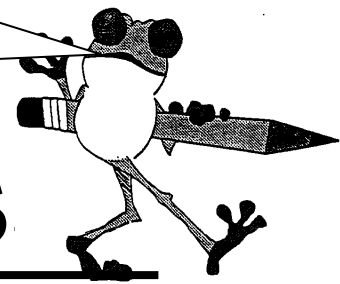


Welcome Back!
See you at the
Back to School Picnic on
September 12!



Burning Issues

President's Message

Welcome Back to School! I hope everyone had a wonderful summer break and you're ready for the

year ahead! The PTA would also like to welcome Mrs. Nancy Erdrich as our new Principal. We are also very happy that Mr. Aaron Tark is returning as our Assistant Principal. Cindy Campbell, PTA President-elect and I have worked with Mrs. Erdrich and Mr. Tark over the summer and we're looking forward to a great year.

The PTA has planned many exciting programs and events for the school year. Keep a look out for interesting cultural arts assemblies for the kids, and also our fabulous after-school activities offerings. We would like to thank Joan Wolf Chiaverini for her relentless work in scheduling the assemblies and the after school activities! More information will be coming very soon!

The PTA Executive Board is constantly assessing the programs we run, and we have a couple of positive changes this year. In lieu of the Adult Fundraiser (and the many hours of volunteer time it takes to make it happen), we will have a "Fill Our Pond" Fundraising Campaign. Please read the attached letter for more details. We are also streamlining the jobs of Room Parents. Please read the article in this issue for more details. We encourage you to join the PTA so your vote can be counted on matters like this and many others that affect you and your children. Our meetings are the first Tuesday of almost every month. Please attend. We want YOUR input!

I also want to draw you attention to the PTA website, which was created last year by PTA VP of Community Based Programs Karen van Loon. Karen continues this year as webmaster, and the PTA would like to thank her! Please visit

www.BurningTreePTA.org often. There is a wealth of information. And, you can find almost any PTA form that is distributed via backpack. All PTA publications are also on the website.

Here is to a wonderful 2008-2009 School Year!

Lisa Sanfuentes, PTA President

First PTA Meeting Sept. 2, details on page 2.

The Burning Tree Directory and Handbook

We are finalizing the *Burning Tree Directory and Handbook*. In order for your child(ren) to be included in the directory please make sure to take the following steps:

For students **NEW** to Burning Tree: complete a NEW Student Information Form. The form was sent home with the school information packet in the summer mailing, and it is attached to this publication. You can also find a form on the PTA website (burningtreepta.org). Please either return this form in an envelope marked "directory" or e-mail it to karenvanloon@verizon.net. **Deadline is Friday September 5.**

For children **returning** to Burning Tree: if your child(ren) was/were not in the directory last year, but you would like information included this year, please fill out a NEW Student Information Form.

All parents whose child(ren) information was in last year's Directory will receive an e-mail containing last year's Directory information. Please verify this information online by **Friday September 12.**

Please Note:

The August school mailing also included the **MCPS request to Withhold Directory Information Form**. If you complete this form, your child's name will not appear anywhere in the directory.

Only PTA members receive the directory. Join by completing a PTA membership form (available online)

If you have any questions about the Directory, please contact Karen van Loon at karenvanloon@verizon.net.

Inside This Issue:	
Back to School Picnic.....	2
Burning Tree Directory	1
Important Dates	3
President's Message	1
PTA Executive Board.....	4
Room Parent Re-Invented.....	2
Spirit Shop.....	5
Volunteer Updates	2 & 3

Come to the Back-To-School Family Picnic!

Meet old friends and new and mingle with classmates and teachers in a fun and informal atmosphere on Friday, September 12th, from 5:30 – 7:00pm at the annual back to school family picnic! It's held on the rear playground of the school. Pack a picnic dinner or – better yet – buy the pizza, subs, hot dogs and drinks sold by Potomac Pizza. Bring a blanket, and if you'd like, bring a dessert to share. The PTA will provide popsicles, face painting and other fun stuff for the kids! **Volunteers Needed!** Contact Robin Gonzales @ 301-320-7448 or samandres20817@verizon.net or Nancy Samit @ 301-229-8686 or nancysamit@verizon.net.

First PTA Meeting and Volunteer Fair!

Please attend our first PTA Meeting on Tuesday, September 2nd at 7:30pm! The PTA provides on-site babysitting for children age four and older. Come early, because from 7:00pm – 7:30pm there is a "Volunteer Fair." Tables will be set up in the All Purpose Room so that PTA Committee Chairs can share information about the great programs and events that are offered through the PTA. This is a great opportunity for parents to learn more about volunteer opportunities and to sign up to help. The PTA meeting will include a report from Mrs. Erdrich, information about new PTA committees and parents are always welcome to bring up issues during new business. Please sign up to be a PTA member, as you have no voting rights if you are not a member. If you paid dues last year, thank you, but those memberships have expired, and it's time to rejoin! When you pay your dues, you receive the invaluable *Burning Tree Directory* and will partner with other parents to become active, involved citizens in our community! A membership form is attached AND can be found at www.BurningTreePTA.org.

PTA Vacancies!

Thank you so much to those of you who responded to the BTNet announcement seeking volunteers. We did fill some of the positions. Some are still open - the PTA is looking for more enthusiastic parents who want to contribute to the happiness and well-being of the Burning Tree Community! It's also a lot of fun to be involved and allows you to meet other fabulous parents at our school!

Spring Fair: We need another co-chair for this fabulous carnival at our school on May 16!

Chess Club: Love to play chess? We need one person to run the before school Chess Club.

Bingo Night: Looking for a third co-chair for this great night where the whole school is invited to play Bingo and win great prizes. The event is November 7.

Child Care at Meetings: One person to arrange for Pyle students to babysit BTES children during **PTA meetings, Back to School Night**, and other events. Do you have a Pyle student who wants to be one of the babysitters? Once the schedule is set up for the year, the job should run itself!

Recess Equipment: One person to work with our Physical Education teacher and others to make sure the recess equipment is in good shape!

Fitness Frogs: One person to help organize this program during recess where students voluntarily participate in running, jogging or walking a certain number of laps per week.

Spirit Shop Apprentice: Interested in heading up the Spirit Shop Committee next year? Our current Committee Chair would love to help you learn the ropes this year!

Please contact Lisa Sanfuentes at Lisa.Rizzolo@verizon.net or 301-320-6214 if you are interested in any of these opportunities or have any questions.

Room Parents Reinvented: Don't Wait -- Sign Up Now!

You talked and we listened. With your feedback and ideas, we have reorganized the duties of our invaluable **Room Contact Parents** and **Room Parents** for the 2008-2009 school year. The goal is to spread out the responsibilities among more parents and to have a clearer definition of the roles. For each class, we are seeking a PTA Liaison Parent, a Teacher/Classroom Liaison Parent, a Treasurer, and Coordinators for each classroom party; Halloween, Valentine's Day and End of the Year. The list of responsibilities for each of these positions is detailed in an attached flyer. Parents may sign up for more than one position. At Back-to-School Night, each family will be asked to sign up to help with (at least) one of the three parties. This doesn't mean the parent necessarily has to attend the party, but he/she will be asked to contribute by ordering party favors or purchasing snacks, etc. Please

note that if a class does not have a party coordinator for a particular party there will not be a party for that class.

Being a room parent is rewarding and fun! There are also resources to help you. Please join us for a **Room Parent Meeting on Thursday Sept 4** at 10:15am and 7:00pm (choose one to attend). We will have sample sign-up forms for Back-to-School Night, and hear tips from experienced room parents. We are also forming a database of party ideas for those who are new to party planning, or those looking for some new ideas.

To submit your name for one (or more) of the new positions or if you have questions, please contact the Room Parent Coordinator by grade. For Grades K – 2, contact Brenda Conroy brenda.conroy@gol.com and for Grades 3-5, contact Dorene Rosenthal dorene@verizon.net. You may email your name and the position(s) you are interested in, or if you prefer, drop the attached form off at school in the PTA Forms box in the lobby. (Or send it in with your child) Thanks for your involvement!

Thursday Update replaces Friday Update

Be on the look-out all year for your PTA “*Thursday Update*”. The PTA publishes a weekly update about PTA and School Events to keep our Burning Tree Community up to date on fun events and fundraisers. Why the change from Thursday to Friday? On Fridays, we’ve found that some people don’t look in the backpacks, and don’t read the material sent home until Sunday or Monday. We are hoping receiving the update on Thursday will be more convenient! The deadline for all *Thursday Updates* is Tuesday at noon. The first deadline is Tuesday, September 2 at Noon. Anyone wishing to publish information should email articles to Cindy Campbell at CampbellHannegan@comcast.net. If you have a flyer you would like to attach and it can’t be emailed, a hard copy can be left in the *Thursday Update* folder in the copy room by Tuesday at noon.

Burning Issues Deadline changes

The PTA thanks Joe Busch for continuing on as our *Burning Issues* editor. This monthly PTA Newsletter will also be published on Thursdays, and it comes out the second Thursday of every month. Throughout the year, there will be no *Thursday Update* the week the *Burning Issues* is distributed. To submit an article for publication, the deadline is the first Friday of every month. Please submit copy by email to Joe Busch at jbusch@urban.org. Hard copies of flyers can be left in

the Newsletter folder in the copy room but send Joe an email or call him at 202-261-5569.

Mark Down These Important Dates!

Tuesday September 2:

- ❑ Volunteer Fair from 7pm-7:30pm
- ❑ First PTA Meeting at 7:30pm

Thursday September 4:

- ❑ **PTA Committee Chair Meeting** at 9:15am in the Staff Lounge
- ❑ **Room Parent Meeting** (for all of those interested in ANY of the room parent positions) 10:15am AND 7:00pm in the Staff Lounge. Pick one to attend.

Friday, September 12;

- ❑ **New Parent Coffee** at the home of Vicki and Michael Herson from 9:30am to 11:00am. 8709 Burning Tree Road.
- ❑ **Back to School Picnic** on the rear playground from 5:30pm – 7:00pm. (Rain Date is Friday, Sept. 19)

Monday September 15:

- ❑ **Grades K-2 Back to School Night!**
Babysitting available for age 4 and older.

Tuesday September 16:

- ❑ **Grades 3-5 Back to School Night!**
Babysitting available for age 4 and older

Wednesday September 17:

- ❑ Sally Foster Sale Begins!

Thursday, September 18:

- ❑ **Learning Center Family Get-Together** at the home of Yvonne and Kevin Van Lowe at 7pm. 7012 Rainswood Court.

Back to School Help Needed in the Lunch Room and at Recess

Would you like to see your child’s new friends? Who they sit with at lunch or play with at recess? You can get a peek into their day by helping out during their lunch/recess hour. Lunch and recess will now run from 12:20-1:20 in total. Lunch for K and Grades 4&5 will be from 12:20-12:50 and Recess will be from 12:50-1:20. Recess for Grades 1, 2 & 3 will be from 12:20-12:50 and Lunch will be from 12:50-1:20.

We are looking for volunteers to help during lunch and recess in August and September. Ideally, we would like parents to volunteer for the entire hour-to follow their "group" either from Lunch to Recess or from Recess to Lunch. This way you can see your child both at lunch and in action on the playground. If you have 2 children who eat and recess at different times and would like to only be on the playground or in the lunchroom, we will work with you!

Please note: We ask that parents with children in Kindergarten NOT volunteer in August and September so as not to disrupt them as they settle into their new routines. After that, please feel free to help out as often as you like.

If you can help or have any questions, please contact our coordinators, Debby Rubin @ 301-469-0364 or debbyrubin@verizon.net or Farish Perlman @ 301-320-0718 or fperlman@cwr103.com. Thank you!

New Community Service Project

Our VP of Community-Based Programs, Vicki Herson, has organized a relationship between Burning Tree Elementary and "Food For Kids". Food For Kids delivers supplemental weekend food bags to community based sites serving more than 1,000 children of low income families in the Washington Metropolitan Area. This program is designed to help ease hunger for children when school is out, since many of the children served rely on free and reduced school breakfasts and lunches for their main meals. BTES will have 3-4 collection drives for this important program this school year. More information will come before the first collection drive in November.

Shop and Help Burning Tree

Your daily shopping can help Burning Tree and our sister school, Broad Acres. Please see the attached forms explaining the easy ways to



earn money for our school with Schoolpop.com, Giant A+ Bonus Bucks, Safeway eScrip, eScrip.com, and the Target Take Charge of Education Visa Card.

For more information, contact Amy Lenkin at 301-365-4123 or by e-mail at amylenkin@millerandlong.com.

Burning Tree Elementary School PTA EXECUTIVE BOARD 2008-2009

President	Lisa Sanfuentes
President-elect	Cindy Campbell
Treasurer	Lisa Norwalk
Recording Secretary	Surya Shah
Corresponding/ Membership Secretary	Katerina Papaioannou
VP for Fundraising	Ellie Abramowitz
VP for Volunteers	Elissa Ginsky
VP for School-Based Programs	Karen van Loon
VP for Community-Based Programs	Vicki Herson
MCCPTA Delegates	Darren Hartzler Ira Feldman
At-Large Representatives	Eva Scheer Yvonne Van Lowe
Ex-Officio Members	Dorene Rosenthal Olivia Lai

From the National PTA website:

Elementary/Middle School PTAs

*PTAs serve as a type of forum where parents, teachers, administrators, and other concerned adults discuss ways to promote **quality education, strive to expand the arts, encourage community involvement, and work for a healthy environment and safe neighborhoods.***

Join the Burning Tree PTA!
Fill out your form today!

Spirit Shop

Need to buy your school calendar, 4th / 5th grade planner or stock up on Burning Tree spirit items? Visit the Spirit Shop during the Volunteer Fair on Tuesday, September 2nd, from 7-7:30pm in the BTES cafeteria! Bring CASH or a CHECK to buy



World' Finest School Calendars

your PTA CALENDAR (\$8) which is chock full of important information including no school days, early release days and school events—it's the perfect way to keep your life organized during the school year.

If you have a 4th or 5th grade student, they will need to have a STUDENT PLANNER this year (it is optional for 3rd graders). You can purchase a planner through the Spirit Shop for \$7. In addition, support BTES and show your school spirit by purchasing school spirit items such as the popular lime green t-shirt (available in youth & adult sizes S, M & L), the new BTES car magnet, water bottles, jelly bracelets, and the BTES sports shoulder bag! And, of course, we will have the popular **Note to School** pads (great for sending your teachers a quick note about absences or dismissal changes).

Additionally, parents will be able to purchase items using the Spirit Shop order form which will be available in the school lobby and will be included in the first *Thursday Update* and in intermittent future Updates. Questions about the Spirit Shop? Contact me at lauradweiss@msn.com or at 301-365-1268.

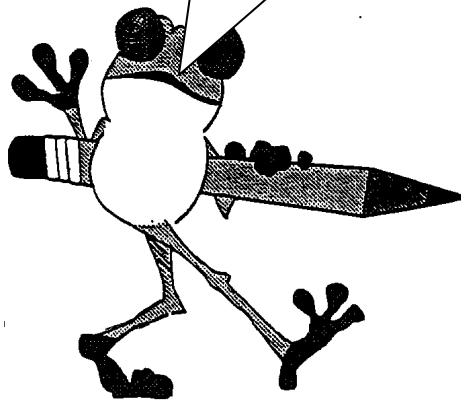
Laura Weiss, Spirit Shop Chairperson.

"Everybody can be great...because anybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and your verb agree to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love."

--Martin Luther King, Jr

You can borrow my pencil or get one from the Spirit Shop. Then use it to fill out a Volunteer Form at the Volunteer Fair on September 2nd.

You'll feel good, your children will be thrilled. Everybody wins!



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

Principal:

Mrs. Nancy Erdrich 301-320-6510

Assistant Principal:

Aaron Tark 301-320-6510

PTA Co-Presidents:

Lisa Sanfuentes 301-320-6214

Cindy Campbell 301-469-0252

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, September 5.**