



# Bonnie Brae Star

Volume III, Issue I

September 9, 2008

## Welcome Back!

As president of your Parent Teacher Association (PTA), it is my very great pleasure to welcome, and welcome most of you back, to Bonnie Brae Elementary School. The PTA is here to support our children and our teachers and I hope many of you will join us as volunteers (maybe even for a few meetings) as we have a very exciting year in store.



Many of us worry that it can appear PTA is mostly about fundraising and that at times it seemed like the requests for money just keep coming. This year we've tried to cut back on our fundraisers focusing instead on programming. Toward that end we offered, and hope to offer again, school supply kits to our families with no profit and we will be sharing the school directory with all of our school community not just those who officially joined PTA. Our major spring fundraiser will focus on a "read-a-thon" that we hope will offer educational, in addition to funding, benefits – in addition to our second annual Fun Fair (after the first made all the other schools JEALOUS – thank you Amy and Laura!). We will also in the coming days, be discussing whether we want to remain affiliated with the national PTA, or operate as an independent organization, retaining more of our funds here at Bonnie Brae.

That being said, we have a huge objective this year. In case you didn't know, this is the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary year for our school. Our principal and teachers carefully examined their needs and over the past few years several have been met with help from the PTA. In particular, we've slowly been adding Smart Boards to our classrooms. New schools have these installed in every class and at BBES they are in high demand. Our hope is to nearly double our fundraising from last year, already a record year, and complete the task of outfitting every room with these wonderful tools.

Most importantly, I hope you all are as excited and enthusiastic about our school as I am. In my work, I get to visit schools all across the nation, and every day I am more proud of the atmosphere at BBES. The talent and rich diversity of our student body, and the incredible heart of our administration and faculty, are evident the minute you walk in the door. I don't believe there is a finer elementary school in the system—a system that is well recognized as among the best in the world.

Our first PTA meeting of the year is on Wednesday, September 10 at 7 p.m. in the BBES Library. You do NOT have to pay dues to join our meetings, and we'll try to keep them brief, fun and friendly (I may even bring treats!). Please join us!

I look forward to meeting and working with you all this year, and wish you all the best for the bright new school year!

Sincerely,

Andrew Flagel  
PTA President

### 2008-09 PTA Officers

Andrew Flagel, President  
aflagel@gmu.edu

Stacy Farran, VP Programs  
stacy.farran@fcps.edu

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

Christine Oswald, Treasurer  
ceoswald@aol.com

Lauren Wagner, Secretary  
lewagner@cox.net

## News to Note

- September 9, Lavender's fundraiser begins
- September 10, PTA Meeting, 7 p.m.
- September 10, Community Information Night, 7 p.m.
- September 15, Back to School Night:
  - Kindergarten, 6 p.m.
  - Grade 6, 7 p.m.
- September 16, Back to School Night:
  - Grade 1, 5:30 p.m.
  - Grade 3, 6 p.m.
  - Grade 5, 7 p.m.
- September 18, Back to School Night:
  - Grade 2, 6 p.m.
  - Grade 4, 7 p.m.
- September 22, PTA Meeting: PTA/PTO Meeting, 7 p.m.
- September 25, Field Day: Grades 1-3
- September 26, Field Day: Grades 4-6
- October 1, Lavender's fundraiser ends
- October 9, Fall Pictures
  - October 13, Columbus Day Holiday
  - October 31, 1st grading period ends
  - November 3-4, Student Holidays
  - November 4, Election Day
  - November 26, Early dismissal
  - November 27-28, Thanksgiving Holiday
- December 24, 2008 to January 2, 2009, Winter Break
- January 19, Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday
- January 20, Inauguration Day Holiday
- January 26-27, Student Holidays



## Back to School Nights—Volunteer Fair

Back-to-school night is an opportunity for teachers to share with parents the curriculum, expectations, procedures, and events planned for the year. It's also a great time to talk to PTA members about the many events we sponsor and opportunities when you might be able to help out.

Our school depends heavily on volunteer support from parents, and there are a number of volunteer opportunities available that can be worked into your schedule. These range from one-time activities you can do in your home or in the school, to periodic activities you may be able to help out with on a more routine basis, to opportunities to chair specific events, such as International Night, the Holiday Shoppe, or the FLEX program.

*"It's easy to make a buck. It's a lot tougher to make a difference."*

*~Tom Brokaw*

If you only have a half an hour at home or an endless supply of time and energy, there are many opportunities available throughout the school year.

Whether you have time to give now or not until February, we'll have something for you! Stop by the Volunteer Fair on Back to School night to see how you might be able to make a difference.

If you have time to spare (even an hour or two during the course of the year) and would like to become more involved in your child's school, please contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Lynn Walters, at 703-249-0303, or by email at [LWalters3@csc.com](mailto:LWalters3@csc.com). Sign-up sheets also will be available at Back-to-School Night.

## From PTA to PTO



The executive committee of the PTA requests your input on a proposed change at Bonnie Brae. Effective with this school year, the executive committee of the PTA recommends dissolution of the “PTA” and the creation of a new parent-teacher organization (PTO). The change to a PTO is mainly a change in acronym that will have little impact for the day-to-day activities and focus of our volunteer group at Bonnie Brae. There are, however, several implications of the change to consider.

Currently each PTA member pays membership dues of \$6 per individual (\$12 per family). Of that \$6, only \$3.25 actually stays at Bonnie Brae; \$1.75 is sent to the national organization with the name PTA, and \$1.00 goes to the state chapter of the PTA (the Virginia PTA). Collectively, that means that each year we send approximately \$1,300 of our parents’ dues out of our school. With more money remaining at Bonnie Brae, the change to a PTO would allow us to lower membership dues to \$5 per individual while actually increasing revenue.

Money we send to the National PTA is primarily used to finance lobbying efforts. They submit positions on issues ranging from school vouchers to cafeteria meals to state-run preschool programs. While this seems admirable, we feel our parents have other methods at their disposal to have their voices heard. Our proximity to the nation’s capital affords us an advantage in getting in front of lawmakers, and with the proliferation of access to the Internet, lobbying efforts can be conducted as simply as sending an email to one’s delegates. Individuals are, of course, welcome to independently contribute to the PTA’s efforts regardless of our decision.

We feel that Bonnie Brae and our families will benefit from the transition to a PTO. To that end, a special meeting will be held on **Monday, September 22 at 7pm** to vote on this resolution by the executive committee recommending a change of our Bonnie Brae parent volunteer organization from a “PTA” to a “PTO”. In addition, if you have any questions or concerns about this proposal, please feel free to contact any of us via email or phone:

Andrew Flagel, [aflagel@gmu.edu](mailto:aflagel@gmu.edu), 703-426-5508, President  
 Lauren Wagner, [lewagner@cox.net](mailto:lewagner@cox.net), 703-323-6540, Secretary  
 Amy Riddick, [amy.riddick@cox.net](mailto:amy.riddick@cox.net), 703-250-8016, VP Fundraising  
 Stacy Farran, [stacy.farran@fcps.edu](mailto:stacy.farran@fcps.edu), 703-250-2474, VP Programs



## Put your shopping dollars to work!

Bonnie Brae's partnership with area stores have been renewed for the new school year!

### Giant

Please visit [www.giantfood.com/aplus](http://www.giantfood.com/aplus) to redesignate Bonnie Brae (ID number 01892). Giant renews their lists every year, so even if you designated Bonnie Brae in the past, **you need to do it again this year.**

### Target

If you have a Target store card or a Target *Visa*, you can designate Bonnie Brae to receive up to 1% of your annual purchases by visiting [www.target.com/tcoe](http://www.target.com/tcoe) and using Bonnie Brae's ID number 103763. If you have already designated Bonnie Brae to your Target card, you do not have to do it again.

### Safeway

Please visit [www.escrip.com](http://www.escrip.com) to reinitiate your Safeway Club card to the escrip program. If you registered your Club card last year, escrip will be able to recall your designation; if not, you will need to choose Bonnie Brae as your designated school.

### General Mills Box Tops

Box Tops are back! Last year this easy incentive almost tripled our earnings from the previous year. Your efforts resulted in **\$1,492** coming back to the school—all for clipping little pieces of cardboard! So continue to clip those box tops and watch your Tuesday packet for information on classroom incentives.



## BONNIE BRAE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATION

5420 Sideburn Road  
Fairfax, Virginia 22032

Phone: 703-321-3900  
<http://www.fcps.edu/BonnieBraeES/pta>

*For everything else...*



*...There's the PTA!*

## Positive Behavior Support

Bonnie Brae is thrilled to continue the positive behavior support program for the third year. Positive behavior support is a framework to establish consistent school wide rules—what we call “The Big Three.”

“The Big Three” are three very simple rules for behavior and expectations that will be used school-wide:

1. Respect Yourself
2. Respect Others
3. Respect Property

Expected behaviors are recognized with a BBES sticker by all staff members. Classes are “collecting” those stickers for classroom rewards. Behavior in the cafeteria is also a focus this year. Each table has the potential to earn points toward recognition. Positive lunch time reports will be calculated and added to the ‘Positive Paws.’ Ask your child to tell you about “The Big Three” and how quickly their classroom paw is filling up!

## PTA Fundraising

### Lavenders: Gifts and Gift Wrap

Our fundraiser is starting September 9th—October 1st! We are excited to be on board with again with Lavenders. They have quite a selection of quality products to choose from including gift wrap, kitchen gadgets, gift bags and hand poured scene candles. Fun prizes for student sales will be awarded. For every student selling 40 items, they will get to take a ride in a stretch Hummer limo out for lunch. The students that went last year had a blast!

Please be sure to have your orders in by **October 1st**. If you have any questions, or would like to help with this endeavor, please call Amy Riddick by email at [amy.riddick@cox.net](mailto:amy.riddick@cox.net)



### Spiritwear here soon!

New spiritwear will be coming soon! Be sure to check your Tuesday folder for information on how to purchase Bonnie Brae t-shirts and sweatshirts. A variety of items will be available this year with delivery dates scheduled for three times during the year. Stay tuned for ordering information!

### Fun Fair '09

The Fun Fair was such a success this past spring that we are already planning for this year's event. We will again plan to have food vendors, carnival games and booths, and a silent auction. If you would like to be a part of our planning committee, or if you have contacts for food or carnival vendors, we'd love to hear from you. Please contact Laura Blahusch ([paul.and.laura@cox.net](mailto:paul.and.laura@cox.net)) or Amy Riddick ([amy.riddick@cox.net](mailto:amy.riddick@cox.net)) if you'd like to help out!

