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President's Message

As spring approaches and schedules get harder to juggle, please keep the following PTA dates and deadlines in mind.

Most PTAs will be announcing their slate of officers and/or holding their elections in the months of March, April or May. Be sure to consult your local unit bylaws to be sure that your Nominating Committee is working within the deadlines prescribed by your bylaws.

The County Council Annual Meeting and Banquet is **Tuesday, May 6** at Hermitage High School. PTA Presidents should have received their registration packets by now. The packet includes the Registration Form for the Banquet and the Volunteer of the Year Nomination Form. Both forms are due by **April 10**.

The deadline for submitting your exceptional PTA newsletter to the Virginia PTA is **May 1** (see the article on page 5). The PTA newsletters at Tuckahoe Elementary School and Maude Trevvett Elementary School were recognized for their outstanding newsletters in recent years.

Claire Pollock
County Council President

Moody Scholarship Fundraiser Cancelled

The County Council has cancelled the Moody Scholarship Fundraiser scheduled for March 15, due to a lower response than expected.

The County Council continues to rely on donations from local units to fund the majority of the Scholarships that we award to high school seniors each year. Thank you to those units who have already made contributions. Individual donations, memoriam, and contributions from local units can continue to be made payable to the Henrico County Council of PTAs and sent to:

Ingrid Johnson
Treasurer
4509 Argonne Court
Glen Allen, VA 23059

A remittance form can be found at www.hccpta.com.

DISTRICT NEWS

Three Chopt District News

Message from Rivers Edge Elementary PTA President

Submitted by Mirinda Lawrence, Three Chopt VP

Rivers Edge Elementary PTA hosted a Dads and Donuts event to kick off our new dad volunteer initiative. Rick Chapman, one of our great dad volunteers, has worked with the school administration and the PTA to create volunteer opportunities specifically for dads. Our event during Take Your Family to School Week had almost 350 people in attendance (150 dads and 200 students!). All of the dads and kids got to share a morning treat, hear from a few of our dads who volunteer up at school, hear about our new dad initiative, meet and greet the administration, school resource teacher and guidance counselors and then walk their children to their classrooms and say good morning to their child's teacher.

Everyone agreed that this was a great way to get our dads to school and let them know about some great opportunities they have to become more involved.

Kathy Burcher

Rivers Edge Elementary PTA President

Colonial Trail Elementary is Growing—Literally

Submitted by Phil Cantone, Colonial Trail Principal

Colonial Trail Elementary School has recently partnered with The Growing Connection, a program that links schools internationally and introduces low-cost, water-efficient and sustainable food growing innovations. Representatives of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, one of the program's founding organizations, visited the school yesterday to train teachers and kickoff the project.

Through the program, Colonial Trail Elementary will begin growing crops in ten earth boxes purchased through the fundraising efforts of the PTA, SCA and a grant given by the Henrico Education Foundation. Once Colonial Trail has finished a season of growing vegetables and herbs, they can begin the process of adopting a school in another part of the world, which involves purchasing earth boxes and materials for the adopted school to begin their own growing process. Staying connected by the Internet, the two schools will work side-by-side tracking water and light adjustments, plant measurements, and sharing experiences with each other. Ultimately, five to six schools will communicate as a group from different parts of the world.

The project allows students and families in America, Nicaragua, Ghana and Mexico to learn from one another and potentially earn income where it is most needed and break the cycle of world hunger.



Tuckahoe District News

Carver Elementary PTA Holds Family Fun & Fitness Night

Carver Elementary PTA hosted "Family Fun & Fitness Night" following their General Meeting in February. Participants learned how fitness can be lots of fun. Students, teachers, family and friends enjoyed an evening of Zumba, jumping rope, volleyball, dancing the Cha Cha Slide, and even an obstacle course. Healthy snacks and refreshments were provided at the event.



Brookland District News

Mount Vernon Middle School Raises Money for Pennies for Patients

Submitted by Helena Lythgoe, Brookland VP

Mount Vernon Middle School has broken an all time record by collecting over \$433.00 for Pennies For Patients. We have a total of 68 students at Mt. Vernon. Last year we collected a total of \$73.00. Many of our students here at Mt. Vernon have huge challenges to overcome; and for them to get behind Pennies for Patients it shows real passion and spirit. A couple of our staff members and their classes have been in competition. Ms. Holloman and her 6th grade class continue to give each day and Mr. Futrell's 7th grade class took the lead by \$7.00. We continued the competition until Wednesday, March 5, 2008. Once the money is counted, the class that collected the most will receive a pizza party. The whole school will have an ice cream social as a thank you for their accomplishment. Our goal is \$500.00 and I am sure we will reach it and more. We hope the spirit of giving here at Mount Vernon continues to grow as we strive to continue to set examples for those to come for years.



Blanche Bourne, Coordinator
Pennies For Patients

Mount Vernon Middle School Helps Support Ronald McDonald House

Submitted by Helena Lythgoe, Brookland VP

Some of the students at Mount Vernon Middle School have been supporting the Ronald McDonald House by collecting pop top tabs. The Richmond, Virginia Ronald McDonald House now participates in the Pop-Top Program! It's easy to help and costs you nothing. Simply save your clean, dry pop top tabs from canned beverages, canned vegetables, and pet food cans and bring them to the Ronald McDonald House at 2330 Monument Avenue or drop them off at any McDonald's restaurant. They recycle the tabs and use the funds for the upkeep of the Ronald McDonald House.



Varina District News

Highland Spring and Varina High School PTAs Holding After-Prom Events

Submitted by Andrea Beck, Varina VP

Highland Springs and Varina High Schools are both busy organizing their after-prom events since April is right around the corner. As our children prepare for the prom with decisions of finding the perfect place to dine, purchasing the right dresses or tuxedos, coordinating the corsages, transportation and, of course, the hair and nails for the ladies, our PTSA's are not forgetting they are also making decisions about what to do after prom ends.



Highland Springs High School is holding its event on April 26th from 12:30a.m.—4:00 a.m. at the Hanover Bowling Alley. They will have a DJ, a dance contest, prize giveaways and will be able to watch videos, play pool, play arcade games and, of course, bowl.

Varina High School is holding its event on April 19th from 10:00 p.m. through 5:00 a.m. They are going to break tradition this year by not holding the event at John Rolfe Middle School. They will instead go to a recreational building in Sandston. Their theme will be "Casino Night" in which there will be games to play like Texas Hold 'Em. For those with a crafty touch, they will be able create memory pages of their special night. A DJ will also be present with a possibility of a Karaoke machine showing up for their performers.

After-Prom PTSA events are very important to our young adults, especially since other parties with drugs or alcohol may seem more appealing but could be left with a possibility of a life altering consequence. If you are in a position to help out any high school with their after-prom event, please be sure to contact your area high school PTSA president. These events can be very costly but could save lives or prevent other life altering choices that could be made that special night, "Prom Night".

Virginia Lottery Super Teacher Awards

Reprinted from Virginia PTA Voice

I'm sure that many of you know and appreciate at least one dedicated Virginia public school teacher who consistently goes the extra mile each day to serve their students and their communities. Parents and students have a great opportunity to spotlight a deserving public school teacher through a joint awards program of Virginia PTA and the Virginia Lottery. These two organizations also recognize that Virginia is brimming with these outstanding teachers and have partnered to bring you the "Virginia Lottery Super Teacher Awards."



Through this program, the Virginia Lottery will pay tribute to those educators who put smiles on their students' faces and who are shaping their futures. The "Virginia Lottery Super Teacher Awards" will recognize eight Virginia public school teachers with a \$2,000 credit from the Supply Room Company to outfit their classrooms as well as a \$2,000 check from the Virginia Lottery.

The program bypasses the bureaucracy of many recognition programs and allows parents and their children to honor those teachers who have made such a difference in the lives of their students. Nominations, due April 11, may be made by parents, colleagues and former students at least 18 years old. The nomination form was sent to local PTA units in a special mailing last week and is available on the web at

www.valottery.com/promotion/teacher/nominate_teacher.asp. Nominees must be current public school teachers in Virginia in grades K-12. Judging will be based on essays from the nomination forms demonstrating the nominee's passion and commitment to teaching, classroom innovation and creativity and the involvement of parents and families in their student's education.

Thanks!

Melissa Nehrbass

Virginia PTA President

Virginia PTA Joins Safe Routes to School Network

Reprinted from Virginia PTA Voice

Virginia PTA is now part of the Virginia Safe Routes to School Network.

Primary goals of the Virginia SRTS Network are:

- To increase physical activity in school-aged children by improving safety
- To increase the number of children walking and bicycling to schools
- To help ensure the success of the federal SRTS program
- To institutionalize the SRTS program so that it is not dependent on one short burst of federal funding

"Virginia PTA will greatly enhance the reach of the SRTS Network," said Stephanie Smith, network organizer and BikeWalk Virginia education director. "We are excited about what we can do together."

Virginia is part of the SRTS State Network Project, which includes nine states and the District of Columbia. Virginia's participation is managed by BikeWalk Virginia, funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. For more information, visit the Virginia SRTS Network at www.saferoutespartnership.org/virginia.

Stella Y. Edwards

Virginia PTA Education Committee Chairman
education@vapta.org

Virginia PTA Outstanding Newsletter Recognition Program

Reprinted from Virginia PTA Voice

Deadline for application is May 1, 2008.

For many PTAs, the newsletter is their chief communications tool, an essential link between school activities and the home. Virginia PTA recognizes this important volunteer job through its annual Outstanding Newsletter Recognition Program.

To enter, local PTAs choose three - only 3, please! - issues from the current school year. If the newsletter is electronic, print out the submissions and send paper copies. Place them in a folder or notebook and mail to the state office along with an entry form.

To give PTAs the largest number of issues from which to choose, the deadline is May 1. PTAs must be in good standing, with bylaws current and dues paid by Dec. 1, 2007, to be eligible.

Entry forms are available on the Local Unit Resource Guide CD sent to all PTA presidents last summer or, in the members-only section of the web site, on Page 22, at this link:

http://www.vapta.org/Members/LURG/Section_IX_Forms_07_08.pdf.

Denise Bowman-Scott

Virginia PTA Public Relations Committee Chairman
public_relations@vapta.org



Virginia PTA Action Alert

Reprinted from Virginia PTA Action Alert Email Notice

Members of the General Assembly have proposed a procedural change in how state funding is distributed to support the state Board of Education's Standards of Quality (SOQ). Virginia PTA supports the full funding of the Standards of Quality, which Virginia law requires local school divisions to meet for accreditation.

However the General Assembly has not kept pace with fully funding these requirements. Now proposals are on the table to change the funding formula for the SOQs that will require local divisions to spend more local money to ensure their schools meet the standards.

The Virginia Education Association (VEA) has prepared an analysis of what the House budget would mean to local school divisions, saying that costs to localities, by the 2010-12 biennium, would exceed \$350 million.

Go to www.veawetech.org/images/pdf/Budget%20Analysis%202008.pdf to see the shortfalls the House budget would cause each Virginia school division.

Go to www.veanea.org/legislative_contact.asp to e-mail budget conferees to stop this damaging change in its tracks.

Please act immediately to urge your delegate and senator to oppose this.

Jane S. Brooks

Virginia PTA Legislation Committee Chairman



Leadership Training Conference

New and continuing PTA leaders are invited to attend a condensed, concentrated learning conference July 11-12 as part of the recently revamped Virginia PTA Leadership Training Conference.

The "power pill" of PTA orientation and instruction, the LTC has moved to a more accessible location for many attendees, Deep Run High School in Glen Allen outside Richmond. Gone, too, are the college dorms and dining hall meals.

Based on comments by past attendees, PTA has:

- Adjusted the conference to 1½ days to meet busy volunteers' schedules
- Planned workshops, round tables and other opportunities to network and to receive program ideas, guides, membership cards and other valuable resources from fellow PTAers
- Allowed time to visit an extensive exhibit hall and PTA store
- Planned workshops to meet the needs of seasoned -- as well as new -- PTA leaders
- Included a boxed lunch on Saturday in the reduced \$35 registration fee.

The theme for this year's LTC is "VITAL," which stands for Vision In Training And Leadership. Local nominating committees can use the availability of this "VITAL" training as an incentive as they recruit officers and committee chairs for the 2008-09 school year. With lower costs, more leaders can attend.

Registration information will be posted on the Virginia PTA web site soon and will be included in a mailing to current PTA presidents later this spring.

Anne Carson

Virginia PTA Leadership Training Conference Chairman

District Reflections Program

The District *Reflections* program was held Sunday, March 9th at 3:00 p.m. at Atlee High School in Hanover.

The theme for next year is "WOW!" We will be getting information out to the local units as soon as we receive the packet from the State PTA. If you have any questions, please contact Wendy Logan wplogan@verizon.net or Kelly Powell at keltpow@aol.com. Because of the earlier submission deadlines, it is important to appoint your *Reflections* chair when other PTA Board positions are filled this spring.

County Council Nominations

If you are interested in serving on the County Council Board for 2008-2009, please contact a member of the Nominating Committee listed below. The Nominating Committee will announce its slate of officers at least 30 days prior to the election, which will occur at the County Council Annual Banquet on Tuesday, May 6 at Hermitage High School.

Brookland District:	Beverly Cocke	BevLCocke@aol.com	262-3280
Fairfield District:	Operadella Williams	Operadella@aol.com	314-3503
Three Chopt District:	Wendy Logan	wplogan@verizon.net	360-5915
Tuckahoe District:	Cathy Carter	kandhcarter@yahoo.com	285-4280
Varina District:	Lisa Creeden	ldcreeden@verizon.net	737-4695

Save the Date

March 19	State Board of Education meets, 9 a.m., Richmond
April 10	County Council Banquet Registration and Volunteer of the Year nomination forms due.
May 1	Outstanding Newsletter Recognition Program application deadline
May 6	County Council Annual Meeting and Banquet at Hermitage High School
June 21-23	National PTA Convention, San Diego
July 11-12	Virginia PTA Leadership Training Conference, Deep Run High School, Glen Allen



SAVE THE DATE

Leadership Training Conference

JULY 11- 12, 2008

**Deep Run High School
Glen Allen, Virginia
(Richmond Area)**

We heard your “Voice” and made some changes:

- We have shortened it to 1 ½ days
- We have planned workshops, round tables, and other opportunities to network and receive program ideas, guides, membership cards, and other valuable resources
- We have given you time to visit an extensive exhibit hall and to network with PTA leaders from around the state
- A wide variety of workshops will be offered for both new and veteran PTA leaders
- We are currently working on reducing the cost of attendance as well

This “**new and improved**” one and a half day Leadership Training Conference (LTC) is the most important training offered by Virginia PTA and is a must for all officers and many committee chairs!

Proposed Schedule:

Friday: 1-5 p.m.

Saturday: 9-5 p.m.

Keep connected:

- Talk to your current board members.
- Find out who is interested in attending.
- Review your budget to ensure there is a line item for training.

Look for the registration information, which will be posted very soon!

Mark your calendars and begin making plans now to attend the Annual Leadership Training Conference July 11 & 12, 2008. This highly charged and exciting event has every PTA leader in mind. We look forward to seeing you there in July!

***Ensure the success of your PTA and motivate your members –
Plan to attend LTC now!***

National PTA Legislative Conference 2008

Submitted by Wendy Logan

The National PTA held their Legislative Conference on February 27th and 28th in Washington D.C. This conference was a great opportunity to meet representatives from across the county. The Virginia Delegation consisted of Virginia State PTA President, **Melissa Nehrbass**, Virginia State Legislative Chair, **Jane Brooks**, Virginia State Field Service Chair and member of the VA State PTA Capital Committee, **Anne Carson**, Henrico County Council Reflections Co-Chair, **Wendy Logan** and Rivers Edge PTA President and member of the VA State PTA Capital Committee, **Kathy Burcher**.

On Wednesday, we attended several seminars. The seminar for beginners reviewed how a bill becomes a law and how individuals can mobilize to get a law changed. To get information regarding the congressional records visit the website: www.thomas.gov. This website was created so that all Americans would be able to access information to the Congress.

The keynote speaker for lunch was Dan Pink. He has written the book, *The Whole New Mind- Why Right-Brainers Will Rule The Future*. He was an excellent speaker who spoke to the fact that our world is changing and the jobs that are children will hold are very different than the jobs today. He believes that arts teach many important skills. For our economy to be competitive globally, we will have to ensure that our children receive this type of training.

On Thursday, PTA members walked the "Hill" all day. We had appointments with six Congressmen and a Congresswoman and their aides. We also met with the legislative aides in Senator Warner's and Webb's offices. There were three messages to our legislators from the PTA.

The first message was in regards to **The Child Nutrition and School Lunch Protection Act**; Senate bill S.771 and House of Representative; H.R. 1363. This bipartisan legislation requires the US Dept of Agriculture to update its school nutrition standards and apply those standards to the whole school. Current regulations utilize nutrition standards developed in 1979.

The second message dealt with the **Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act- No Child Left Behind (NCLB)**. The PTA would like to see the following included in NCLB:

- More accountability to parents
- Better data through a more understandable delivery system
- Better resources to help teachers and parents
- Community Support

The third message was in regards to **Funding for Education and Child-Related programs**. The PTA believes that to ensure schools and districts can provide a quality education to all children, additional targeted federal funds are needed to help schools implement specific interventions designed to improve student achievement.

Plans Underway for Harvie PTA

The County Council is ready to set out the ground work to establish a PTA at the new Harvie Elementary School!

All parents of children who will be attending Harvie Elementary School in the fall are invited to attend a PTA Planning Meeting on **Monday, April 7**, at 6 p.m. at Hidden Creek Recreation Center. We will elect a Nominating Committee and a Bylaws Committee, and elect a Chair and Secretary of the Organizing Committee--temporary positions to guide the group through the process.

We will follow up with an Organization Meeting on **Monday, May 5**, also at 6 p.m. at Hidden Creek Recreation Center, where the parents will vote on their new bylaws and elect a slate of officers.

Please direct any questions to Claire Pollock at President@HCCPTA.com or 740-6972. We look forward to your assistance and involvement at this exciting time!