



Bonnie Brae Star

December 2, 2008

From the Prez

As I clean up from Thanksgiving, I'm keenly aware of all the financial stress around us, and how difficult these times are for many members of our BBES community. I have had the chance to speak at length with the Superintendent and members of the school board, and know that the financial situation for the whole of Fairfax County Schools is indeed dire. Fortunately, thanks to careful and thoughtful planning and advocacy on the part of our principal, I think Bonnie Brae, while facing tough decisions, is better off than many. I'm particularly pleased to report that the county at long last will be fixing our leaky roof problems, and that our students should return from the holidays to a drier BBES.

I hope you will also return as members of a new organization to support our school. You should have received an invitation to join our new Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) in last Tuesday's packet, and hopefully one is in this newsletter/Tuesday packet as well. Our Parent Teacher Association (PTA) decided to disband in order to form a local, unaffiliated PTO that would retain more of your dues here at the school. That was by no means an easy decision, and I know we have several members of the BBES family that hoped we would continue as a PTA. As we move on from that decision, I hope all of you will decide to become members of this new group. We have reduced dues, and in a unanimous decision PTO will offer free membership to any families in the free and reduced lunch program, which can be done by emailing or speaking with Principal Bruce so that none of your family's financial information need be shared with any PTO member.

You'll also find mention in this newsletter of upcoming activities, including the Holiday Shoppe, our December PTO meeting, and upcoming fundraisers. I know it seems like terrible timing, to mention fundraising while our wallets are stressed by the economy and the holiday craze. I sympathize, but I also know that contributions of your time and talent, in addition to your treasures, are more important than ever. The cuts being proposed for our school district will impact every student and every classroom. It is at just such a time that volunteer organizations are the most crucial. In recognition of these special circumstances, in the coming weeks PTO will be reconstituting the Future Works committee to review how the funds we raise can have the most positive impact on our school, and it is a discussion that I hope you all will join, either directly or through communicating with me or other members of the PTO leadership team.

As I peek in on the Thanksgiving Lunch (thank you again, Bob Franklin and all the volunteers!), watch our student bands rehearse, or just watch the kindergartners try to "catch a bubble" as they strive to keep quiet in their traverse of the halls, I remain full of pride and enthusiasm for being part of such a wonderful community. While these times are challenging, the richness of our diversity and our mutual commitment to our children gives us strength, and that strength is plainly evident on the faces you can see in our halls every day. Thank you all for being part of the Bonnie Brae family, and may you all have a happy and healthy holiday season.

Andrew Flagel, PTO President

2008-2009 PTO Officers

Andrew Flagel, President
flagelan@gmail.com

Kelly Hood, President-elect
kellysings@verizon.net

Lauren Wagner,
VP Programs
lewagner@cox.net

Amy Riddick,
VP Fundraising
amy.riddick@cox.net

Christine Oswald,
Treasurer
ceoswald@aol.com

Laura Blahusch, Secretary
paul.and.laura@cox.net

News to Note

December 5, 5:00pm—8:00pm— **HOLIDAY SHOPPE**

December 16, 7:00pm—**PTO MEETING (BBES Library)**

December 17, 7:00pm—**HOLIDAY CONCERT**

December 24—January 2—**WINTER BREAK**

January 19—**MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. HOLIDAY**

January 20—**INAUGURATION DAY HOLIDAY**

January 26-27—**STUDENT HOLIDAY**

February 12—**R.E.A.C.H. KICK-OFF ASSEMBLY**

February 28—March 5—**R.E.A.C.H. CAMPAIGN**

Coming Attractions

December 17—Holiday Concert

December 19—Crazy Hat Day

January 13—Strings Concert

Friendly's Dining Out—date to be announced

February 12—R.E.A.C.H. Kick-Off Assembly

February 16—President's Day

Science Fair—Winter; date to be announced

April 3—Student Holiday

April 6-10—Spring Break

Original Works—Spring; date to be announced

R.E.A.C.H. is Coming!!!

“The money raised [from REACH] will help to provide for field trips, teacher enrichment, technology purchases...and much more”

The PTO is bringing the new Reading Education Awareness in the Child's Home (REACH) program to Bonnie Brae. Coinciding with our 20th anniversary, REACH offers a fun, easy, and educationally-positive approach to fundraising.

Our students will be challenged to read a total of 300 minutes at home and in school during the REACH Week, 7- day campaign. Once the reading is completed, we'll inform sponsors of your child's progress, and the sponsors will then donate pledged



amounts to the PTO. PTO decided to hold this event anticipating the kind of success several neighboring schools in FCPS have enjoyed, many of which raise the majority of their operating budgets with this one program. As a result, we already reduced other

costs, having fewer fundraisers, offering the back to school kits at cost, and drastically lowering the cost of tickets at the Fall Festival... and success with REACH will let us do even more, so we're REALLY counting on everyone's support for this great project! The money raised will help provide for field trips, teacher enrichment, technology purchases, cultural arts, assemblies, and much more.

File Cabinets Needed

Several parents are currently working with Mrs. Henry, one of our wonderful music teachers, to organize her music and props. We are desperately in need of some file cabinets and a props wardrobe.



be one in which we can hang costumes.

If anyone has any file cabinets or an old wardrobe that they would be willing to donate to this effort, please contact Kelly

Hood at kellysigns@verizon.net.

Your help is greatly appreciated.

The file cabinets can be of any size. The wardrobe needs to

A Big Thank You

THANKS — to our volunteers at the Thanksgiving Luncheon. The luncheon would not be what it is without their generous donations of time and energy. Over 910 delicious meals were served. Green beans and all!"

Holiday Shoppe This Friday



MARK YOU CALENDARS! SET YOUR TIMERS! Bonnie Brae's Annual (and popular) Holiday Shoppe is this Friday. That's right. Friday, December 5, beginning at 5:00pm in the school gym, your children can find gifts for the whole family that won't break their wallets. As always, items will be grouped according to price. And there will be plenty of volunteers to help your children shop. So don't forget to bring the kids to the school to get their shopping done. But remember — **NO PEEKING!**

Open PTO Positions

We love all of our volunteers so if you'd like to have that wonderful feeling that comes from giving back to your school, please let us know of your interest in one of these opportunities.

Spring Fun Fair Co-Chair/Science Fair Co-Chair—Both of these great events will be losing one of their Co-Chairs and could very much use someone interested in learning the ropes toward becoming the primary chair in future years. This is a great chance for those of you newer to Bonnie Brae and PTO to get involved in a leadership position.

Future Projects and 20th Anniversary Committee—The Future Projects committee is charged with exploring, with the PTO executive board and Principal Bruce, how best to use our funds to advance Bonnie Brae's mission. The 20th Anniversary Committee is...well I think it's pretty self explanatory—we haven't gotten much farther than knowing we want to highlight and celebrate this illustrious event.

Webmaster—We very much need someone to work with our current fundraising VP who generously doubles as our webmaster, Amy Riddick, especially since next year she won't have any children in BBES (sob!).

**BONNIE BRAE
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

***PARENT TEACHER
ORGANIZATION***

5420 Sideburn Road
Fairfax, Virginia 22032

Phone: 703-321-3900



We're on the web!
[http://members.cox.net/
bbespto/index.htm](http://members.cox.net/bbespto/index.htm)

Keep Sending in Those Box Tops!

Our 2008-2009 Box Tops campaign is going strong. So far, the school has earned over \$1,000 dollars. But with more budget cuts for the school district being discussed, now more than ever, Bonnie Brae needs your help. Please take a few moments to look through your cupboards to see if there are any Box Tops lurking on boxes of cereal, cake mix or Zip-loc bags that were put away so many months ago. Or the next time you go shopping, be sure to put on your list some of the products that carry a Box Top coupon. Remember, each Box Top may

only be worth \$.10 cents but together they are worth a bundle. And all money received goes directly to the school. So keep clipping and saving. Also, don't forget that your child's classroom will receive rewards for reaching set goals.

For a complete list of participating products, please visit the General Mills Box Tops for Education website at www.boxtops4education.com



BBES 20th Anniversary Approaching

Bonnie Brae Elementary School's 20th Anniversary is fast approaching and we want to make sure to properly commemorate this occasion. Do you know someone who attended BBES 20 years ago? Do you have some fun ideas for celebrating this event? If you think you have a good idea, please feel free to contact any of the Board members. We are also forming a 20th Anniversary Committee. All are welcome to join in planning a celebration. If you are interested in serving on this Committee, we want to hear from you.

Join the BBES PTO

Last week's Tuesday packets had our new BBES Parent Teacher Organization membership form. One should be in this week's Tuesday packet as well. Please join this organization which supports students, the school, and BBES families. The cost is \$5 for an individual membership and \$10 for a family membership. If you didn't receive a membership form, please visit our website at <http://members.cox.net/bbespto/index.htm>. Forms are also available in the school.