should I say, it's finally happening. Construction of our very own Burning

Tree Elementary School gymnasium will be getting underway next week. It's been a long wait for many of us. Last year it looked as if the funding for our gym construction may be delayed for yet another year. Due to the widespread support and efforts of our PTA and so many others in Montgomery County last year, our gym construction got back on track, and the gym will be ready for occupancy by the first day of school next year!

If you have renovated your home (as my family recently did) or gone through a new home construction, you know it can sometimes be a challenging process. You also know to expect the unexpected. For many of us at Burning Tree, the rest of the year during the gym construction may be full of anticipation, many questions, some annoyances, excitement, and the list goes on. Throughout it all, just remember what the end result will be. When our children return to Burning Tree next fall, we will have a brand new gym, which will enrich the lives of our children as well as the surrounding community. The construction process probably won't be easy, but it will certainly be worth it!

We have two fun-filled events coming up in the next week. I hope to see you on Saturday, October 14th, when we will be beautifying Burning Tree. We rely on the parents of the school to mulch, prune, and maintain the flowerbeds surrounding the school. The gardening committee cannot do this all on their own, so we hope to see you and your children on Saturday for this family event. Let's take this opportunity to make Burning Tree look its absolute best. Also coming up on Thursday, October 19th, is International Night. This is truly one of my favorite events of the year because it celebrates our diverse Burning Tree community. With over 50 different countries represented, what an amazing opportunity we have to learn about and experience and taste the food from so many different countries. Hope to see you all there.

*Olivia Lai, PTA Co-President*

## Beautify Burning Tree

The Garden Committee has been very busy preparing for the first ever Beautify Burning Tree event. Special thanks go to parents Allison Ellis and Andrea Lichtman, and to students Kate Ellis, Sam Ellis, Carly Baker, and Tyler Baker for their help weeding and pruning the gardens and planting flowers around the front sign. We really appreciate your help!



Please bring the whole family on Saturday, October 14th from 9am – noon to make Burning Tree beautiful.

This is a great opportunity for the school community to come together to demonstrate school pride by cleaning up the school grounds. No experience is necessary. Members of the garden committee will be on hand to offer instruction and assistance. If you have any garden tools in your garage, even if you don't know how to use them, please bring them along! We will have Starbucks coffee, Dunkin donuts and other snacks and refreshments available. You may even win a giant pumpkin! If you have any questions or wish to join the garden committee, please contact Lisa Baker ([bakewoman@aol.com](mailto:bakewoman@aol.com)) or Lisa Davenport ([lisa@brightestbulb.net](mailto:lisa@brightestbulb.net)).

## Win a giant pumpkin

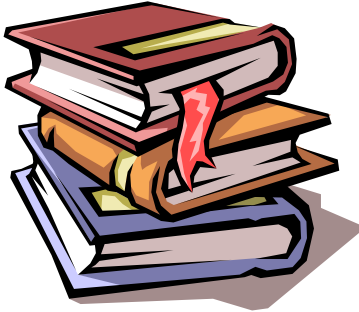


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## Library Gift Program

Looking for a special way to honor a special occasion or person? Consider making a donation to the



Burning Tree Media Center! After receiving your donation, our Media Center staff will purchase a book in your child's area of special interest to be added to the library collection. The book

will display a bookplate acknowledging your gift. Through this program you can honor your child, expand our library collection, and benefit everyone at Burning Tree. If you are interested in participating in the Library Gift Program, complete the attached form and return it in an envelope marked "Media Center." All donations are tax-deductible and 100% of your donation will be spent on the purchase of books for our Media Center. Questions? Call or email Jan Hauck (301-469-7790 edhauck3@aol.com)

## Box Tops for Education

Please help us collect Box Tops for Education to benefit our sister school, Broad Acres. Simply clip the Box Top coupon off of any General Mills product. Each coupon is worth ten cents, so don't throw money away! It couldn't be easier to make a difference. Box Tops may be placed in the PTA box in the lobby. Questions? Call Anne Ruskowski (301) 229-2393

## Sister School Update

Many thanks to the terrific Burning Tree family, friends and staff who participated in the school supply drive for our sister school, Broad Acres. The donated backpacks, notebooks, binders and other school supplies were wonderful, and were delivered to Broad Acres last month. The Broad Acres community appreciates the special partnership that exists between our two schools.

Please note that the winter clothing drive for Broad Acres will start on November 3rd. As you take out your winter clothing, and see what's outgrown, please think of Broad Acres. You can drop off new or gently used winter clothing at Burning Tree between November 3rd and November 13th. Coats, sweaters,

and other winter items, in good condition, are appreciated.

Thank you,

*Karen Judson, Betsy Falloon and Sheryl Isaacs*

## Community-Based Programs

Like the beautiful leaves of autumn, Burning Tree kids will be brightening up the lives of many members of our community in October. Thank you to Cathy Houston who coordinated the collection of Sandwiches for Martha's Table this month and to all the families who took the time to make and bring in sandwiches. Martha's Table is a volunteer-supported, non-profit organization that among other things supplies food to the hungry in our city seven days a week. Burning Tree will continue to support their efforts by donating sandwiches the first Thursday of each month.

October 14, our fabulous Gardening Committee, led by Lisa Baker and Lisa Davenport, will be organizing a Burning Tree school-wide fall cleanup. Please join them from 9 am-12 noon for a morning of fresh air and exercise. Help is needed to spread mulch, plant perennials and remove litter and weeds to beautify our school. Snacks and refreshments will be provided.

Our students will once again have the opportunity to participate in the annual Fannie Mae Walk for the Homeless. This year's walk will take place during recess on October 17. All proceeds will be matched by Fannie Mae and will benefit the



Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless (MCCH). Thank you to David Elfin for coordinating this worthwhile activity.

For the second year in a row, Burning Tree students will be collecting canned goods for the Harvest for the Hungry "Kids Helping Kids" Campaign between October 23 and November 10. Collections will benefit the Manna Food Center, a non-profit food bank of Montgomery County, which provides food to 2,000 county families at ten different locations in the community.

Our wonderfully talented Burning Tree kids will have the opportunity to participate in a Talent Show for the elderly community at Springhouse Manor. This year's

show is scheduled for Friday, October 27 from 4-5 pm, at the facility located at 5101 Ridgefield Road (on the corner of River and Ridgefield Roads). A brief rehearsal is scheduled for Friday, October 13, in Ms. Drake's portable. Thank you to Gail Haven for organizing this fantastic show. Please contact Gail at gailrhaven@verizon.net and let her know if your child is interested in participating.

At the end of the month, we will be distributing Trick or Treat for UNICEF boxes for the students to take with them on Halloween. Thank you to Jo Okon for volunteering to Chair this annual program.

### Volunteers' Corner

**Help Needed!** Now that we have gotten into the new school year, may I please ask you to check your diaries to see if you can spare an hour a month to help out in the health room, lunchroom or playground.

Enjoy the fresh air on playground duty from 12:25pm until 1:35pm; or take cover from this time of year's changeable weather in the lunchroom from 11:55am until 1:30pm. It's a great opportunity to see the children socializing with their friends, and it really does help keep them safe and healthy.

When things do go wrong, we're lucky to have Mrs. Bouhafa in the health room, but sometimes she needs extra help. If there's a time/day that you could be on standby to help out, please let us know. No experience is necessary; Mrs. Bouhafa will train all new volunteers.

If you can help, or would like further information, please contact:

**Playground:** Lisa Davenport (301) 263-0932  
[lisa@brightestbulb.net](mailto:lisa@brightestbulb.net)

**Lunchroom and health room:** Brenda Conroy  
 (301) 229-1703 [brenda.conroy@gol.com](mailto:brenda.conroy@gol.com)

Lisa and I are developing the rosters for October, November and December right now, so please get in touch soon. Thank you.



Thanks to everyone who signed up as a Room Parent for the year. I'm sure you'll enjoy added insight into your child's classroom and the teachers have expressed enormous gratitude for the extra help.

Special thanks to hosts of this year's Parent Get-Togethers: Tammy and Matthew Pasquinelli who hosted the Learning Center evening; Julie and Jon Garcia who hosted the Kindergarten evening; and Kathy and Michael Chelst who hosted 1st Grade parents. Olivia Lai and Walter Gillcrist will host a welcome get together for parents new to the school on Thursday, October 26. RSVP is Friday, October 20th.

Thank you to Lisa Baker and Lisa Davenport for all their extraordinary work over many hours in the school grounds that made them look so attractive and welcoming for the Back to School Nights.

Finally, thank you to Brian Liu who has taken on the role of School Historian this year. Brian will photograph the key school events and will compile the images in an album for Dr Chaset. As well as being a wonderful keepsake, the albums are a fabulous marketing tool. Dr Chaset shares them with prospective families to showcase the activities our children enjoy – and how much they enjoy them!

*Brenda Conroy, VP for Volunteers*

### Bingo Night Thanks

A very big thanks to everyone who came to Bingo Night! It was a big success thanks to the support of the Burning Tree community. A very, very big thanks to our star emcee Joan Wolf who kept us all winning and laughing!! Thanks to Dr. Chaset and Mr. Tark for contributing to the fun! A very special thank you to everyone who volunteered to help at this year's Bingo Night.

From those of you who helped set up, to those of you who sold food, sold bingo cards, pulled numbers, wrote numbers and judged Bingo cards to those of you who helped clean up – we could not have done it without you. Thank you to Michael Chelst who didn't let us go hungry when he went to pick up extra pizzas, and David Elfin, who was on the stage all night helping keep everyone in line and everything on track.



Here's to winning next year!

*Your Bingo Committee Co-Chairs,  
 Laura Weiss, Christine Brake and Lisa Sanfuentes.*

**International Night**

Our annual trip around the world to visit the countries represented at BT will be on Thursday, October 19th. The evening is always one of the most exciting at the school and we hope to see all families there in celebration of our school's rich and diverse community. The festivities start at 6:30pm. Get there early so you don't miss the parade of nations! If you have any last minute questions, please contact Karen Van Loon (301-320-4223 karenvanloon@verizon.net) or Jo Chang (jochang2@yahoo.com) for information.



**Calendar of Upcoming Events**



**October**

**Monday, October 16**

Principal's Coffee 9:30am & 7:00pm  
 Creative Writing Club begins 3:30pm

**Thursday, October 19**

International Night -- 6:30 – 9:00pm

**Friday, October 20**

No School – MSTA Convention

**Sunday, October 22**

Darcars Young Run

**Tuesday, October 24**

Individual Student Pictures  
 MCCPTA Meeting 7:30pm

**Thursday, October 26**

Families New to BTES Get Together 7-9pm

**Friday, October 27**

PTA Executive Board 9:30am

**Tuesday, October 31**

Halloween Parade & Parties 2:00pm  
 End of First Marking Period

**November**

**Wednesday, November 1**

No School – Professional Day

**Thursday, November 2**

Martha's Table Sandwiches



**Under Construction – Gym Update**

The groundbreaking is almost here. Continue to check back here for the latest information on the new Burning Tree Gym!

**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](mailto:jbusch@urban.org) or call him at 202-261-5569. The deadline for the next newsletter is **Friday, November 3.**

