



VOICE

October/November 2005

October is Georgia PTA Male Membership Month. See page 7 for details.

Inside this Issue

Georgia PTA	2
<i>Hurricane Katrina Relief</i>	
National PTA	4
<i>OMDR Webinar; Three for Me</i>	
Georgia PTA	5
<i>History; Member Benefits</i>	
Membership	6
<i>Centennial Pin Awards; Male Membership Month</i>	
Legislation	8
<i>2006 Legislative/Advocacy Conference; Sales Tax Proposal HR 58</i>	
Treasurer Tidbits; Reflections/Arts	10
Bylaws	11
Parent Involvement	12
Latino/Hispanic ; Diversity	13
Education Enrichment	14
Environmental Education	15
Wellness Education; Youth Services	16
Committee News	17
<i>Field Service; Councils</i>	
Georgia DOE; MCG Children's Medical Center	18
F.Y.I.	19
<i>Honorary Life Members; School of Excellence; "In Good Standing"; All Pro Dad</i>	
Important Dates	20

From the President . .

The opening of school this year has been somewhat less than normal. Just when students, teachers and parents were adjusting to a new school year, Mother Nature ripped through the Gulf Coast leaving behind thousands of displaced families and students. There has been a huge outpouring of support and concern all across the country. Georgia PTA is no exception and continues to support those in need.

To date, Georgia has received almost 10,000 displaced students spread all across the state, as 152 out of the 181 school systems have received students. Our local unit leaders have been some of the first to assist in meeting the immediate needs of so many children and their families. We continue to receive phone calls, emails and letters asking what can be done to help. Please continue to support the efforts of the American Red Cross as their work is far from complete and they will need support for many months to come. At the local level you know best as to the immediate needs of those in your schools and communities.

Georgia PTA is a few months away from beginning a "Century of Commitment to Children." It is ironic that when we look back in history we find the strength, dedication and commitment of PTA members through a variety of outreach programs. Georgia continues to be a leading state at the grassroots level for addressing the health, safety and educational needs of all children which are addressed through the myriad of outreach programs we have. This natural disaster, once again, confirms the heart and dedication of grassroots members through combined community efforts to help those children in need. Working with school systems, social services, faith based organizations and many other support systems assures displaced students and their families that their needs will be met.

We continue to receive daily updates from the Georgia Department of Education as to how they are helping school systems with class size, additional teachers, and instructional resources. Both the state and federal departments of education are constantly in communication assessing the needs and funding stream to meet this immediate need. The Georgia Department of Education website provides detailed information about how they are meeting the needs of Georgia's children as well our newly enrolled students from our sister states. For more information and a map to see the location of displaced students across Georgia, visit www.doe.k12.ga.us.

National PTA has developed a Hurricane Katrina section on their website, www.pta.org. Click on **Hurricane Katrina "Adopt-a-PTA" Program**. This program is designed to help PTAs across the country coordinate their efforts to assist those hurt by the hurricane. It allows PTAs to register their needs online - for their schools, for other non-PTA schools in their community, for displaced children and families - or any other type of support needed to help the families and communities affected by Hurricane Katrina. The online "needs form" allows hurricane-affected PTAs to provide details about who they are, where they are, and

(continued on page 2)

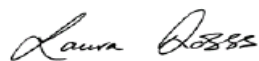
From the President. . . (continued from page 1)

what they need. This information can be found at http://www.pta.org/local_leader/adopt/form.asp.

The next phase in helping Hurricane Katrina families will be during the upcoming holidays in November, December and January. Some families may need special care and attention during these very important “family celebration” months. So, as we begin to prepare to celebrate these holidays, let us not forget our Katrina families.

Sincere thanks and gratitude to all of you for your tremendous response. You truly have made a difference in the lives of many children.

Best Wishes,



Laura Dobbs
Georgia PTA President
National PTA Board Member, Bylaws Chairperson

Tell us your Hurricane Katrina support stories. . .

**From a Child’s Eye...
Katrina Support**

Hurricane Katrina’s massive destruction has touched all of our lives. As adults we have responded with outpourings of donations, the kind of things we normally do. As a disaster, writ large in our everyday media, its toll has affected our children as well.

Georgia PTA would like to learn about the wonderful and amazing stories our students are responsible for developing and implementing in building a sense of community spirit and understanding of the tragic consequences of this natural disaster. In 200 words or less please ask your children to share the programs they have developed and valued results for hurricane relief that have ensued. We will select a cross section stories from across Georgia and publish these on our website and in a hard copy form: Georgia PTA Students’ Response to Katrina.

Items should be sent to: secgapta@bellsouth.net and will be accepted until October 20, 2005.

**Georgia PTA and Georgia Optometric Association
Assist Displaced Families**

Georgia PTA has a very long and established history of ensuring the health, safety and education of children as a priority. With this in mind, Georgia PTA, in collaboration with the Georgia Optometric Association (GOA), wants to reach out to the many displaced families currently in our schools and community. The GOA, in partnership with optometrists across the state, will assist Hurricane Katrina families with their immediate eye care needs.

Local PTA leaders should send the names and location/addresses of these children to gapta@bellsouth.net or GOAEYES@aol.com with the subject “**Katrina Optometric Needs.**” The GOA will locate a doctor of optometry closest to the address given and inform the doctor’s office that the child’s parent will be calling to arrange a visit.

The American Red Cross is providing vouchers for a free eye exam and glasses for Katrina victims. Some 600 victims have received assistance to date. Please send the name and address of any child who has received such a voucher from the American Red Cross to GOAEYES@aol.com. If a school needs to conduct eye exams for a large number of children, please contact the GOA and they will help make arrangements to meet the needs of these children.

Please send any questions or concerns to Georgia PTA, at gapta@bellsouth.net, and we will forward them to GOA.

PTA Voice
Official publication of the
Georgia PTA
A Branch of the National
Congress of Parents and Teachers.

Five regular issues
Published August - May
Annual subscription
\$10 PTA members/\$15 non-members

Georgia PTA
114 Baker Street, N.E.
Atlanta, GA 30308
404-659-0214 or 1-800-PTA-TODAY
FAX: 404-525-0210
Web address: www.georgiapta.org
Email address: gapta@bellsouth.net
President: Laura Dobbs
Editor: Kathy L Smith
(smithta@mindspring.com)

Information from this newsletter may be excerpted for other PTA publications at the local, council and district levels as long as credit is given to Georgia PTA and any byline that may appear with the item must be included.

Please notify the state PTA office of address changes or to purchase a subscription.

After Hurricane Katrina: Recover...Rebuild...Renew

by Barbara Costello, Georgia PTA Federal Legislative Chair

National PTA and Georgia PTA have gathered together various resources to help you and your local unit, council and district PTAs support the relief effort. We want to make sure that children are ready to learn and to support parents and families as they struggle to put their lives back together after the tragic destruction of Hurricane Katrina.



As of September 15, 2005 Georgia has registered 9,000+ students from Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama. Out of 181 school districts in Georgia, about 150 districts have registered evacuee students. The heaviest student increases have been in Atlanta and the surrounding 12 metro area school districts, with the next heaviest groups in Richmond (Augusta) and Muscogee (Columbus) counties. Go to the Georgia Department of Education's website, www.gadoe.org, for continuous information and updates on the Georgia statewide effort.

Our National PTA (www.pta.org) and Georgia PTA (www.georgiapta.org) websites have links to Federal and State Departments of Education, Library Association, FEMA, American Red Cross, The Salvation Army, The Foundation Center, the *Katrina Recovery Job Connection*

from the U.S. Department of Labor, Habitat for Humanity, and an additional list of the effected states and their PTA contacts and other local foundations working the various aspects of the assistance and recovery. From National PTA Bulletin Boards, to Adopt-a-PTA Database; Disaster Relief Information Center; Special Bulletin Board to Share Ideas and Stay in Contact; to specific activities in Georgia from state and local PTAs to assist evacuees and their families and children as they settle in our schools and communities to re-start their lives.

Georgia PTAs are already on the front line with the relief work and are assisting our new students and their families in so many ways. We send our thoughts, prayers and heartfelt respect to all of the affected areas. We also send our warm *Thank You!* to all who have dedicated their time, talents and treasure, and who have opened their doors and hearts to our new neighbors and students. This event will impact our country, states and community schools for a very long time. We are all in this together.

This will be PTA's "leave no child behind act"... for a long time to come. everychild.onevoice.

This will be PTA's "leave no child behind act"... for a long time to come. everychild.onevoice.

"In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, the past few days have tested our state and nation in many ways. I am extremely proud of how Georgians have risen to the occasion. All of our state departments are working together to meet the emergency health, housing, education and other needs of affected Georgia citizens and the influx of evacuees."

Sonny Perdue, Georgia Governor

"As the victims of Hurricane Katrina piece their lives back together, we hope they will take comfort in knowing that they are welcome in our state and their children are welcome in our schools."

Kathy Cox, Georgia Superintendent of Schools

"National PTA extends its sympathy and support to the families harmed by Hurricane Katrina. Our hearts and prayers go out to these families as they work to rebuild their homes and communities."

Anna Weselak, National PTA President

"...I want to express my sincere thanks to all those who wish to reach out and make a difference. Throughout the history of PTA, the willingness of our volunteer members has reached well beyond the local unit and into the community at large. This is but another example."

Laura Dobbs, President Georgia PTA



Our hearts and prayers go out to the families affected by Hurricane Katrina as they work to rebuild their homes and communities. There has been an outpouring of concern expressed by PTAs across the country.

National PTA is taking steps to provide communities affected by the hurricane with relief and needed supplies, and to inform concerned communities how they can help.

- Use the Hurricane Katrina Adopt-a-PTA database to get in touch with a PTA in the disaster-stricken areas and find out how to assist that PTA and its school, families, students, and community. Units in need can post their contact information and a brief description of what items they need to help rebuild their schools or to assist displaced students their schools have absorbed. With this resource, PTAs can communicate directly with each other to coordinate the donation of specific items.
- Not sure what you can do from across the country to help those on the Gulf Coast? Go to the information center on National PTA's website to find out how you can most effectively help with the recovery effort.
- Discuss recovery activities, hear from affected PTAs, ask questions, and console one another on our special bulletin board.

In the weeks to follow, we will continue to keep you updated on PTA recovery efforts through our website.

Anna M. Weselak
National PTA President

Online Membership and Dues Reporting (OMDR) Webinar Training

National PTA has launched a pilot phase of a web-based database for all PTAs to use. Called the Online Membership and Dues Reporting (OMDR) project, this system will allow PTAs to more quickly and cost-effectively collect dues, communicate with members, track demographics, and offer more member benefits.

OMDR system training webinars, for Council, State, and Local Unit levels, are being offered on various dates in October. To enroll and gain access to the training, logon to <http://ptaevents.webex.com/ptaevents>.

At the time of enrollment you should also set up your computer for the webex manager. This will save you time when you join the event. Once you enroll for the webinar you will receive complete instructions via email on how to access the session.

National PTA Leadership Conference - Savannah, GA October 21-23, 2005 (Registration deadline: October 7, 2005)

The theme for the 2005 National PTA Leadership Conferences, "Leadership, Membership, and Diversity: Putting Ideas into Action," puts the focus on growing our organization, which is essential to implementing our Mission.

For details and online registration, visit www.pta.org. Click on "Come to the National PTA Leadership Conferences".



National PTA's new **Three for Me** program emphasizes the difference parents can make by spending just a few hours volunteering on behalf of their children's education. Three for Me asks parents to promise to volunteer **three hours during the school year**; parents can fulfill that promise through many different activities. Talk to your PTA or school about starting a Three for Me program at your school, and make a personal commitment to get involved.

To find out more about Three for Me, logon to their website at <http://www.three4me.com>. Register to start Three for Me at your school. Once you register, you can download a free starter kit and you have permission to use anything on the website for promoting the program at your school.

Register today for Three for Me. **A little volunteering goes a long way.**

*Countdown to 100 Years. . . A Look Back at Georgia PTA History**This is the third in a series of articles about the richness of Georgia PTA history, our accomplishments and relevancy to the work we do today, as we approach 2006 and celebrate 100 years of advocacy for Georgia's children and youth.***Georgia PTA - Where Children Come First****by Margie Britt, Georgia PTA Past President, Leslie Cushman, President Elect**

We begin to look toward the start of the legislative session and the preparation of educating ourselves concerning the issues we have facing us this year. Hurricane Katrina resulted in a tragedy of epic proportion, and an influx of our fellow Americans looking for refuge. We have offered all we have and it is still not enough; but, we will continue to give until all of our families are secure.

This attitude has been prevalent in Georgia PTA since its inception. How do we help those that are most critically in need? The overwhelming problems of society 100 years ago did not deter our founders. They sought out the experts, listened to them, formulated a plan and began the arduous work of advocating for all children.

Our Eighth President, Mrs. Bruce Carr Jones of Macon, represented Georgia at the Third International Congress of the Welfare of the Child in Washington, D.C. in 1914. During those days discussion topics included infant mortality, child labor, spiritual education, the impact and aftermath of the Balkan War on mothers and children, playground expansion, health and care of school age children, juvenile justice, outlawing of alcohol and polygamy, congestion of cities and the effect on children, and movie ratings (they called it "wise and effective method of censorship"). The attendees unanimously adopted 23 resolutions. Mrs. Jones and the Georgia Congress certainly had their work cut out for them.

From 1911 forward Mrs. Selena Slone Butler established the first state organization for the parents of African American children, the Georgia Congress of Colored Parents and Teachers. Mrs. Butler wanted to secure the same possibilities and opportunities for the children that were denied equal access to public education. It was through Mrs. Butler's dedication which established greater awareness and need in our African American community. She persistently sought the advantage of creating a more equitable education situation for the community in which she lived.

The book "Where Children Come First" has a revealing passage on the remarkable staying power of our organization:

The Congress has had to be alert to changing conditions. It has had to keep flexible enough to see new problems and form new habits of response. It has had no time to grow stiff with age. It has had to keep blessedly young—young through a modesty that has been kept alive by unsolved problems... This is not a movement directed toward a grand climax where accomplishment is to be triumphantly final. Rather it is one in which every achievement merely reveals new things still to accomplish.

Georgia PTA Member Benefits**"Georgia PTA Nights" at Philips Arena****Atlanta Thrashers vs. Tampa Bay Lightning**

Saturday, October 29, 2005 at 7:00 PM

Discounted tickets for PTA members

(\$55, \$42, \$25 and \$15)

Ticket Order Deadline: October 17, 2005

Atlanta Hawks vs. 76ers

Friday, December 23, 2005 at 7:00 PM

Discounted tickets for PTA members

(\$45, \$35, \$25 and \$15)

Ticket Order Deadline: December 9, 2005



**For details and ticket order forms
logon to www.georgiapta.org Members Only section.**

For more information, contact JENNIFER SMITH
(404) 878-3966 or jennifer.j.smith.@atlantaspirit.com.

RECEIVE A 10% DISCOUNT

- * Any annual membership at **Atlanta History Center**
- * Family membership at **Chattahoochee Nature Center**
- * Any level of membership at **Fernbank**
- * Any purchase at **Honey Baked Ham Company**

Visit www.georgiapta.org
Members Only section for details.



The Georgia PTA 2005-2006 membership theme, “100 Years and Growing”, is already proving itself. So far, we have enrolled **142,761** members! This is compared to 106,614 this same time last year. These membership numbers are truly inspiring and show that Georgia’s local units are working harder than ever. The year is young though, and we still have a lot of work to do. Remember, membership is a year-long effort. We have new families coming in to our schools all year, as well as new opportunities to invite the community and extended family to join PTA.

Sincere congratulations to all **216 winners of the Centennial Pin Award**. This special membership award took the place of the Early Early Bird Award from prior years and came with stricter requirements of 275 members versus 175 members. Wonderful job! Keep up the good work. (Pins will be mailed to winners in approximately four weeks.)

Remaining Membership Goals (due dates mean post marked by):

- **Male Membership Month** – 10 new male members per grade level by last business day of **October**
- **Oak Tree** – 100% school staff by last business day in **October**
- **Partnership** – 25 community members by last business day in **October**
- **Gold** – Target number by last business day in **October**
- **Silver** – Target number by last business day in **November**



CENTENNIAL PIN WINNERS

275 members by August 31

District 3

Burroughs-Molette
Glyndale ES
Glynn MS
Greer ES
Satilla Marsh ES

Durham MS
East Cobb ES
East Side ES
Eastvalley ES
Ford ES
Frey ES
Garrison Mill ES

Shelton ES
Simpson MS
Smitha MS
Sope Creek ES
Sprayberry HS
Still ES
Tapp MS
Teasley ES
Timber Ridge ES
Tritt ES
Varner ES
Vaughan ES
Walton HS
Wheeler HS

Northwestern MS
Northwood ES
Ocee ES
River Eves ES
River Trail MS
Riverwood HS
Roswell HS
Roswell North ES
Sandy Springs MS
Shakerag ES
State Bridge Crossing
Summit Hill ES
Sutton MS
Sweet Apple ES
Taylor Road ES
Webb Bridge MS
Wilson Creek ES
Woodland ES

Shamrock MS
Southwest DeKalb HS
Stephenson HS
StephensonMS
Vanderlyn ES
Wynbrooke ES

R.D. Head ES
Rock Springs ES
Shiloh ES
Shiloh MS
Simonton ES
Simpson ES
Snellville MS
Sugar Hill ES
Suwanee ES
Taylor, K.E. ES
Winn Holt ES

District 4

Columbus HS
Double Churches ES
Double Churches MS
Midland Academy
Midland MS
New Mountain Hill ES
Northside HS

Harrison HS
Hayes ES
Hightower Trail MS
Keheley ES
Kell HS
Kemp ES
Kennesaw Charter
Kennesaw ES
Kennesaw Mountain

District 10

Sylvan Hills MS
Abbotts Hill ES
Alpharetta ES
Alpharetta HS
Autrey Mill MS
Barnwell ES
Cogburn Woods ES
Crabapple Crossing
Creek View ES
Dolvin ES
Dunwoody Springs
Elkins Pointe MS
Findley Oaks ES
Haynes Bridge MS
Hillside ES
Hopewell MS
Inman MS
Lake Windward ES
Manning Oaks ES
Milton HS
Mountain Park ES
Morningside ES
Northview HS

District 12

Alford ES
B.B. Harris ES
Bethesda ES
Britt ES
Brookwood ES
Brookwood HS
Camp Creek ES
Cedar Hill ES
Chattahoochee ES
Collins Hill HS
Craig ES
Creekland MS
Crews MS
Dacula ES
Duluth MS
Duncan Creek ES
Five Forks MS
Harbins ES
Harmony ES
Hull MS
Ivy Creek ES
Jones MS
Magill ES
Mason ES
McKendree ES
Norton ES
Osborne MS
Parkview HS
Parsons ES
Peachtree ES
Pharr ES

District 13

Arnold Mill ES
Bascomb ES
Booth MS
Carmel ES
Chapman
Dean Rusk MS
Free Home ES
Freedom MS
Hickory Flat ES
Johnston ES
Kleven Boston ES
Liberty ES
Little River ES
Macedonia ES
Mountain Road ES
Sixes ES
Woodstock MS
Big Creek ES
Daves Creek ES
Liberty MS
Midway ES
Riverwatch MS
Settles Bridge ES
Sharon ES
Varnell ES

District 5

Heard ES
Heritage ES

Kincaid ES
Lewis ES
Lost Mountain MS
Mabry MS
Marietta MS
McCleskey MS
McEachern HS
Mountain View ES
Mt. Bethel ES
Murdock ES
Nebo ES
Nicholson ES
Nickajack ES
Palmer MS
Pebblebrook HS
Pine Mountain MS
Pitner ES
Pope HS
Roberts ES
Rocky Mount ES
Russom ES
Sedalia Park ES
Shallowford Falls ES

District 8

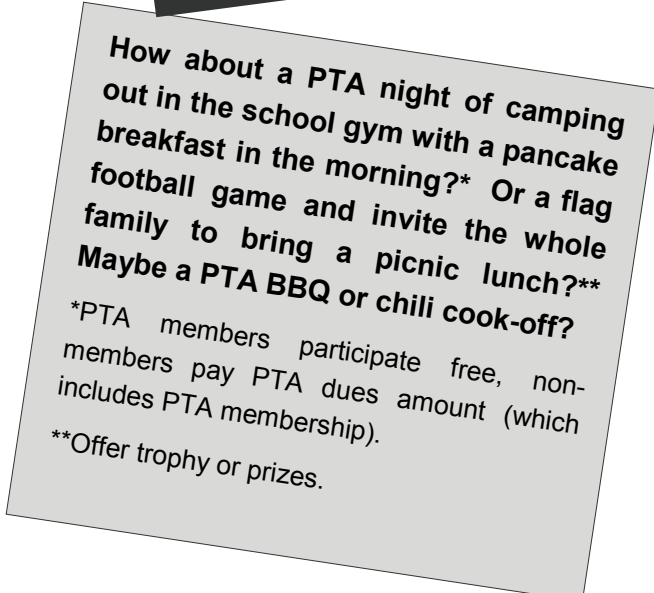
Willis Foreman ES

District 9

Abney ES
Addison ES
Allgood ES
Awtrey MS
Baker ES
Baggett ES
Big Shanty ES
Bryant ES
Chalker ES
Cheatham Hill ES
Daniell MS
Davis ES
Dickerson MS
Dodgen MS
Dowell ES

Let's Hear it for the Boys...

Statistics show when there is male role model involvement, student achievement improves. We need to do more to promote the benefits of our dads joining us, and help the men in our children's lives feel more comfortable in the school environment. Reach out to our dads and male students (PTSAs) like never before during this special membership month for men!



AWARDS will be given to each local unit enrolling a count of at least 10 male members *per grade level* (example: high school with grades 9-12 requires a minimum of 40 new male members). Male Membership Statement form, complete with names and dues, must be sent to the state office, **postmarked on or before the last business day in October**. All participating local units will automatically have their October male members' names placed into drawings to win prizes that include PTA Dad merchandise and a **football autographed by the Atlanta Falcons!**

GRAND PRIZE: A professional video dance party, appropriate for all ages, brought to you by Pulsations Event Services (www.pulsations.tv). Includes everything for a MTV-like experience - large video screens, eye cams (dancers see themselves on big-screen in real-time), all-request music (radio-edited versions with no explicit lyrics). An amazing special event package worth up to \$2,000. **Awarded to the PTA with the highest male membership for the month of October.** (To qualify, forms and dues must be postmarked by the last business day in October.)

2nd PLACE: A full-blown BBQ party for 100 people provided by The Rolling Grill (www.therollinggrill.com). The winning PTA can use this award however they choose - include the whole school for an outside event with everyone paying for a great BBQ meal except for 100 lucky people; as an incentive reward for families of the class with the highest membership; a reward for volunteers and staff, etc. **Awarded to the PTA with the second highest male membership for the month of October.** (To qualify, forms and dues must be postmarked by the last business day in October.)

Georgia PTA Takes over the House and Senate!

The 2006 State Advocacy/Legislative Conference at the Capitol was a huge success. On Friday, September 16th, over 120 delegates from all over Georgia filled the antique desks in the House and Senate Chambers to learn about the issues that will dominate the next legislative session and how to be *effective* advocates for children.

Welcoming Georgia PTA to the Capitol, House Education Chair Brooks Coleman charmed and inspired the delegates to be passionate advocates for Georgia’s children. Representative Jan Jones and Senator Regina Thomas gave thoughtful projections and analysis on the legislative issues that will be hot in the next session. Representative Kathy Ashe gave sage, “nuts and bolts” advice to beginner advocates on how to effectively lobby on educational and health and welfare issues. Featured speaker State Superintendent Kathy Cox outlined her 2006 educational goals and how the Department of Education is meeting the challenge of helping schools assimilate our newest students from the Gulf states. During an incredible lunch Pam Smith, from the Governor’s Office of Student Achievement, discussed “NCLB in Georgia—What Every Parent Should Know.”

The delegates were surveyed to provide their input on what legislative priorities they felt the Georgia Legislative Committee should focus on during the 2006 Legislative session.

Thanks to every Georgia PTA leader who made the effort to attend this advocacy conference and to learn the issues that affect our kids every day.



Speaker of the House?
No, it's Barbara Costello, Federal Legislative Chair, welcomes PTA delegates to the conference.

**Snapshots
from
the
Capitol**

**2006 State
Advocacy/Legislative
Conference**



PTA Takes Over the Capitol Julie Haley, Karen Hallacy and Barbara Costello join 120+ Georgia delegates in the House and Senate Chambers under the Gold Dome.

Georgia PTA Legislative Committee on the steps of the Capitol - working for YOU and advocating for ALL children of Georgia.

- Front Row (L-R):**
Sandy Purkett, Julie Haley, Sally FitzGerald
- 2nd Row:**
Eve Neumeister, Chris Valley
- 3rd Row:**
Lynn McIntyre, Barbara Costello
- Top Row:**
Abby Shiffman, Rebecca Branstetter



House Education Chair Brooks Coleman welcomed Georgia PTA to the Capitol.

Please Contact Your Legislator on Sales Tax Proposal HR 58

A legislative study committee is holding hearings around the state for citizen input about a proposal to change the way public education is funded, i.e. *to repeal local property taxes for schools and substitute a dedicated state sales tax*. Georgia PTA needs your voices to speak up for adequate state funding of the actual costs of public education while keeping local control.

Local PTA members can assist by **opposing HR 58** for Georgia's children.

- Share the talking points, listed below, with local PTA members, school board members, superintendents, and legislators.
- Most importantly, **tell your local senators and representatives** that the state needs to provide adequate funds for educating every child in Georgia every year. Go to <http://www.georgiapta.org> and click on **Capitol Watch to contact them**. You can also contact members of the Georgia PTA Legislative Committee through this website if you have any questions.

An educated child matures into an educated citizen in our democracy and an educated leader of our futures. *Our economic growth depends on an educated work force.*

Georgia PTA Talking Points----Proposal to Replace Property Tax with Additional Sales Tax-9/1/06

Georgia PTA opposes the proposal to replace local property taxes with additional sales tax to fund education. The impact of such legislation would have huge ramifications on the stability and quality of public education in Georgia.

- The proponents of this constitutional amendment are holding hearings on whether to replace property taxes with additional sales taxes **without proposing any plan on how the new sales tax will be distributed throughout the state**. Proponents have stated that every school system will receive at least what they currently receive in property taxes, but local school revenues vary greatly throughout Georgia, and the state must be equitable in its distribution or else it will open itself up to legal challenge. Responsible citizens cannot decide this issue without knowing how the funding will impact their district or whether the law will guarantee that the additional sales tax is dedicated only to the current local portion of school funding, and not spent elsewhere by the state.
- Educational funding experts report that because of the sales tax exemptions for food, prescription drugs, certain business items, and medical equipment, etc., an additional 3% sales tax alone **will not bring in the necessary funds to fund each student at the same level raised by property taxes. Because enrollment continues to grow faster than the economy in Georgia, the amount allocated per child will be reduced** within 2 years of the start date. Any cyclical downturn of the economy would only exacerbate the situation.
- **A mix of funding sources to finance education provides more stability** to ensure that resources are available for all students enrolled. **If no child is to be left behind, then every child's education must be funded sufficiently and reliably.** Property taxes, even with the current homestead exemptions for homeowners, senior citizens, veterans, and the disabled are the most stable form of public revenue, and are a **known quantity** for Local Boards of Education ("LBOE") who bear the responsibility of planning and delivering education to Georgia's children, one school at a time.
- Georgia PTA fears that the state will continue its practices of **under funding** its mandated program for every student. Georgia has never funded any of its adopted financial formulas for education in an adequate manner. **Only with the ability to supply additional funds through property tax do local systems have the flexibility of providing high quality local programs.**
- Educating children has become more expensive as the costs of educational goods and services have risen faster than the rate of inflation, especially in teacher salaries. In addition, children who are more expensive to educate are enrolling in greater numbers in many parts of the state, i.e. special education students, limited English language learners, and students who need more time to master skills. **The proposal has no mechanism to increase the sales tax concurrent with these needs, inflation and enrollment growth.**
- LBOE's now have **discretion** to pay for programs to **meet specific local classroom needs** that voters and taxpayers want in their school districts. Under the proposal, LBOE's and parents **lose local control**. Educating children living within each individual school district must be a responsibility of the citizens within that district, both residential and corporate. Removing the property tax without substituting another local option tax cuts the link between responsibility and citizen.
- **Businesses and those with large land holdings** (like apartment owners, agriculture and developers) are the **big winners** of this proposal, and the **loss of their property taxes** will have to be **made up by individuals**. Businesses must have an educated workforce to compete, so they have an interest in paying for their share of education costs.
- **The sales tax is a proportionally higher burden on lower income citizens.** Currently, 47.88% of Georgia's children are eligible for free and reduced meals. (GDOE website, Oct 04 data) Children who come to school hungry or sick because their parents cannot afford adequate food, shelter, clothing or medicine are simply not able to learn and can affect the learning of all of their classmates as well.

Rules for PTAs for Bingo Nights and Raffles



BINGO: If an admission fee for the evening is charged to cover the cost of the food, drinks, etc., **AND** Bingo is a free activity that is also taking place at the event, **AND** the donated non-cash prizes are valued at \$15 or less, **THEN** it is considered just a fun family activity. For this scenario, your PTA does not need permission from the Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI) to play Bingo.

If, however, your event is a **fundraiser** and you are charging for the **playing of Bingo**, then you must obtain a permit from the GBI (limited to once per calendar year). To obtain the permit, have your principal write a request to Georgia Bureau of Investigation, ATTN: Sandra Pate, P.O. Box 370808, Decatur, GA 30037-0808.

RAFFLES: If you want to hold a raffle of any kind (straight raffle, 50/50, etc.) then you must obtain a permit from your local sheriff's office. This is true for any raffle, in any group of any kind, in the state of Georgia.

Remember the "Three P's": **PAY - PLAY - PRIZES**. .If you **PAY** to **PLAY** for **PRIZES** it is considered gambling and therefore illegal in the state of Georgia unless you obtain a permit once a year.

AUDIT PACKET DUE NOVEMBER 15

Audits are due to the State Office by November 15 in order to remain a local unit in good standing! At this point local units should have their audit completed. Check in the Treasurer's Guide for the Local Unit Audit Packet Cover Sheet. Attach it to your Audit Cover Letter and Audit report along with any comments made by your auditor. Submit all to the state office **postmarked on or before November 15**.

Reflections/Arts in Education

Dawn Small, Chairperson

Reflections 2005-2006: "I Wonder Why..."



By now all local units should be in full swing with their Reflections program and have all deadlines set. Hopefully you have a Reflections committee. Don't forget to remind staff, teachers and volunteers of deadlines. For all forms and rules, in English and Spanish, visit the Reflections Program page on our website.

During November/December:

- Give all judges copies of the rules for their category and proceed with your plans for judging. Don't forget to send thank you notes to all judges.
- When preparing entries for the next level of judging, make sure they meet all requirements. Use the **Requirements Checklist** on page 28 of the Reflections handbook.
- Local unit PTAs bring or mail all winning entries to your Council, along with both Forms A and B filled out.

If your local unit is in a PTA Council, be sure to allow yourself time to meet the Council deadline and requirements. Contact judges for each of the categories and set a judging date.

Remember: 2006-2007 Reflections Theme Search entries are due to the Georgia PTA office postmarked on or before November 1, 2005.

If you have questions, please contact, Dawn Small, Georgia PTA Reflections Chair, at 770-374-6665 or reflectionsapta@bellsouth.net. Good luck with your program and don't forget to have fun!

Remember to Promote the Arts in Your School

Performing Arts Programs: Recognizes young performers in the category areas of Dance or Theater. A student may enter more than one category. Pre-K through grade 12 - Entry deadline: January 31, 2006.

Ann Weeks Music Award: Students are encouraged to use the awards for anything that contributes to the promotion of musical training; music camp, band camp, lessons, music studies, printed music, music supplies, college, may even be applied toward the purchase of a musical instrument. Pre-K through grade 12 - Entry deadline: January 31, 2006.

Contact your Arts in Education Chair for details and entry forms or visit our website Members Only section.

Prepare Early for PTA/PTSA Elections and Amendments

It may seem strange to be talking about preparing for elections and amendments now but we get so busy in November and December and before you know it, January is here. Based on your respective bylaws, your election month maybe in February, March, April or May and many local units only schedule the three (3) minimum required general membership meetings. And so, you will need to plan the calendar of events that lead up to the election month.

The **nominating committee must be elected** at least one month before the election of the officers but you may elect the nominating committee earlier if you want to. This will give them more time to find the best qualified candidates to fill the slate of officers.

ARTICLE VI: OFFICERS AND THEIR ELECTION

Section 7. There shall be a *nominating committee* composed of ___ members (must be an uneven number) and ___ alternates who *shall be elected by this local PTA/PTSA at a regular general membership meeting at least one month prior to the election of officers.*

Nominating Committee “Quick Tips”

- After the nominating committee is elected, the President appoints a temporary Nominating Committee Chair.
- The temporary chair and committee members set a first meeting date, time and place.
- Notify membership of open officer positions and ask for nominations.
- Nominating committee is responsible for finding the best qualified candidates. (They must be PTA members.)
- Use the bylaws and the Nominating Committee and Election Guide.
- Elect qualified members that reflect the diversity of your community.
- When all nominees are selected and notification is given to the Board, post the slate of officers in the school office at least 10 days prior to the election meeting.
- The Nominating Committee Chair reads the slate of officers to the general membership at the Election meeting.
- The written report is given to the Chairperson (presiding over the meeting) who then begins the elections by calling the names of each nominee; asking for further nominations from the floor, closing the nominations, and calling for the vote.
- If only one nominee for each office, you may vote by voice or a show of hands. If there is more than one nominee for an office a vote by ballot is required.
- Always be prepared for a ballot vote if necessary. Only PTA members may vote, so make sure the membership is aware that they should bring their PTA membership card to all voting meetings.
- The Secretary keeps a current copy of the membership list and be prepared with ballots if necessary.
- An installation ceremony is optional and may be done at the election meeting or anytime afterwards.
- The current Secretary is responsible for recording the results of the election in the minutes and for going online to complete the Incoming Officers Form for the State PTA office and sending a copy to the District Director and the council by May 15, 2006.

NOTE: Each year an Incoming Officers Form must be completed, even if no elections were held because all the same officers are returning to serve the second year of their two-year term.

The bylaws require local units to hold **at least three (3) general meetings** per year so plan to notify the membership regarding the election of the nominating committee at your general membership meeting in January, February, March or April, keeping in mind that the nominating committee has to be elected at least one month before election month.

ARTICLE XIII: GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

Section 1. At least three (3) regular meetings of this PTA/PTSA shall be held during the school year.

It is also a good idea to prepare now and use these general meetings to also vote on any bylaw and budget amendments (30 days notice must be given for amendments).

Student Achievement Through Parent Involvement

Parental and community involvement increases student achievement and success. Statistically, when parents are involved, students have higher grades, test scores, and graduation rates, better school attendance, increased motivation, stronger self-esteem, and greater enrollment rates in post-secondary education.

There has never been a more significant time in our history when these statements are truer, and when so much work must be achieved to accomplish this goal. Whether addressing the needs of the Hurricane Katrina victims or working on effective parent involvement in your school community, time is of the essence.

In this country the spectrum of parent involvement ranges from families who are in great need to families who have joined together with their community to provide great resources. As a result of hurricane relief efforts, thirty-four (34) states have registered displaced students from Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama into their school systems. As of mid-September Georgia has registered almost 10,000 students, and more are expected. According to Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings, "One thing has been clear -- local schools are working hard to make sure all students are back in school as soon as possible. Displaced children are being enrolled in order to return their lives to normal as quickly as possible."

The U.S. Department of Education has launched a "Hurricane Help for Schools" website (<http://www.ed.gov/news/hurricane/index.html>) that will serve as a nationwide clearinghouse to address the needs of affected schools in coordination with the National Response Plan already activated by the Department of Homeland Security.

In Georgia, PTAs are reaching out to respond to the hurricane relief efforts by accessing information from the above website, providing valuable resources and financial donations to The American Red Cross, United Way 211, community churches and businesses. Anyone may make a donation to any charitable organization by writing a check directly to the organization. A PTA may collect cash or checks and forward to a charity. A PTA should write a letter to the charity indicating who these funds are from, a copy of the letter should be kept on file for audit purposes.

Currently, one of the most frequently asked questions relating to parent involvement (second to "How can we help?") is "What else can we do for the children at our school?" The answer is simply to implement the National Standards for parent and family involvement through the Building Successful Partnerships implementation process. Ultimately, the best work a PTA can do is to apply and become a National PTA School of Excellence.

In August two more schools were added to the list of thirty in Georgia earning this award - Dickerson Middle School and Walton High School. I had the opportunity to speak to several people involved from each school, in the application process. All agreed the benefits far outweigh the amount of work required to accomplish this task. According to Karen Hallacy, Resolutions/Legislative Link Specialist for Georgia PTA, there are several. First, it encourages a strong school/home/community partnership linked to every PTA program. Second, the process provides a clearinghouse effect to a better-organized PTA (likened to cleaning house!). Finally, the ultimate benefit is that it promotes pride and attention to the school as a result of the measurable student achievement through the working partnerships.

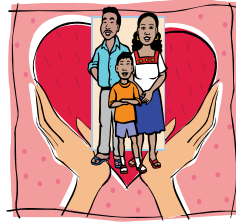
An upcoming PTA University is being planned to address the answers to the following questions. Exactly what is involved with the application process? Who should be on the BSP team? Can I see what the required paperwork looks like? Can I speak to someone who has already completed this work? This forum will be presented so that local unit PTAs can successfully apply and become a National PTA School of Excellence. More information on this forum/workshop will be sent out very soon.

Keep up the good work; help those in need by utilizing the resources available. Set high expectations for your PTA. The students and families in your school depend on the knowledge and training you receive and the outcome result of the work you do. Today and always, our focus continues to be student achievement through parent involvement.

Thank you for all that you do for the children in your school communities. For consultation, comments, questions, please contact Donna Kosicki, Parent Involvement Chair, at bannrhcic@bellsouth.net.

The Heart of Parental Involvement

A frequent question that I hear in my travels throughout the school community is, “How do we find ways to engage Latino parents. How do we involve them in their child’s education?” PTA leaders, parent liaisons, administrators and teachers are struggling to find *the key* to accomplish this goal.



American schools. (Many of these newly arrived families risked their lives to make a better one for their children; they came from different countries that have different sets of cultural norms, values and beliefs.) For a Latino parent new to this country, being “involved” means teaching their child to be well mannered so they know to behave appropriately in school and show respect to their teachers. Parents see their job as that of laying a strong foundation at home where they instill values and beliefs and assure their child’s well being. The job of “educating” is what the teacher does. Latino parents would not dream of interfering or assume to tell the teacher how to do her/his job. Until they gain an understanding of American ways and acculturate into American society, Latino parents will continue to keep a respectful distance when it comes to school involvement. It is not that they don’t care; on the contrary, they care very much about their child’s education.

My response is always the same “ask them”. Latino parents are no different from any other parent. They have the same dreams and aspirations for their children as we all do. They experience the same struggles, joys, and heartaches and they swell with pride at their child’s accomplishments, the same as almost every parent does. So how do we get the message across to Latino parents the benefits of participating in new ways in their child’s education? Is there a solution to get Latino parents to the PTA table? How do we overcome the “barriers” and move forward?

Begin by having the same expectations of Latino parents as you would of any other parent. Instead of seeing a “Latino/Hispanic” parent, see them as caring parents who want to do the right thing for their children. Families newly arrived to this country are not familiar with the American school system. They are not familiar with NCLB, CRCT, PTA, or all the other requirements of

So how do we bring Latino parents to the PTA table? We change the way we are thinking about what counts as involvement and we invite the parents to problem solve with us. Over time we will learn to accommodate and adapt as we gain an understanding of each other’s meaning of Parent Involvement.

Strategic Diversity and Inclusion Update

Many of our members are aware that the State Board has been working on a strategic diversity document which will serve as our foundation for linking our parents, students and teachers to resources which support an inclusive school and community environment. On October 8, the Georgia State PTA Board of Directors will be reviewing the final mission and vision for this area and will work on building the language into our overall strategic plan.

Soon after this board we plan to begin implementing the first two steps of our strategic plan. First you will see the development of a webpage on the State PTA website which links our local units to resources for cultural competency education and awareness, school and community resources available for advocacy work, and best practices being used across the state. Secondly, you will begin to see a state wide communication strategy designed to educate all of our PTA members and community education stakeholders of our mission and vision. We are again asking for a grant from the Campeau Family Foundation to support our work in this important area of inclusion.

Even with the ongoing work at the State Board level, our diversity advocates, many of whom have attended PTA sponsored diversity training, are already beginning to engage in the important projects and discussions that will make a difference when it comes to inclusion.

PTAs in Gwinnett, Cobb and Cherokee counties and Atlanta Public Schools have started engaging in discussions with community leaders about the importance of inclusion - not only at the PTA unit level, but also at the community level. Projects such as building PTAs in Alternative Schools, Community Coalitions to communicate the successful strategies of school achievement, development of Diversity Councils and student anti-bias training programming are all starting to occur because of our very own PTA leadership !

I am eager to hear about the projects that are going on state-wide that we may not have heard about yet. If you are starting a diversity and inclusion project, please contact me so we can celebrate all of our efforts on behalf of our children and we can begin exchanging best practices!

PROMOTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF QUALITY OUT-OF-SCHOOL STUDENT PROGRAMS: AN OPPORTUNITY FOR PTAs TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE FOR 21ST CENTURY YOUTH

By Lisa Malice, Ph.D., Georgia PTA Education Chair and
Jill Reimer, Executive Director of the Georgia Partnership for Youth Investment

According to a recent survey by the Afterschool Alliance, one quarter of Georgia children of working families are unsupervised in the afternoons. Research shows these children are at significant risk of getting poor grades, abusing drugs or alcohol, engaging in sexual activity, and becoming the victims of crime. They are also missing out on extended learning opportunities and positive relationships with caring adults in safe environments. Research also shows that these students spend more time in front of the TV and computers, and less time in physical activities.



afterschool programs for school-age child care meets as little as 25 percent of the demand in some urban areas across the country. Parents also have trouble locating quality programs if they live in rural areas, have a child in middle or high school, or have a child with special needs. Only one-third of schools in low-income areas offer extended-day and enrichment programs, as opposed to more than half of schools in more affluent areas. Furthermore, the cost of quality programs is out of reach for many families. Participation in some of the communities most in need, therefore, is low. Quality of programming is as much an issue as the lack of programming available.

Quality out-of-school programs can protect our children during the non-school hours, especially after school and during summer breaks, when juvenile crime hits its peak. Quality programs are more than just a baby-sitting service, offering lots in the way of educational assistance, enrichment experiences, youth services, healthy social interaction, nutritional snacks, and organized physical activity. The best programs are built around 16 quality indicators, including linkages to regular school day activities, educational enrichment opportunities, parental involvement, community collaboration, youth safety and health services, cultural awareness, and special needs inclusion. These indicators reflect the priorities of PTA, making support for the development and implementation of out-of-school programs a natural for PTA at the national, state and local levels.

Research confirms many benefits to children who participate in quality out-of-school programming. For example, they are less likely to commit crimes or be victimized, and are less likely to engage in sexual activity or use drugs, alcohol, or tobacco. After-school programs also improve the attendance and academic performance of participating children. Teachers and parents report that children who participate in after-school programs develop better social skills and learn how to handle conflicts better.

Despite the benefits, few students have access to quality, affordable out-of-school programs. The same Afterschool Alliance survey found that just 13% of the children of Georgia's working families are in afterschool programs, while fully 9.7 million children of Georgia's working families who do not participate in afterschool programs would likely do so if a program were available. According to the U.S. General Accounting Office, the number of

The good news is that there many national and local government, educational, and private organizations dedicated wholly, or in part, to supporting efforts to provide comprehensive, quality afterschool and other out-of-school programs. Research, guidelines, toolkits and a wide variety of organizations offer resources or developing high quality program. Many of these are easily available from the Internet at little or no cost. Funding is readily available from public and private sources, but the supply of programs and funding still falls short of meeting the high demand for these programs. Nearly \$30 million of the total \$1 billion allocated by the **U.S. Department of Education for 21st Century Community Learning Centers** across the country are going to Georgia afterschool programs through the Georgia Department of Education. This grant program, started in the 1990s and now part of the **No Child Left Behind Act**, focuses on funding quality afterschool programming for students in Title I schools.

Georgia was awarded three-year funding from the C.S. Mott Foundation to develop a statewide afterschool network in Georgia. Georgia becomes one of 25 states to join this national movement. This network will be implemented by the **Georgia Partnership for Youth Investment** (GPYI) that comprises 34 steering committee partners from the non-profit sectors and six public agencies in the state of Georgia. The **Georgia PTA** is one of the many organizations and coalitions working with GPYI to raise the issue of out-of-school programs and promote the development of quality programs. GPYI hosts the first **Afterschool Summit on October 19th** at the Lowdermilk Center in Atlanta. (The summit is open to all individuals and organizations interested in this issue. Check the Georgia PTA web site for registration information.)

(continued on next page)

(continued from page 14)

Another non-profit organization leading the charge in this area is the **Afterschool Alliance** (www.afterschoolalliance.org), which sponsors **Lights On Afterschool** events all across the county every year in October (October 20 this year; program kits are available from the web site) The afterschool efforts of this group are also supported by **National PTA** (which sent out Afterschool Kits to all local units in September), the **Ad Council** (a public service announcement campaign is underway), and the **C.S. Mott Foundation**, the **J.C. Penney Foundation**, and others.

Georgia PTA will be partnering with GPYI to a survey school-based programs and parents across the state of Georgia regarding the availability and usage of out-of-school programs. Look for survey information in November and support the effort in your school. For more information, including how your PTA can support quality afterschool programs in your community, visit the Georgia PTA web site (www.georgiapta.org) and the National PTA web site (www.pta.org).

Don't Wait to Go Green



Since its founding, National PTA has worked to secure adequate laws for the care and protection of children and youth. Over the years, National PTA has recognized the growing importance of environmental issues and the impact they have on the health and welfare of children and their families. PTA members have a responsibility to promote environmental health and safety, and to help protect our world's finite natural resources.

National PTA urges its members at all levels to monitor, support, and advocate for laws, regulations and programs that:

- Promote environmental education programs in pre-Kindergarten through higher education.
- Eliminate environmental pollutants and prevent new hazards.
- Protect children from health risks by testing for specific hazards in and around homes and schools and, if hazards are found, by limiting exposure and addressing remedies.
- Use protection and management strategies that take into account the geographic, economic, ethnic, cultural, and other societal factors that influence the incidence, exposure, and effects of environmental health hazards.
- Require comprehensive right-to-know and public information provisions in environmental laws and policies.
- Encourage the use of renewable, sustainable energy and technologies, as well as environmentally healthy land-use policies to reduce greenhouse gases and manage hazards to minimize further health problems.
- Promote "reduce, re-use, and recycle" policies and support incentives for pollution prevention and natural resource conservation activities.
- Improve the quality of our physical environment by securing and monitoring the enforcement of stricter health and safety standards for contaminants and pollutants.
- Minimize the production of hazardous waste, and enforce strict compliance with rules that require the safe transportation, storage, management, and disposal of hazardous waste.
- Support research and data collection about environmental hazards and health risks.

What better way that you local PTA could support this national statement than by adopting the **Go Green Initiative**? Many local units are already involved in recycling, schoolyard habitat projects, and a variety of environmental education and stewardship initiatives. Why not receive state recognition for these efforts? Why not show the rest of the country how the local units of the Georgia PTA are actively involved in the environmental health and safety of children?

I urge you to register your school as a *Go Green Initiative* school. To find out how simple it is to register, logon to <http://www.gogreeninitiative.org/JoinIn.html>. Learn how to build your team, set your goals, plan to evaluate success, and form partnerships. Don't wait! Register today.

CDC Influenza (Flu) Vaccine Recommendations And Availability for 2005-2006

Influenza vaccine distribution delays or vaccine supply shortages have occurred in the United States in three of the last five influenza seasons. Priority groups have been identified as in recent years to ensure the availability of those at greatest risk of complications from influenza (flu).

Four manufacturers now expect to provide influenza vaccine to the U.S. population during the 2005-2006 influenza season. However, because of the uncertainties regarding production of influenza vaccine, the exact number of available doses and timing of vaccine distribution for the 2005-2006 influenza season remain unknown.

Given the uncertainties in doses and distribution, CDC recommends that the following priority groups receive TIV (Trivalent inactivated influenza vaccine) until October 24, 2005:

- persons 65 years and older with comorbid (pertaining to two diseases which occur together, for example..Obesity and Heart Disease) conditions
- residents of long-term care facilities
- persons aged 2 - 64 years with comorbid conditions
- persons 65 years and older without comorbid conditions
- children aged 6 - 23 months
- pregnant women
- health-care personnel who provide direct patient care
- household contacts and out-of-home caregivers of children aged birth - 6 months

Beginning October 24, **all persons** will be eligible for vaccination.

CDC- MMWR (Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report) September 2, 2005

Youth Services

Loren Eischeid, Chairperson

Red Ribbon Week and The Great American Smoke Out

These two important events are perfect opportunities for parents to get involved and make a difference in the lives of children. **Red Ribbon Week** is October 23-31 and **The Great American Smoke-Out** is November 17.

Lots of **Red Ribbon Week** ideas can be found on the Georgia PTA Youth Services web page. Logon to www.georgiapta.org; click on "programs"; then click on "Youth Services". There you will find a link to **Red Ribbon Week** ideas and resources.

The best prevention for lung cancer is to keep kids from smoking in the first place!!! For terrific lesson plans, activities and ideas for **The Great American Smoke Out** be sure you visit the "Education World" website at www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/lesson/lesson034.shtml. Many of these ideas are for use with younger students. For additional information and ideas visit www.cancer.org and www.quitsmoking.com.

Please take advantage of these two opportunities to educate our children about the dangers of drugs. For additional resources, visit the Youth Services webpage at www.georgiapta.org, or contact Loren Eischeid, Youth Services Chairperson, at jaelce@aol.com.

Methamphetamine Awareness Methamphetamine use, among both adults and teenagers, is a growing concern in Georgia. Learn more about what is happening within the community and understand how to protect your family and others by learning the hazards and concerns associated with "meth" use and manufacturing.

Georgia Tech is offering a 4 hour *Methamphetamine Awareness Course* on November 10, 2005. Fee: \$125 - **10% discount for anyone associated with the school system or PTA.** For registration and questions, contact Katie Pyner, 404-385-3544.

How do we talk to our children about the devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina? Many of us have been struggling with our own emotions in relation to this devastating storm and are wondering how to talk to children about it. How much information should we be giving them and is it appropriate to expose them to the constant stream of coverage provided by the media? National PTA, at www.pta.org, has two excellent articles addressing these concerns - "When Disaster Strikes: Helping Children Cope with Life at Its Worst" and "Helping Children When Death Happens". In addition, PBS has a wonderful website for parents for help when talking to children about any and all issues, including difficult ones. The PBS article, "Positive ways to talk and listen", can be found at www.pbs.org/parents/talkingwithkids.

Committee News

Field Service Committee - Up and Running

by Sheila Cornelius, 2nd Vice President

The new Field Service committee includes all members of the Georgia PTA board of directors. The purpose and goals of the committee are to:

- Ensure that all requests for board members are submitted on the State Board Member Request Form (page 289 Georgia PTA Leadership Resource 2005-2006)
- Answer the call from districts, councils and local units that request presenters for their respective events including but not limited to schools of information, leadership training, meetings, etc.
- After assessing data, suggest and provide training to districts, councils and local units where needed.
- Through training, develop a stronger leadership pool for the next level of leadership
- Receive, review, and keep an accurate record of all State Board Member Requests and assign board members based on skill level, availability, travel time, and presentation time to provide you with the best presenter.
- Develop a usable hard copy and CD library of leadership training conference and leadership development workshops for presenters so that our message is consistent, uniform and current.
- Establish methods of tracking the following data for board quarterly reports and the annual report:
 - ◇ Number of Field Service Requests
 - ◇ Number of workshops conducted
 - ◇ Number of districts, councils and local units served
 - ◇ Use of the training/workshop library
 - ◇ Total number of field service training hours provided by board members
 - ◇ Total expenses to provide field service requests
 - ◇ Total miles incurred to provide field service requests
 - ◇ Which board members are trained in which areas and able to present which workshops
 - ◇ Evaluate the success of the Field Service committee

Districts, councils and local units that want to request a Georgia PTA state board member to speak or present at an event should:

- For each request complete a “State Board Member Request Form” (page 289 Georgia PTA Leadership Resource 2005-2006).
- Send all completed request forms to Margie Britt at the state office (114 Baker Street, NE, Atlanta, GA 30308) or fax to 404-525-0210 or email to gapta@bellsouth.net.
- Make sure you include all the details including **the time of the event** and a copy of the agenda if possible.
- Wait for an email or telephone confirmation from the Field Service committee within 5-7 days.

If you are interested in serving on the Field Services Committee or would like to make comments or suggestions to improve this service, please contact Sheila Cornelius at vp2gapta@bellsouth.net.

Councils Update

by Tracey Wright Jones, Councils Chairperson

The excitement of the opportunity to serve as Councils Chairperson continues to be tremendous! I am thrilled to be in a position where I can assist local units on a wide scale through the Councils. With much anticipation for the coming year, my ultimate hope is to make myself available to you at all times whether it be via email, phone calls, training, workshops, various communications or visits to your council meeting. As I begin this undertaking, I am reminded of a phrase I've heard most of my life... 'Don't work harder—work *smarter!*'

I believe we all have an opportunity to step back and look over what's been done, what needs to be done and what should be done - then immediately begin to think, strategize and prioritize. Without taking this approach you may find yourself working a whole lot harder, without enjoying the benefits of a job smartly done. Please continue to support your PTA through the services we offer. As we realize “None of us is as smart as all of us”, we will grasp the real meaning of unity in numbers and team building as we make this journey *together!*

With this in mind, I cannot stress enough the importance and value of local units working with their councils. For the few areas that do not have a council, we encourage you to ‘please contact the Council President of the nearest council and partner to get involved’. This may be the start to establishing a council at a later date. As this message takes flight, I request the support of the Council Presidents to stand ready to assist as needed. We are the councils and throughout the state we represent the councils with a “Connected Voice”. Collectively, *we will make a difference* as we speak for every child with one voice!

What's Going on with Councils?

Workshops: I am teaming up with the BSP Committee Chair, Cathy Richards, conducting BSP Workshops throughout the Councils. Look for updated information via email.

Updating List of Council Presidents: Keep sending change and revision updates to produce a completed list for distribution.

Connect the Councils: Send all requested information by deadline to keep the councils connected. With the implementation of the Yahoo Group, hopefully, in early October, we will advance another step toward this goal.

Get Involved in Your Own Special Way

by Kathy Cox, State Superintendent of Schools



Over the past two decades, I have had the privilege to wear many hats when it comes to education - teacher, department head, legislator and now, State Superintendent of Schools. But the education role I cherish most is that of a parent. I have two sons in Fayette County public schools; one in 10th grade, and the other in sixth-grade. My husband, John, and I are both very active in our children's education.

We go to parent-teacher meetings and attend school functions together, and the importance of education is stressed by both of us all the time. But around the house we fill different education roles. I'm more the details person; the one that makes sure that homework gets done and reviews notebooks and assignments. My husband is the "project guy." Our house is filled with assignments that my sons worked on with their dad, like the plaster of paris map of Colorado and makeshift musical instruments. My sons absolutely love it when my husband, a home builder, covers their textbooks in discarded blueprints. In our own ways, John and I not only tell our children how important education is, we show them.

When it comes to parental involvement, I'm preaching to the choir in this newsletter. If you are involved in the Georgia PTA, then you are clearly an active, caring parent. But please help me spread the word that parental involvement is more than football games and yearbook advertisements. Being an involved parent means being "hands on," whether it's helping your child work through a difficult math problem, attending a school concert or building a plaster of paris map of Colorado.

Thank you for all that the Georgia PTA and its members do for our children.

MCG Children's Medical Center

Platinum Sponsor of Georgia PTA

School Buses Eight Times Safer Than Cars Safe Kids East Central Explains School Bus Safety Features to Parents

As the new school year is well underway, Safe Kids East Central, led by MCG Children's Medical Center, reminds parents that school buses are eight times safer than other vehicles. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), the rate of crash-related fatalities on school buses is 0.2 per million vehicle miles traveled, compared to 1.5 for cars.



"School buses are, by far, the safest way for kids of all ages to get to and from school," says Rene Hopkins, RN, Safe Kids East Central coordinator. "School buses are designed with safety features no other vehicles have. The padded, high-backed seats on school buses are close together to create protective compartments, like egg cartons." Children are not likely to be ejected from a school bus in a crash if they are seated properly — upright and facing forward.

To parents who ask why most school buses do not have seat belts, Hopkins says, "The purpose of seat belts is to prevent ejection, which is usually fatal and almost always catastrophic. There is not a significant risk of ejection from a large school bus."

In a 2002 report on school bus safety, NHTSA found that seat belts on large buses "appear to have little, if any, benefit in reducing serious-to-fatal injuries in severe frontal crashes." Small school buses equipped with lap belts as well as compartmental seating are especially useful for preschool children who ride in car seats.

"More children are killed and injured crossing the street at bus stops than riding on a school bus," says Hopkins. "Teach your children about the 10-foot danger zone around the school bus, where the driver can't see children on the ground." Young children should take eight giant steps away from the bus to be sure the bus driver can see them. Older kids who must cross the street in front of the bus should look to the bus driver for an "OK" sign before crossing.

The NHTSA 2002 report is available at www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov. For more information about child passenger safety in school buses and private vehicles, visit www.safekids.org.



Congratulations!

**Georgia PTA
Honorary Life Member**

Barbara Henderson
Presented by
Continental Colony ES PTA
District 10

**National PTA
Parent Involvement
School of Excellence Certification**

District 9
Dickerson Middle School PTSA

Walton High School PTSA

“In Good Standing” - What Does It Mean?

Local units must be in good standing in order to participate in the Reflections and Performing Arts Programs, apply for Georgia or National PTA scholarships and/or grants (including Georgia PTA’s Postsecondary Scholarships for students), to submit reports and be eligible for awards, or to attend state or national convention as voting delegates.

To be in good standing, a local unit must meet the following requirements:

- Pay State and National dues (collected to date) by the last business day in February.
- Have approved bylaws on file at the state office.
- Submit an annual audit report to the state office by November 15. *See Treasurer Tidbits on page 10.*

NFL Players Want to Recruit Dads to Your School



“Two of the single most defining moments in my life were the birth of my children. But the responsibility is huge. All Pro Dad gives me and other men the necessary equipment to have a positive impact on our children and the people they interact with.”

– Todd Peterson, Kicker, Atlanta Falcons

Get dads more involved at your school through the **All Pro Dad** program! All Pro Dad, an initiative of NFL players, is headed up by Indianapolis Colts’ Head Coach Tony Dungy. The program encourages men to become better fathers.

One of All Pro Dad’s initiatives is a monthly breakfast, before school hours, where fathers and their children meet with other dads and kids. They hear great speakers on a wide range of family topics, spend time together, and are equipped with resources to strengthen their relationship. Additional options include a dads and kids movie night, board game night etc. The best part of all, the resources are provided at no charge!

Logon to www.AllProDad.com today for more information.

Looking Ahead - Important PTA Events in 2006!

February 16

PTA Day at the Capitol

February 17

PTA Founders’ Day (109th)

February 24-26

Federal Legislative Conference
Washington, D.C.

April 30

Arts & Scholarship Reception
Atlanta History Center, Atlanta

May 5-7

Georgia PTA
Centennial Convention
Renaissance Concourse Hotel
Atlanta

June 24-26,

National PTA
Annual Convention
Phoenix, AZ

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

OCTOBER 2005

Georgia PTA Male Membership Month

- 1 PTA University - 2005 Reflections Workshop
- 7 NPTA Leadership Conference registration deadline
- 8 District 4 Fall Conference, contact Kenn German at germangrace@aol.com
- 10 National School Lunch Week begins
- 11 District 9 Fall Conference, 9:30 AM, Austin MS
- 17 Doors Open After School;
National School Bus Safety Week begins;
Ticket order deadline for Georgia PTA Night (Atlanta Thrashers game - October 29)
- 20 Lights on AfterSchool
District 8 Fall Conference, 7 PM, Glenn Hills MS
- 21-23 National PTA Leadership Conference, Savannah
- 23 Red Ribbon Week begins
- 29 Georgia PTA Night at Philips Arena, Atlanta
Thrashers vs. Tampa Bay Lightning, 7 PM

Items due by Last Business Day:

*Male Membership Form
Gold Membership Certificate
Oak Tree Membership Award
Partnership Membership Award*

NOVEMBER 2005

- 1 Reflections Theme deadline
- 15 Local Unit Audit Packet deadline;
America Recycles Day in Georgia
- 16 Great American Smoke-out
- 17 National Parent Involvement Day

Items due by Last Business Day:

Silver Membership Certificate

DECEMBER 2005

- 1 World Aids Day
- 4-10 National Handwashing Awareness Week
- 9 Ticket order deadline for Georgia PTA Night (Atlanta Hawks game - December 23)
- 23 Georgia PTA Night at Philips Arena, Atlanta
Hawks vs. 76ers, 7 PM

JANUARY 2006

- 6 Deadline for submitting resolutions
- 9 1906 Centennial Membership Award deadline

Items due by Last Business Day:

*Ann Weeks Music Award Application
Performing Awards Award Application
Outstanding Principal Application
Post Secondary Scholarship Application
Reflections Entries due to state office*

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION
US POSTAGE
PAID
ATLANTA, GA
PERMIT NO. 1151

Georgia
114 Baker Street, NE
Atlanta, GA 30308-3366

Georgia PTA

everychild.one voice.