



Gunpowder Elementary PTA Newsletter

www.gunpowderpta.org

Welcome Back and Welcome To Those Who Are New!

I hope that everyone had an enjoyable summer, and now that it's over that you have successfully transitioned into school year mode and are coping well with all that comes with it. For those of you who do not yet know me, I am Chris Kirtz, Gunpowder Elementary's PTA president. I am returning for a second year, and am happy to say that nearly all of the PTA Executive Committee and many members of the PTA Board also are returning. We have a

good core group of people, all of whom are energized and excited by the promise and prospects of a new school year. We are going to have a lot of fun this year while working to make our school year a good one for our children, their teachers and the administration. I welcome those of you who are new to Gunpowder, or who may be new to an active role in our organization, to join us! We have a busy and rewarding school year ahead of us. I hope you

will take me up on my offer!

Last year the PTA asked Gunpowder families for their thoughts and feedback on a variety of topics including events, communication, fundraising and the PTA structure. The feedback you provided was very valuable. We took it to heart and did a great deal of our planning for this year with it in mind. Following is a brief preview of some of what is to come.

PTA Meetings

The first PTA General Membership Meeting for the year was on Back to School Night. I appreciate so many of you coming early for the meeting. There will not be another General Meeting until December, but that doesn't mean there is no place for you in the PTA. **Our Board meets monthly, usually the second Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. in the school library. Meetings are usually about an hour and anyone is welcome to attend, PTA members and those adults who have children at Gunpowder but who may not have joined the PTA. The meetings are a**

good opportunity for you to find out what the PTA committees are up to, and how you can help. **The first PTA Board Meeting of the school year will be on Tuesday, October 13.**

PTA Membership

The price and structure of PTA membership for this year is different from last. Gunpowder's PTA is offering just one level of membership. The first adult membership costs \$8, and the second is \$7. All membership fees help support the Baltimore County and Maryland PTAs as well as Gunpowder PTA programs. **PTA members get free admission to all Gunpowder PTA Family Fun events.** Thank you to those of you who have already joined our association. If you have not yet done so, or have others in your family such as grandparents who might want to, you can download additional copies of the membership materials from the PTA website. Go to www.gunpowderpta.org, then choose "More Info" then "Forms."

Upcoming October Events

3rd	Pitch In For Progress Event 8 a.m. - 12 p.m.
6th	Market Day Pick-up 6 p.m.
9th	Bank Day
9th	Fun Run
12th	PTA Restaurant Night: Qdoba Mexican Grill
13th	Volunteer Training 6 p.m.
13th	PTA Board of Directors' Meeting 6:30 p.m.
15th	Kindergarten Apple Day
16th	Professional Day: Schools Closed
17th	Outdoor Movie Night: <i>Monster's vs. Aliens</i> 7 p.m.
19th	SIT Meeting 3:45 p.m.
20th	Fun Run Awards Assemblies
23rd	5th Grade Fundraiser Doors open at 6 p.m.
30th	Halloween Parade

Continued on page 2.



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Continued from page 1.

Fundraising

Our PTA is taking a break from the type of giftware/gift wrap fundraiser we have offered in the past and this year, unless circumstances require otherwise, will go with three primary fundraiser types: the KidStuff Coupon book sale which just concluded; monthly restaurant fundraiser nights; and our first ever "Book Boogie," a sponsorship fundraiser whereby you and your family will be able to sponsor your child for his or her efforts in support of the PTA. The philosophy guiding this year's fundraising is that all our efforts to raise funds will have the objective of saving our families money or time. I hope you will support us to the best of your ability. Information about our "Book Boogie" will be coming home soon.

Communication

Many of you told us communication between the PTA and families had improved over previous years, but that there was still room for improvement. With this in mind, we are pleased to tell you about a change we made to the PTA website. It still features much of the same great information you came to expect, but now has a new, easy to navigate design. The new website features a calendar of activities and events, a place for current flyers, a way to contact the PTA, sign-up for committees, volunteer in the classroom and much more. There is a built in shopping page that lets your online purchases raise money for the PTA. There is also a broadcast e-mail feature that we plan to use to send out re-

mindings and updates about PTA and school events. **In order to receive broadcast e-mails we need you to set-up an account.** It's free, takes only a minute, and will help you stay in the loop.

In addition, the PTA will, for the first time, be printing and distributing a printed student directory utilizing the information you input into the website when you create your account. To participate, please visit www.gunpowderpta.org to register your family. Simply click "Create Your Account" on the homepage. Don't have a computer but still want to be in the printed directory? Use the form attached to this newsletter.

Volunteer Opportunities

Our school and our PTA rely heavily on the efforts of parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles who help out in the

classroom, from home, and who serve on PTA committees. We each play a key role in making the school year a rewarding one for our children. Last year Gunpowder had a lot of volunteers. Our goal is to increase that number this year and to grow the size of all our PTA committees. **For a list of volunteer opportunities and committees, visit the PTA website or contact PTA Volunteer Coordinator Kathryne Snyder at volunteer@gunpowderpta.org.** Whether you have minutes, hours, or days that you can donate, we urge you to please consider becoming involved with the PTA and our school. All volunteers who help out at school and on field trips are required by Baltimore County Public Schools to be trained and must watch a brief 14-minute video. For your convenience, this short film will be shown prior to the first several PTA board meetings of the year.

Programs and Events

The goal of the PTA is to enhance the school experience of all our children. Money raised by the PTA supports a variety of needs and helps purchase equipment and supplies for the school, pay for assemblies and fieldtrips, and other needs as they arise. A good portion of PTA proceeds also are used to support family social events sponsored by the PTA throughout the year. Many of your favorites including the Winter Carnival and the Spring Dance will be returning along with a few new events including an outdoor movie night in the park and a roller-skating party. Watch for more details to come, or click on the "Calendar" link on the PTA website for a preview.

With your help, we are going to have a great school year!

Chris Kirtz, PTA President
president@gunpowderpta.org

PTA: H1N1 Flu Resources for Families

The National PTA has assembled a wealth of resources about the H1N1 (Swine) Flu to help families better understand this strain of the flu, common symptoms, and the risks associated with this virus that the World Health Organization anticipates soon naming a pandemic. **The resources can be found on the National PTA's website at www.pta.org/2940.htm.**

The National PTA seeks to increase awareness about the illness and eliminate misconceptions associated with it. For example, the

H1N1 virus' classification as a pandemic does not mean this strain of the flu is more deadly than others, or that there should be an increased cause for alarm, just that the virus has spread widely around the world.

The website provides a list of recommendations by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to help your family stay healthy, and links to a variety of other CDC resources about the H1N1 strain and the flu in general. There also are links to an H1N1 Tip Sheet for Par-

**Spread the Word
NOT the Flu!**

ents that answers common questions, and makes suggestions for how best to talk about the H1N1 flu with children. The PTA's "Talking To Children About Swine Flu: A Parent Resource" handout also is available for download, as are activity sheets appropriate for elementary school age students. As flu season approaches, Gunpowder families are encouraged to take advantage of the free resources available on the PTA website.



PTA Introduces New Look, New Website Features

The address remains the same, but the look is different. The PTA made the decision this summer to go a different direction with its website. We are the first school in Baltimore County to adopt the Paperless PTO website template. The result is a new, easy to navigate concise website that is also a fundraiser for our organization.

Parents will like the informative homepage that constantly updates you on upcoming events at the school. Other key features are the calendar page which lets you look ahead to events that are planned for later this year, and the "More Info" tab where you will find links to the minutes from PTA meetings, and copies of flyers and forms that have been distributed at school.

The website's "My Account" page is the basis of the PTA's plan for a printed directory. Simply by registering yourself and your family on this page, you will be putting yourself in the directory, and also making sure we have your e-mail so that you can receive mass e-mail reminders from the PTA about events, deadlines, and more. Registration only takes a minute. If you received e-mails from the PTA last year, you still need to register. There were numerous problems with last year's mass e-mail system and list. We have opted to use our new website system this year and need you to register in order for the e-mail announcements to be effective. We anticipate PTA

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e-mails becoming more important and timely than ever. Don't forget to register!

Lastly, the PTA website is also an electronic shopping mall with links to online retailers including Walmart, Macy's, Barnes and Noble,

Amazon and many, many more. We encourage you to start your online shopping on our website. Everytime you do and make a purchase, the PTA earns a percentage of the sale. This feature costs you nothing and could save you money, as many of the retailers offer

special discounts to those who begin their shopping from our website. Don't wait, if you haven't checked out the new PTA website, visit www.gunpowdepta.org today!

Chris Hagan,
PTA First Vice President/
Webmaster
webmaster@gunpowderpta.org

5th Grade Selling Tickets for Fundraiser

The PTA's 5th Grade Steering Committee is currently selling tickets for its annual Longaberger fundraiser. The event is planned for Friday, October 23 at Tall Cedars. Tickets cost \$10 in advance or \$15 at the door. Tables may be reserved for groups of 10 in advance of the event.

Those of you who are not new to Gunpowder know that the PTA's 5th Grade Steering Committee's event is a family favorite. However, we are unable to offer all the details of the event here. So, for all of those who are new to Gunpowder and/or who want to know more, the PTA's 5th Grade Steering Committee asks you to seek out the specific details of the upcoming event on your own.

The Steering Committee encourages and invites Gunpowder families to turn to the PTA's website. Go to "More Info" then "Flyers" for all the details.

This annual event has proven to be a big success and a lot of fun in the past, and no doubt

will be again this year. We anticipate a lot of attendees leaving with some wonderful Longaberger Baskets and a few other nice items. You can

download a copy of the ticket order form from the PTA website or use the attached form.

The 2009-2010 Gunpowder Elementary PTA 5th Grade Steering Committee presents its...

Annual Longaberger® Basket/Vendor Fundraiser

Friday, October 23, 2009
Tall Cedars
2501 Putty Hill Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21234

Doors open at 6:00 p.m.
Festivities begin promptly at 7:00 p.m.

Admission Donation: \$10.00 in advance;
\$15.00 at the door

(Tables can be reserved in groups of 10 only.)

Admission includes 20 opportunities to participate!

Additional opportunities to participate are available for purchase. Also available: Door Prizes, Good Food and More!

For tickets and additional information, contact:
Teresa Kurtz—grade5fundraiser@gunpowderpta.org
Brenda Bennett—grade5@gunpowderpta.org

This fundraiser is not connected with or sponsored by
The Longaberger® Company.



Treasurer Vacancy

Shannon Wagner, last year's PTA Treasurer, who was elected to a second term last May, resigned her post for personal reasons in September. The PTA is currently taking nominations for the treasurer position and has hopes of voting on a new treasurer at the October PTA Board Meeting. **If you are interested in the position or wish to nominate someone, please contact Chris Kirtz, PTA President, at president@gunpowderpta.org. The October PTA Board meeting will take place at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, October 13.**



In a related announcement, the PTA is pleased to introduce a new committee, the Accounting Committee. Susan Shanklin is the new committee's chairperson. The committee will be assisting the PTA treasurer with bookkeeping responsibilities. Sue can be reached at accounting@gunpowderpta.org. Welcome Sue!

Monsters Coming To A Park Near You

Aliens too! Actually, it's the Dream Works' film *Monsters vs. Aliens*. **The PTA is sponsoring an outdoor movie night for Gunpowder families at Honeygo Regional Park on Saturday night, October 17.** The movie, which starts at 7 p.m., is free for Gunpowder PTA member families.

Bring a blanket or lawn chairs, and join the Gunpowder Ele-

mentary School community for a fun flick on a fall night under the stars. More information will be coming home in the days ahead. **For more information, or to find out how you can help out**



with this event, contact Chris Kirtz, President, at president@gunpowderpta.org.

New PTA FUNdraiser!

It's about reading. It's about dance. It's about raising money to pay for assemblies, helping offset the cost of school awards and supplies, assisting families in need, and offering programs and activities that enhance the elementary school experience of all of our children. This year's primary PTA fundraiser is a FUNdraiser! We call it a "Book Boogie."

The event, which will run from November 1 – 13, combines the best elements of a read-a-thon and a dance-a-thon and promises to be a lot of fun. All students will participate in the dance-a-thon during their weekly gym period. The read-a-thon part of the FUNdraiser is optional. Students compete both as families and as classes. Classes that have 100% participation will earn prizes. Prizes also will be awarded to families based on the number of sponsors their children have. The top readers in each grade level will also win prizes.

More information about our Book Boogie will come home

in mid-October. Please support your children and the PTA to the best of your ability. **Unlike with other fundraising events 100% of the money raised through the Book Boogie benefits the PTA, its events and programs.**

The Great Gunpowder



For more information or to join the PTA Fundraising Committee, contact PTA Fundraising Co-chairs, Chris Hagan and Melissa Strohman at fundraiser@gunpowderpta.org.

Have You Joined the PTA Yet?

The Gunpowder PTA Membership Drive is off to a wonderful start! If you haven't sent in your membership dues, please do so. **Membership dues are \$8.00 for the first member and \$7.00 for each additional family member that you recruit.** You can find the membership form on the PTA's website in the "Forms" section.



Please keep in mind that **every homeroom that has 100% membership (that is every student is represented by at least one member) before November 1 will receive a class pizza party courtesy of the PTA!** Thank you in advance for supporting the Gunpowder Elementary School PTA!

Rose McQuay,
PTA Membership Chair
membership@gunpowderpta.org



A Few Notes from the PTA's Volunteer Coordinator

Hello, my name is Kathyryne Snyder and I am the volunteer coordinator for Gunpowder Elementary this year. **In order to volunteer in the school you must complete a volunteer application and watch a volunteer training video. The next time this video will be shown is before the PTA meeting on Tuesday, October 13, at 6 p.m.** Once you are approved to volunteer,

you will find your nametag in the drawers on the front table in the office. I check regularly with the office to see who has been approved, but if you think that I have somehow missed you, feel free to call or e-mail me. My contact information is on the front cover of the volunteer notebook.

When you come in to volunteer there are two places

that you need to sign in!

One is the notebook on the front desk in the "Volunteer" section, and the other is a white notebook on top of the nametag drawers. That way I can keep track of all the hours our wonderful volunteers put in. **If most of your volunteer hours are done outside of school, please feel free to e-mail them to me at volunteer@gunpowderpta.org.** Please also feel free to e-mail me with any questions that you may have. If you have some time to spare, I am sure I can find just the right place

for you to help out!

Volunteers of the Month

Each month I will take the time to recognize two or three of our volunteers. **The September Volunteers of the Month are Melissa Strohman, Tori Banks and Phyllis Henry.** These ladies have already been hard at work making our new school year a success.

Kathyryne Snyder,
Volunteer Coordinator
volunteer@gunpowderpta.org

PTA To Benefit From "Shop For A Cause"

Since 2006, Macy's Shop For A Cause Event has partnered with non-profit groups nationwide to raise more than \$28 million. This is our opportunity to participate in this monumental event!

The Gunpowder PTA, a non-profit organization, is selling special shopping passes for \$5 each. Our PTA keeps 100% of the proceeds!

In exchange, on Saturday, October 17, you get exclusive 20% off all-day savings storewide on a wide assortment of merchandise and an extra-special offer for selected departments. There are few restrictions and no credit card is needed for this special discount offer.

Don't wait to take advantage of this unique opportunity to save money while benefitting the PTA! Fill out and return your Shop For A Cause order form. It came home via backpack two weeks ago, or you can download another copy from the PTA website.



First Market Day Sale Of School Year Is Best Yet!

The September Market Day sale totaled \$1,943.08 with the school earning \$194.00! This was our best Market Day sale in Gunpowder Elementary PTA history!

Thanks to the many faithful Market Day customers and to our many new customers. Enjoy your choices!

October pick up is Tuesday, October 6, with the order sheet cutoff being September 29. The cut off date for

Wanted: Print Shop Help!

Anyone with free time on his/her hands and who wants to help our teachers, should contact me. I have the perfect time filler for you!

We have openings for volunteers in the school's Print

Shop. I will be more than happy to show you how the Print Shop operates. It would be helpful if you could volunteer a few hours each week. The teachers are appreciative of this resource and it helps to save their planning time for planning and not copying. **If you are interested, call me at 410-256-3627 or send me an e-mail.**

Phyllis Henry,
Faculty Support Committee
Chair
faculty_spt@gunpowderpta.org

Internet orders is Wednesday, September 30, at 11 p.m.

Phyllis Henry,
Market Day Chair
marketday@gunpowderpta.org

www.marketday.com

Don't forget to check out their "Spooktacular Values" page for special sale items.



Goal Set 4 Box Tops Program

Gunpowder PTA's Box Tops 4 Education goal for the 2009-2010 school year is \$1,524. So far, 6,842 Box Tops have been submitted, which equates to \$684.20. So, we are already almost half way there!



There's still time to get those Box Tops in before the next submission, which will be mid-October, so keep sending them in. **Also, it would be extremely helpful if the Box Tops were fastened to an official Box Tops form.** One can be found under the "More Info" tab, then "Forms" tab on the new Gunpowder PTA website.

Another simple way to help Gunpowder earn cash with "no clipping required!" is by going to www.TheBig-Clip.com and entering your e-mail address – it's that's simple!

Thank you for your continued support! Happy clipping!

Dawn Jones,
Box Top 4 Education
Committee Chair
boxtops@gunpowderpta.org

Gunpowder's Fun Run Is October 9th

Brought back by popular demand, the Fun Run will be held on Friday, October 9. All students will run/walk the course on this day. The Fun Run is a cumulating activity for the fitness unit being taught in physical education classes.

REMEMBER it doesn't matter what place they finish but that the students TRY THEIR BEST and PARTICIPATE!!!!!! I want them to have fun and enjoy becoming fit!

The 4th and 5th graders will run the course 2 times (1 mile). The 1st, 2nd, and 3rd graders will run the course 1 time (1/2 mile). Kindergarteners will run a 1/4 mile.

The rain date for the Fun Run is Tuesday, October 13. The awards assemblies will take place on Tuesday, October 20 in the cafeteria according to the following schedule:
9:30 – 9:55 a.m. Kindergarten, 1st and 2nd grades.
10:05 – 10:30 a.m. 3rd, 4th and 5th grades.

Needs

Volunteers are needed to help out before and during the Fun Run. Prize donations also are needed.

If you have any questions or can help in anyway, please contact me. See you at the race!

Jayne Donohoe,
Physical Education Teacher
jdonohoe@bcps.org



Below are the times your child's grade level will run on Friday, October 9:

GRADE 1	9:15-10:05 a.m.
GRADE 2	10:10-11:00 a.m.
GRADE K	11:05-11:55 a.m.
GRADE 3	12:30-1:20 p.m.
GRADE 4	1:25-2:15 p.m.
GRADE 5	2:20-3:10 p.m.

The 4th and 5th graders will run the course 2 times (1 mile). 1st, 2nd, and 3rd graders will run the course 1 time (1/2 mile). Kindergarten will run a 1/4 mile.

Gunpowder Bank Day

The Gunpowder Bank Day program is off to a great start! On Friday, September 11, many returning depositors as well as new account holders reported to the cafeteria during announcements to make deposits into their bank accounts. This program has proven to be very successful over the past 10 years with total deposits of more than \$35,000 from both present and former Gunpowder students.

If you would like more information on this super program, or an application to get your student(s) started saving at a young age, send me an e-mail. **The next banking day will be on Friday, October 9.**



Rose McQuay,
Bank Day Coordinator
bankday@gunpowderpta.org

Gunpowder Elementary School PTA Newsletter

The deadline for submissions for the next newsletter is **Wednesday, October 14.**

Please send applicable items to
Chris Hagan, Newsletter Chairperson, at
Newsletter@gunpowderpta.org

For additional information about topics covered in this newsletter, a list of PTA officers and chairpersons, the latest event schedule, and access to a variety of Gunpowder Elementary School and PTA resources, visit the Gunpowder Elementary PTA online at www.gunpowderpta.org

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5th Grade Steering Committee presents its...*

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Friday, October 23, 2009

Tall Cedars

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Admission Donation: \$10.00 in advance;
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(Tables can be reserved in groups of 10 only.)

Admission includes 20 opportunities to participate!

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Door Prizes, Good Food and More!

For tickets and additional information, contact:

Teresa Kurtz—grade5fundraiser@gunpowderpta.org

Brenda Bennett—grade5@gunpowderpta.org

This fundraiser is not connected with or sponsored by The Longaberger ® Company.

You can also order tickets by filling out the information below and returning it to your child’s teacher along with payment in an envelope marked “PTA: 5th Grade Fundraiser.”

Make checks payable to Gunpowder PTA.

Parent’s Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Student’s Name: _____

Teacher’s Name: _____

Number of Tickets: _____

Total Payment: _____

For PTA use:

Payment received by: _____ Date: _____ Quantity: _____

Amount:\$ _____

Cash ___ Check No. _____

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