



# Perry Hall Middle School PTSA



## PANTHER BEAT

PTSA Web site: [www.phmsptsa.org](http://www.phmsptsa.org)

March 2009

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## **A Message From the President**

During the past few months, many of our families have unfortunately experienced tremendously difficult times, both financially and catastrophically. Our hearts go out to the Chen family who suffered great losses resulting from a recent fire. However, even at such a devastating time, it was uplifting to see our community pull together and offer support to this family. Recently The Perry Hall Improvement Association organized a "gift card drop off" to offer assistance to the Chen family, and I am happy to say that many PHMS PTSA members participated.

This only illustrates in a small way something we already know: Perry Hall Middle School is truly one of the best around! Even in tough economic times we have continued to meet our goals. I would like to thank each and every parent, teacher, student, and family member who not only joined PTSA this year, but those who have become involved and remain active.

Thank you to the teachers who attend our monthly meetings, plan and coordinate events such as the upcoming Star Search talent show, nominate students deserving of recognition, and attend PTSA-sponsored events.

Thank you to you parents who not only attend our monthly meetings, but continue to burn the midnight oil to make our many programs and events so successful. We have an amazing team of dedicated parents who continually make our monthly Market Day, annual fundraiser, and Spirit Wear activities tremendously successful. Our Membership committee worked extra hard again this year to maintain over 1500 current members, while our Communications department works "behind the scenes" almost

daily, assisting teachers and faculty with printing needs, compiling information, editing articles and publishing our monthly newsletter.

A special thank you to each and every student who not only became a member this year, but to those who show their school pride on spirit days, and who have become involved with the PTSA in varying capacities. We encourage all students to become active in student government activities as well as the PTSA. This is your school and your education and we are very interested in your input.

There are too many people to single out and thank for their ongoing efforts, but please know that your efforts do not go unnoticed! From students who turn in "Boxtopoly" sheets, to parents who offer clerical support from home, to our committee chairpersons and local senators and delegates, don't ever think for a moment that your efforts go unnoticed.

I have also been busy communicating with the local PTA's of our feeder elementary schools in an attempt to fill anticipated PTSA vacancies for the 2009-2010 school year. We have so far procured a few new leaders but still have the need for many more. Please consider your talents and abilities and contact me at [volunteer@phmsptsa.org](mailto:volunteer@phmsptsa.org) for more information on how you can make a difference! Donating a few hours, chairing a committee, or anything in between, we need you so that we can best serve our purpose of Every Child, One Voice.

Best regards,

Heather Patti  
PTSA President

## SUNSHINE COMMITTEE UPDATE

The Sunshine Committee would like to thank each and every person who attended the Winter Music Concerts and made a donation to the Johns Hopkins Children's Center Pediatric Burn Unit. We collected \$2058.50 over the three evenings. Thank you for your generous donations. The Pediatric Burn Unit is very appreciative of our support. The monies collected have been deposited in our savings account. We will collect donations again at the Spring concerts and will send the Pediatric Burn Unit a check at the end of this school year.

Lea Dissen  
Sunshine Committee Chairperson



## MARKET DAY

As spring approaches, you are really not going to want to spend time cooking. You are going to want to spend time outside, savoring the warm weather, and hoping the Orioles finally have a winning season.

This is where Market Day can help you out!!! There are many products which take 30 minutes or less to heat and eat. And they are so tasty!!!

**This month's ordering deadline is 11pm on March 5th.** Pick up will be on March 11th from 7 to 8pm. **(Please be aware of the time change for pick up!!! We are going to be starting 30 minutes later than usual!)**

As always thank you to our volunteers who make Market Day a success! Please consider volunteering at pick up; it is always a good time!

Kathy Schwabeland  
spicykathy211@aol.com

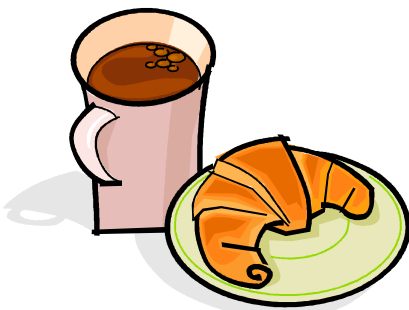


## TEACHER BREAKFAST & COFFEE

Thank you to the following people who sent in food for the January teacher breakfast: MaryLou Miller, Karen Siewierski, Suzanne Vari, Susan Smith, Shelley Shank, Tina Sherman, Luise Fortney, Amina Feathers, and the Halls.

If you would like to volunteer to send something into the teacher breakfast please contact me!

Kathy Schwabeland  
spicykathy211@aol.com



## SPIRIT WEAR SALE

We are launching our second Spirit Wear Sale. If you weren't able to take advantage of our fall sale or if you want to purchase additional Spirit Wear items, now is your chance. The sale will be ongoing from March 2nd through March 13th.

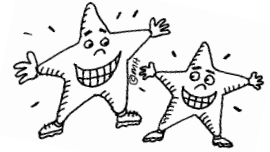
We are selling two colors of tie-dye tee shirts, flannel pants, a zip up sweatshirt, and a regular T-shirt this time around. Samples of the items are in the glass case next to the cafeteria.

Show your pride in Perry Hall Middle School.

Michele Burbridge  
Spirit Wear Chairperson



# PTSA Student Recognition Awards, February 2009



PTSA Student Recognition Awards are given to Perry Hall Middle School students who have shown outstanding achievements or efforts. Each month teachers are asked to nominate students for this award. This month 78 students received a "red bag" award. A total of 494 bags have been given this year. Congratulations to these deserving students!

Ramsey A.	Jessica G.	Yae-Won P.
Wayne B.	Michael G.	Brianna P.
Mille B.	Dante G.	Raymund P.
Ethan B.	Ariena H.	Kule R.
Alysa B.	Katelyn H.	Chris Q.
Dylan B.	Kate H.	Jen R.
Lauren B.	Jay H.	Ryan R.
Hayleigh B.	Mackenzie H.	Austin R.
Matt B.	Tori J.	Scott S.
Cameron B.	Zach K.	Gabe S.
Katherine B.	Savon K.	Emily S.
Evan C.	Summer K.	Kayla S.
Nick C.	Samantha L.	Aakriti S.
Giavanni C.	Nate L.	Jade S.
Brandon C.	Emily L.	Casey S.
Josh C.	Kadejah L.	Mukela S.
Abby C.	Josh M.	Armand S.
Rachel D.	Matt M.	Chelsea S.
Nick D.	Tyler M.	Cesar S.
Kimani D.	Matthew M.	Tytyana T.
Ali E.	Megan M.	Everett T.
Chris E.	Alec M.	Matt W.
Katelyn F.	Richard N.	Victoria W.
Cayla F.	Kathleen O.	Miranda W.
Kryza G.	Kayla O.	Brett W.
Ryan G.	Chris P.	Emily W.



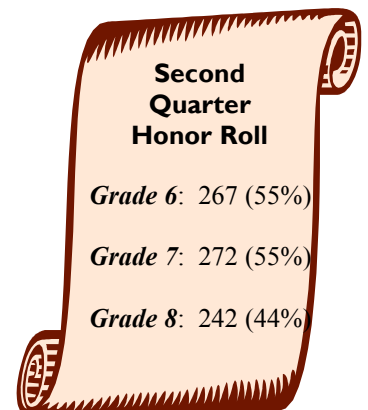
## PTSA Gold Card Recipients Second Quarter

The PTSA Gold Card Program is designed to award students who achieve Baltimore County Honor Roll status. Perry Hall Middle School is proud to award 781 students out of 1,525 students with this distinction.

Students eligible for the honor must have A's and B's and a maximum of one C that is offset by at least one A. A student with a D or an E on his or her report card is automatically ineligible for the honor roll that quarter.

**Keep up the good work Panthers !!!**

Rita Weber  
Gold Card Chairperson



## Dads in the PTA

By Lisa Belkin



In 2009, for the first time in U.S. history, the parent in charge of the Parent Teacher Association will be a dad.

Charles J. Saylor will take office as president of the 5.5 million member organization in June, putting a further dent in the stereotype that has taken hold in recent years of moms who leave the workforce and devote their impressive — and sometimes excessive — energies to the PTA.

Men make up just 10 percent of the membership of the national PTA — which was founded 112 years ago as the “National Congress of Mothers.” While that number is small, it is larger than it has ever been, and reflects a steady increase of about 1 percent in each of the past five years.

That growth is consistent with other evidence that men are becoming more involved in the schooling parts of their children’s lives. A survey this year but the National Center of Fathering found that more dads report walking their kids to school, attending class events, helping with extracurriculars and talking about education with other fathers than in a similar study nine years ago. (If you go to their Web site, take a look at the Watch D.O.G.S program — Dads of Great Students — which is designed to bring fathers into the classroom and is being used in 800 schools in 30 states.)

And those changes, in turn, are partly the result of a concerted effort, on both the local and national level, to get fathers more involved. Two years ago the PTA polled 3,000 fathers in families where Mom was a member of the organization but Dad was not. Why hadn’t they joined? Far and away the two most common answers were: 1) I don’t have the time, and 2) nobody asked.

Addressing the time crunch “excuse,” the PTA created a program called “Three for Me,” which is a contractual agreement between the school and “the adult role model,” Saylor, the new PTA president, says, for three hours of volunteer time over an entire school year. The point, he says, was to show men that they didn’t have to give their lives over to the PTA in order to make a difference. “When you dial it down to minutes, you’re only talking 180 minutes,” he says. “I ask them, ‘How many of you can go to a movie, watch the movie and come back home in less than 180 minutes?’ It’s a light-bulb moment. It seems like a less than daunting task.” And it is a bet on the part of the school that those 180 minutes will lead to more. “If anybody goes into a school, for one hour, two hours, three hours,” Saylor says, “they’re going to come back.”

In response to the second reason, the feeling that “no one invited us,” the invitations started coming. The ones with the highest RSVP rate weren’t from the PTA, or the school principal, or the classroom teacher, but from the children themselves. At the Monroe Trotter School in Dorchester, Mass., for instance, few fathers were coming to the “coffee hour” scheduled especially for dads, until the school renamed it a “Dads Club” and had children hand-print notes asking their father, uncle or other adult male in their life to come. Now upwards of 50 show up.

Why all this effort? Because it is good for children. They do better in school and in life when their fathers are involved. The National Household Education Survey by the US Department of Education found that:

- Students whose fathers were highly involved at school were 43 percent more likely to receive As.
- Children of highly involved resident fathers were 55 percent more likely to enjoy school than those with uninvolved fathers.
- Students with nonresident fathers who participated in even one activity at school were 39 percent less likely to repeat a grade and 50 percent less likely to experience serious disciplinary problems.

*Reprinted from Adventures in Parenting, The New York Times Magazine, New York Times.com (<http://parenting.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/01/06/dads-in-the-pta/?hp>)*

## PTA COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE COUNTY UPDATE

I recently attended the General Meeting of Baltimore County's PTA Council on January 29, 2009, which was held at Loch Raven High School. The theme for this meeting was "Celebrating Over 100 Years of PTA Advocacy" with Laura Carr, VP of Legislation, Maryland PTA, as guest speaker.

Ms. Carr related past examples of PTA advocacy for child safety and education. Parental involvement has historically been a predictor of success, and parents were encouraged to continue their involvement especially during the middle school years. Parents were encouraged to look for opportunities to open the lines of communication regarding education and social issues.

"Energy drinks" and their apparent marketing toward children was mentioned as a potential topic for future advocacy. There are numerous energy drinks on the market, such as Monster, Red Bull, and most recently Hit Man. Also, Snickers has introduced a new Snickers Marathon Energy Bar, which contains caffeine and taurine. It is important to note that while little is known about the effects of long-term use of taurine, high amounts of sugar and caffeine have proven to be harmful. For example, too much caffeine can increase your heart rate, blood pressure, interrupt your sleep, and cause nervousness and irritability. Parents and teachers are encouraged to participate in advocacy related to possible legislation to limit or ban the sale of such products to children.

The Baltimore County PTA Council was happy to participate in the launching of the "Powered by ME" program, sponsored by a coalition between the National Institute on Drug Abuse, and Catholic Health Initiatives/St Joseph Medical Center. Powered by ME serves to educate the community regarding the side-effects of anabolic steroids and performance-enhancing substances on our youth. It encourages healthy, safe, and fair physical and athletic development. Congressman Elijah Cummings, School Superintendent Nancy Grasmick, and John Tolmie (CEO, St Joseph Medical Center) were all present for this important presentation. Please visit [www.PoweredbyMEmd.com](http://www.PoweredbyMEmd.com) for fact sheets, quizzes, and downloadable information, as well as a video featuring Brian Roberts of the Baltimore Orioles.

Heather Patti,  
PTSA President

## PERRY HALL COMMUNITY UPDATE

We were recently invited to attend the community's 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Community Roundtable, sponsored by the Perry Hall Improvement Association, held on Saturday, February 7, 2009. Topics such as zoning, construction, development, and alternative energy sources were discussed. Of relevance to parents, teachers, and students are the following:

- ★ "Escort Program" to be enforced at The Avenue at White Marsh. No unescorted minors under age 16 are permitted after 9 pm.
- ★ The community feels that a new high school is needed for the northeast area.
- ★ Gang Awareness programs are offered by the county police department. Perry Hall Improvement Association is looking into hosting such an event in the near future.
- ★ The community recognizes the need for youth activities as an alternative to "hanging out at the mall." Preliminary suggestions have included a skateboarding park, a "teen focused" area within the new library, as well as live music venues or clubs for those under age 18. The Perry Hall Improvement Association has offered collaboration with local PTSA's to seek input from our youth. Please contact [volunteer@phmspts.org](mailto:volunteer@phmspts.org) if you would like to participate.

## TOP 10

### Things Parents Need to Know About Gifted and Talented Education in Maryland

1. "Gifted and talented" is defined in Maryland Law.
2. There are different types of gifts and talents.
3. Gifted and talented students think and learn differently.
4. Gifts and talents are identified using multiple methods.
5. Programs and services are available.
6. Some gifted students also have learning difficulties.
7. Extracurricular activities are important.
8. Special training in gifted education is available.
9. Parent support is vital.
10. You can get more information.

Call 410-767-0363, or go to  
[www.marylandpublicschools.org](http://www.marylandpublicschools.org)

## Perry Hall Middle School

**PTSA**<sup>®</sup>  
everychild.onevoice.<sup>®</sup>

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### PTSA Mission

The mission of the PTSA is threefold:

- To support and speak on behalf of children and youth in our schools, in the community, and before governmental bodies and other organizations that make decisions affecting children; and
- To assist parents in developing the skills they need to raise and protect their children; and
- To encourage parent and public involvement in the public schools of this nation.



**We're on the Web**  
[www.phmsptsa.org](http://www.phmsptsa.org)

## National Poison Prevention Week, March 15 - 21

The third week of March is designated National Poison Prevention Week. During this time, the Maryland Poison Center and other organizations coordinate activities to increase awareness of the dangers of unintentional poisoning, as well as teach about poison prevention.

This year, there are two themes: "Poisonings Span a Lifetime," and "Children Act Fast, So Do Poisons."

Please see the Poison Safety Checklist (from Maryland Poison Center), and visit their website at [www.mdpoison.com](http://www.mdpoison.com) to sign up for their monthly newsletter and learn more about preventing accidental poisoning. Be sure to review the "Toxic Tidbits" resource sheets for timely information.

## Upcoming Dates

**Tuesday, March 3**, Market Day order forms due back to school.

**Thursday, March 5**, Market Day Internet orders due.

**Tuesday, March 10**, PTSA Board of Directors meeting, 7pm in the meeting room.

**Wednesday, March 11, Market Day Pick-Up, 7-8pm**

**Friday, March 27**, Friday Morning Coffee Service for Teachers (weekly), plus Breakfast (monthly)

**Tuesday, March 31**, Market Day order forms due back to school.

**Thursday, April 2**, Market Day Internet orders due.

**Friday, April 3**, Easter/Spring Break begins at end of school day.

The Beautification Committee is beginning to plan for its **2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Spring Clean Up**. We are happy to announce the receipt of a monetary donation from the Perry Hall Improvement Association (PHIA). The donation will be used to purchase seasonal plant material and mulch to enhance our school's appearance. This will correlate with PHIA's "Greening of Perry Hall" project, which recently sponsored the planting of 40 trees along the Ebenezer Road corridor.