

Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake PTA Council

March 16, 2009

Call to Order: Paula Van Buren called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Darcy Baumbach, Barb Becker, Linda Fieldhouse, Mary Beth Frewin, Laurie Kruppenbacher, Kathy Lynch, Erin Pezzulo, Lauren Roecker, Ann Slocum, Jim Schultz, Karen Smith, Rita Snively, Bob Speck, Paula Van Buren, Lynnette Ziskin.

President's Report: Paula Van Buren.

~Paula thanked those who made the effort to communicate information regarding our current budget situation and to distribute the form letter at BH-BL events (Kindergarten Orientation, Rec Nights, Movie Night, Bookfairs, etc.) and to those who sent a letter on behalf of BH-BL to our local and state legislators in an effort to lobby for state aid.

~Paula is a parent representative on the School Calendar Committee. There has been a lot of discussion between parents, teachers, and administration regarding the starting date of school this fall due to the fact that Labor Day falls on the latest possible date in September. A separate issue is setting the date for middle and high school orientation for 6th and 9th graders. A decision will be made soon at the next meeting on March 25.

~The next BOE meeting will be held at Pashley on April 7.

~Final membership payments are due to NYS PTA by March 31, 2009. Please use the mandatory forms.

~Some PTAs are distributing their monthly minutes prior to their approval. This practice MUST stop; the minutes must be approved first, and then dispersed.

~Paula initiated a discussion concerning gifts for teachers/staff for the upcoming Teacher Appreciation/Staff Appreciation day. After a very lengthy discussion, it was agreed that (PTA policy) PTAs cannot purchase or solicit money for gifts for teachers/staff.

Secretary's Report: Lynnette Ziskin.

~The minutes of the January 19, 2009 Council meeting were distributed via e-mail, but not approved via e-mail. Lauren motioned to approve the January minutes, Laurie seconded. A vote followed; the minutes were unanimously approved. They will be sent to Christy Multer for inclusion on the BH-BL website.

Treasurer's Report: Amy Agan.

~Amy could not attend tonight's meeting; Lynnette provided Amy's report:

1. The Balance Sheet as of March 16, 2009 which reflects the following:
 - Checking Account: \$6,646.57
 - Savings Account: \$8,709.62
 - Total Assets: \$15,356.19
2. The Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual, July 2008 – June 2009.
3. A check for Kathy Lynch for Theatre for Children expenses.

School Board Liaison's Report: Bob Speck.

~The last BOE meeting was held on March 12.

~Overall, the Board has not heard many positive comments regarding this year's budget.

~The next Budget Forum is scheduled for March 31 at 7:30 p.m. at the East Glenville Fire Dept.

~The January '09 Bulletin included a great deal of positive information about the BH-BL School District.

~Mike Wolf will not seek re-election for his BOE position. Meet and listen to the individuals seeking seats on our Board of Education at Meet the Candidates Night on Tuesday, May 5 at 7:30 p.m. in the high school library.

~ The Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake Board of Education remains concerned about what the Governor's proposed state aid cuts would mean for our school district in 2009-10.

Superintendent's Report: Jim Schultz.

~The programmatic needs committee has been postponed at this time. There are \$30 million in infrastructure needs/problems throughout our district. Input is needed from the committee for infrastructure needs throughout the district. PTA members are invited to join the committee.

~On Thursday, the head of University at Albany Nano College is coming to BH-BL for a presentation about Nanotechnology. The general public is invited – the program is not limited to our district. The program targets high school level students although all ages are welcome.

~The most recent budget updates and developments can be found on the BH-BL website. This is a very critical time in the budget development process; everyone is encouraged to express their concerns and get involved. There has been a reduction of almost a million dollars in staffing alone, with care taken not to cause damage to any particular instructional program or department. (Thus far, 24 staff positions have been cut for a cost savings of \$870,000.)

~Recently Governor Paterson has promised to use federal stimulus money to restore school districts' state aid to current year levels (\$1.6 million for BH-BL). If this plan is approved by the state Legislature, Jim estimates that his recommendations could result in a BH-BL school tax levy increase of 3.5 percent.

~Jim reiterated that this is not a one year problem – the district will feel the effects of this financial crisis for (an estimated) three years.

Teacher Representative's Report: Rocco Montesano.

~Rocco was unable to attend tonight's meeting; no report.

Committee Reports:

Audit Committee: Karen Smith.

~No report.

Eileen Briggs Award: Ann Slocum.

~The nomination forms for the award will be sent out the week of March 26. In addition to asking for nominations, Ann is demanding an e-mail reply from the nominators.

Arts & Enrichment: Rita Snively.

~Charlton Heights and Pashley will host Chris Holder; a grant was received from the Saratoga County Arts Council for these programs.

~The middle school is scheduled to have Living Voices for the 7th grade, Lewis & Clark for 8th grade, and NYSTI also for the 8th grade.

~No update for programs at the high school.

~The BOCES Arts & Enrichment Showcase is planned for April 30 at Cohoes Middle and High Schools. Rita informed the unit reps to encourage the new Arts & Enrichment chair people to attend the showcase. Rita will complete the necessary paperwork for them.

~Grants received in the past from the Saratoga County Arts Council are in jeopardy because these grants are state funded. The BOCES aid is not affected by the current financial/budget crisis.

Founders Day: Erin Pezzulo.

~The Founders Day dinner was held on February 5, 2009 at the Edison Country Club in Rexford.

~Erin received all positive feedback regarding the new format from a formal sit-down dinner to hearty hors d'oeuvres. Next year, we must better communicate that dinner is not provided for families that are waiting for their honoree.

~Clarification: Founders Day is a Council program provided under National PTA guidelines, which must be adhered to. All nominations are confidential and the winners are to remain confidential until the Founders Day awards ceremony. Currently, Stevens informs their winner. Paula will provide unit reps with Founders Day winners' clarification.

After-school Enrichment Clubs: Karen Smith.

~No report.

Theatre for Children: Kathy Lynch.

~Tickets are being offered for sale at the elementary schools via backpack mail. Kathy will deliver the tickets to the main offices of the elementary schools this week. Tickets will also be for sale at Mail 'n More.

~The show ("Grease Jr.") involves over 50 cast members, including the elementary principals and Mr. Schultz.

~Show times are 7:00 p.m. on Friday April 3, and 2:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. on Saturday April 4.

~Jane Coffey, the founder of the Children's Theatre, has set up a \$500 scholarship program in honor of the Theatre's 50th anniversary. The recipient must be a BH-BL theatre/music student.

~The Spotlight contained an extensive story about the 50th anniversary of the Theatre.

~There will be a reunion for participants of the program, past and present, to celebrate the 50th anniversary on Saturday March 21 from 2:00 – 5:00 p.m. at the Town of Ballston in the Community Room.

Odyssey of the Mind: Jean Smith.

~No report.

Council Delegate Reports:

High School PTA Council Rep: Laurie Kruppenbacher.

~The BH-BL High School's production of "Beauty and the Beast" were on Friday March 13 at 7:30 and Saturday March 14 at 2:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. All shows were sold out.

~The BH-BL budget is a major concern; please attend the Forum at the end of the month (March 31) at the East Glensville Fire Department. There is a sample letter on the website; please consider printing, signing, and sending it to our legislators.

~The dodge ball/Jailbreak tournament was successful. The fundraiser was \$2.00 per person.

~Notice is going to seniors that they can get credit for their fundraiser toward prom tickets. They have Trust in Agency accounts for each class to hold money for reunions.

~The staff luncheon will be on May 14 from 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. The theme is "Garden Party".

~The Prom will be on May 15 at the Hall of Springs; the After-prom Party will be at the Bayou Café.

~Membership money is due by March 31; the high school's membership total is 368.

Middle School PTA Council Rep: Mary Beth Frewin.

- ~ The Student of the Month luncheon was held in February.
- ~ There are 29 teams that have signed-up to play Monopoly, largely 6th graders. The committee is looking at what to do with the game board once the event is completed.
- ~There will be a Rock 'n Bowl fundraiser at BH Lanes, on March 27 from 6:30 – 8:30pm. The Hospitality Committee will organize a bake sale at the event.
- ~Barb Becker is organizing a Great Escape fundraiser. Flyers are available in students' homerooms. This information is also available on the BH-BL website.
- ~The Nominating committee is currently searching for a president and treasurer.
- ~The Building Council has had in-depth discussions regarding the student's abuse of electronic equipment during the school instructional day.
- ~The 8th Grade Awards Ceremony and Dance is scheduled for Friday June 19. The awards ceremony will begin at 6:00 p.m. at the High School. The dance will begin at 7:00 p.m. at the Middle School. Electronic devices including cell phones are prohibited at this event.
- ~The current 5th grade students will visit the Middle School in June on the half days (exam days).
- ~There has been an increase in illegal absences.
- ~The Middle School production, Buggy Malone was successful.

Charlton Heights PTA Council Rep: Barb Becker.

- ~Chris Holder's residency program for the 5th graders was well-liked.
- ~Tickets for the play (Grease Jr.) are available via backpack mail.
- ~There will be a Buy One Get One Book Fair at the end of March.
- ~An additional fundraiser is necessary to supplement the fall sale; a flower bulb sale is being planned.
- ~The one week PARP program recently concluded.

Pashley PTA Council Rep: Darcy Baumbach.

- ~The Pancake Breakfast was a success. Proceeds from the raffle went to purchase new instruments for the music department.
- ~PARP is ongoing. It started with a read-in on March 6 and will conclude with a movie night.
- ~The Book Fair is scheduled for March 17 – 19.
- ~Curiosity Shop is in full swing – there is one week left.

Stevens PTA Council Rep: Linda Fieldhouse.

- ~The Stevens Goes Green event has been canceled. Attendance was not what it was hoped to be last year and vendors were also backing down. There will be a plant sale fundraiser instead.
- ~The "Enjoy the City" book sale raised money for the new stage curtain.
- ~PARP is this month.
- ~Kindergarten Registration will be at Stevens on March 9th & 10th.
- ~The Book Fair will be held March 18 – 20. The Pajama Party will be on March 20.
- ~Volunteers at Stevens collected 100 signed letters regarding the proposed cuts in state funding; they will be sent to the NYS Legislature.
- ~The Silver Graphics program will not run next year.
- ~On March 9, Eric Freestone will have 9 classes that will begin keeping food journals to help encourage healthy eating habits. Eric will reinforce this during gym class.
- ~Congratulation to the Odyssey of the Mind team who came in 2nd place!

~John Blowers gave an extensive report regarding the budget situation for next year.

Vice-president: Erin Pezzulo.

~No report.

2nd Vice-president: Laurie Kruppenbacher.

No report.

3rd Vice-president: Lauren Roecker.

No report.

Unfinished Business:

None.

New Business:

None.

Meeting Adjourned: 8:30 p.m.

The next PTA Council meeting will be held on Tuesday May 19, 2009 in the Principal's Conference Room at the High School.

**This is the final meeting of the school year and coincides with the SCHOOL BUDGET
VOTE at the BH-BL High School gym from 7:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.**

PLEASE VOTE.