



# THE BULLETIN

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Tennessee  
**PTA**<sup>®</sup>  
everychild.onevoice.

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## Tennessee PTA Goes To Washington

Spring had not yet sprung when hundreds of PTA leaders from across the nation converged upon Washington to voice support for children and youth. Tennessee PTA was there! Five state board members represented you in the nation’s Capitol meeting with staff and or Congressmen from almost every district. We walked and worked The Hill discussing issues and expressing our passion for making life better for all children and youth. The issues we discussed were No Child Left Behind, federal funding for education, the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act, and the Child Nutrition and WIC reauthorization.

One of the highlights of the National PTA Legislative Conference was hearing Marian Wright Edelman. She was an unforgettable keynote speaker giving her “Prison to Pipeline” presentation. Ms. Edelman is the founder and president of the Children’s Defense Fund and a life-long advocate for all children, particularly the disadvantaged. She acknowledged and thanked us for our advocacy work, but reminded us of how much more we still need to do. Much information was shared with attendees and below are key facts that may surprise you.

### Did you know:

- *That parent involvement can raise student academic achievement so substantially that schools would need to increase spending by more than \$1000 per pupil to gain the same results as with parent involvement?*
- *That 30 million children eat a free or reduced lunch every day at school?*
- *That increasing a county’s average level of schooling by one year can increase economic growth by about 5 to 15 percent?*

The conference energized and motivated us to continue on with the 112 year old PTA tradition of grassroots advocacy. The third purpose of PTA is to secure adequate laws for the care and protection of children and youth. I can think of no better way than to visit Washington D.C. and raise our united voices for children. Thank you for giving us the privilege of representing you!



Charles Scott – Diversity Chairman, Debbie Monroe – Legislative Chairman, Cindy Dearing - President and Kathy Patty – President-elect

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Tennessee PTA Goes to Washington	1
From The President’s Pen	2
Legislative Conference Experience	2
From The National President	3
Summer Leadership Training Dates	3
Demand Parents Summits Increasing	
Parental Involvement	4
Safeguard Your Home Year Round	4
From the Second Vice President	5
Tidbits from National PTA	6
Legislative Conference Review	7
PTA Audits	7
Dates to Remember	8



Byron Garrett – Chief Executive Officer, Marian Wright Edelman – President/Founder Children’s Defense Fund, Jan Harp Domene – NPTA President, Betsy Landers – NPTA Secretary/Treasurer and Chuck Saylor – NPTA President-elect



## From the President's Pen

Most of us have known a special teacher, coach, or principal that has made an impact on our lives. Several teachers from my past come to mind when I think of my years in the public schools. One of my favorite teachers was my kindergarten teacher, Mrs. Atteberry, who taught me that school was a fun, safe, and nurturing place to learn and play. The Tennessee schools have many outstanding teachers and I hope you are making plans to honor and recognize them during the week of May 3 - 9.

### **Below are ten ideas for Teacher Appreciation Week:**

- ✓ Donate a book to the library in honor of a teacher
- ✓ Hold a car wash and detail teacher's cars
- ✓ Treat them to a special luncheon with a theme
- ✓ Create a bulletin board of teacher's baby pictures and give clues as to who they might be
- ✓ Place thank you notes in their mailboxes with tokens of appreciation
- ✓ Bake goodies for their families
- ✓ Collect door prizes and draw a teacher's name each day
- ✓ Decorate the teacher's work room with a big thank you banner; have parents sign it first
- ✓ Ask students to write their teachers a letter or draw a picture
- ✓ Plant a flower garden in honor of all teachers who help children to bloom

Be sure to send in your new officer information to the state office at 1905 Acklen Avenue, Nashville, Tennessee 37212. Please do this as soon as possible so that we can update the database for newsletters and mailings.

Thank you for sharing your time, talents, and skills with PTA and the children and families we serve.

Cindy Dearing,  
president@tnpta.org

### **Legislative Conference Experience Daniel Hammer, 5<sup>th</sup> Grade, Allen Elementary**

Hi! My name is Daniel Hammer. I am in the fifth grade at Allen Elementary School. I want to tell you about a great experience that I got to participate in, in February. It was the Legislative Conference and it is not just for adults.

The first thing that I got to do was go to the Capitol and see what it is like for our Senators and Representatives to vote on and pass bills that will affect us all. I met some of these important people. I told all of them to put education first when casting their votes. I know now how important having PTA in our schools is. We can Lobby and help make important changes.

This was a great thing and I think every kid should try to go. I am glad that I went. I want to go back next year! See You There!

## From the National President

### Fundraising, the (Online) Community Way



Perhaps the most important thing to realize about fundraising is that you can't think about it as collecting money. Money is essential if you want to provide your students with new computers, or finance their field trip to the Capitol—but money is simply the end result of fundraising, and not necessarily the focus of the process. If it were as simple as asking everyone “Can I please have \$10 for PTA?” we wouldn't hold school fairs, host large scale dinners, or organize walks. We do these things not only to raise funds, but to reinforce the idea of community—that people, and not just parents, have a role in supporting the education of our youth.

This idea of community is no less important when fundraising online. Sites like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Fotki let you share pictures and videos with people as if you were sharing photo albums and home movies with friends—they help you tell a story, and keep you connected on a personal level. The individual who is introduced to your PTA through online media might then start reading your blog. Next, they could be commenting on your posts and participating in your polls and petitions. Once that person feels like they are a part of your community, when you ask them to support you with a donation, they're going to be much more likely to say yes. The advantage of websites and other social media is that when you share your story with the members of your online community, they can they easily share it with others, and that's how your entire community grows.

The goal never was, and never will be, the money itself. We plan dances, sell cookbooks, and play bingo because we want to help create the greatest school community we can. As long as you never lose sight of that, your fundraising efforts are guaranteed to be a success.

Jan Harp Domene  
PTA National President

**Save  
The  
Date**

### Summer Leadership Training

Summer Leadership Training is coming to a city near you!  
Please mark the dates below on your calendar:

- July 27                      Memphis-Delta Region
- July 28                      Mid-Cumberland Region; Nashville
- July 29                      Southeast Region; Chattanooga
- July 30                      First Tennessee Region; Johnson City
- July 31                      East Tennessee Region; Knoxville

All PTA leaders are welcome to attend as well as teachers and principals. Contact your Region Director for further details or the State Office at 888-782-5712.

## Memphis City School's Demand Parents Summits Increasing Parental Involvement

One of the strategic goals of the Memphis City School (MCS) School Board commissioners and its new school Superintendent, Dr. Kriner Cash is "Parent/Community Involvement; Build and strengthen family and community partnerships to support the academic and character development of all students." With this in mind Dr. Cash recently created a series of community outreach events for parents called "Demand Parents Summits". Under Dr. Cash's guidance, MCS, which has about 110,000 students and over 200 schools, was divided into four (4) Regions this school year. For four straight Saturdays (2/21, 2/28, 3/7, & 3/14) a Demand Parent Summit was held at a school in each of the four regions under the direction of the P.A.C.E. (Parents and Community Engagement) a division in the MCS in which is one of several groups the Memphis Council (MC) PTA collaborates with to increasing parental involvement.

The Parent Assembly (PA), which has an elected Parent representative from each school and is also under P.A.C.E., was in charge of organizing the summits, which included an open dialog with the Superintendent, introduction of the Regional Superintendents, their staff, vendors, a health fair, and various workshops designed to help parents become more knowledgeable and involved. Three of our MC PTA Board members also served as Board members on the PA Executive Board.

The Memphis Council took part in a joint "**Demand Parents-Standing in the Gap**" workshop with the PA in each of the four summits. There were three (3) workshops/summits for a total of twelve (12) workshops. We were credited with having some of the largest turnouts in our joint workshops.

The Memphis Council PTA was given the opportunity to talk about parent groups or organizations at school, to talk about PTA and why we believe it represented the best choice for parents. Several of our Board members attended and were the lead speaker on the PTA part in these workshops they including Cheryl Floyd 1<sup>st</sup> VP, Joyce Watson 3<sup>rd</sup> VP and State Cultural Arts Chairman, Regenia Dowell Treasurer, Muriel Dotson, Events & Planning and State Early Childhood Chairman, Grace Ann Campbell Public Relations, "Dee" Moore Membership, Janice Robinson Early Childhood Development, and Charles Scott President and State Diversity Chairman.

This is an "idea" that perhaps can be shared with and replicated in many of our metro or rural school districts across the state.

Charles Scott

Tennessee PTA Diversity Chairman

### Safeguard Your Home Year-Round

1. Make sure at least one smoke alarm and one carbon monoxide (CO) alarm are installed on each level of your home near sleeping areas.
2. Test smoke and CO alarms every month and replace the batteries when you reset your clocks from daylight-saving time. Replace smoke alarms at least every 10 years and CO alarms every 5-7 years or as recommended by the manufacturer. Check to be sure your smoke and CO alarms are UL Listed.
3. Take medications and medical supplies out of your purse, pockets and drawers and put them in a cabinet with a child safety lock.
4. Never run electrical cords under carpets, rugs or heavy items, or bunch them up behind a hot appliance or radiator. This can cause damage or overheating and create a fire hazard.
5. Keep flammable materials like bedding, wallpaper and curtains at least three feet from space heaters and other heat sources.
6. During an electrical storm, stay away from corded telephones, plumbing, electrical appliances, wires, TV cables, and metal doors and window frames.

For more safety tips visit [www.safetyathome.com](http://www.safetyathome.com). The above safety tips are provided by Underwriters Laboratories.

## Take 25

Take 25 is a national child safety campaign which encourages parents and guardians to take time to talk with their children on May 25th, National Missing Children's Day, about ways to stay safer.

National Missing Children's Day was established in 1983 by President Ronald Reagan and has been marked annually by each Administration since then. This annual reminder encourages the nation to do all they can to reunite missing children with their families.

What can you as parents and PTA members do to support this campaign? You can host a town hall meeting, organize a child ID event, present a Take 25 program to your school, or simply distribute materials to get the word out about Take 25. Visit [www.take25.org](http://www.take25.org) or [www.ncmec.org](http://www.ncmec.org) for more information about programs.

## Volunteer Recognition

As the school year draws to a conclusion please take time to recognize and thank your volunteers for their commitment to children. How can this be done? There are several tried and true ways, a "Volunteer Coffee" prepared by the PTA – in some cases the teachers have prepared the food to thank all the volunteers, a program where volunteers with "X" amount of hours are recognized with a certificate and then they are eligible for a door prize drawing, have a small "happy" (a pin, flower, a note of thanks- the list is endless) for each volunteer.

How do you know who has volunteered? Each committee chairman should keep a log of volunteers and their hours for the year. Remember if a parent is unable to help during the school day they may have helped by doing some work at home for an event (invitations, baking/cooking, shopping for supplies for a project, etc) Be sure to include everyone who has volunteered on your invitation guest.

Too late for this year, make this a goal for next year and record your results.

## Thank you for a great year!

Thank you to all students who participated in any of the student programs for this year- Reflections, Citizenship, Safety Poster, and the Safety Multi Media program. Also thank you to each of the chairman working with each of these programs. We had a very successful year. Award notification letters have been mailed.

## Student Awards Ceremony

The student award ceremony will be held on Saturday, May 9, 2009 at Hillsboro High School. The school is located at 3812 Hillsboro Road, Nashville TN 37215. Reception begins at 1:00 p.m. and the awards ceremony begins at 2:00 p.m. Winners have been notified. Please make RSVPs through your chairman listed.

Charla Sparks,  
Second Vice President





## 2009 PTA National Convention

Registration is now open online for the 2009 PTA National Convention & Exhibition in Fort Lauderdale, FL; you can take advantage of discounted rates until May 22, 2009. Join thousands of other PTA members and leaders from around the country to exchange ideas, participate in workshops, and witness the induction of PTA's first ever male national president.

Register online, or learn more about the national convention, at [pta.org/annualconvention](http://pta.org/annualconvention) today!

### PTA Movie Night Live! 2

An estimated one million attendees at over 3,700 PTA schools participated in the first event last November with the showing of Dreamworks' *Kung Fu Panda*, making PTA Movie Night the largest school movie event of its kind. And now we are pleased to invite all U.S. schools to participate this Spring!

PTA, in partnership with HP, is now pleased to offer an exclusive showing of Walt Disney Picture's family film *Bolt* (rated PG) or Summit Entertainment's high school hit *Twilight*, (rated PG-13) nationwide to all U.S. schools.

Pick a date convenient for your school between **April 27** through **May 21** for a single showing of your preferred film. Schools must register to participate. Once registered, your school will receive a **screening DVD** of your chosen movie and the **required public performance license**. In addition, guests attending your event can choose to enjoy a special Domino's Pizza deal, and will also receive a gift from PTAdigital.com, a new online destination for fun photo products and movies.

### PTA Digital Website Goes Live in April

PTA and HP will launch PTADigital.com on April 27, 2009 as a portal for students, parents, and faculty to easily and cost-effectively print customized merchandise for the school and home. Users will be able to create personalized calendars, graduation invitations, photo books, fundraising materials, and more. You can hear PTA National CEO Byron V. Garrett talk more about this new initiative on YouTube at <http://tinyurl.com/c3jsdn>.

### The Official PTA Kit—Register for Yours!

The *PTA Back-to-School Kit* is now *The Official PTA Kit*—PTA's Big Box of Possibilities.

Along with the change in name, there is a change in the kit's delivery. This year, all local and council PTAs must register to receive their kit. The registration form allows your incoming PTA president or other authorized leader to provide your unit's preferred shipping address and date.

This new process will help ensure that the kit gets into the right hands at the right time. And the kit is still free!

Look for a postcard and e-mail with your unit's registration link starting at the end of April. Kits will ship weekly June 19 through the end of October (kits shipped after October 1 will incur a handling cost).

For more details about the delivery and contents of *The Official PTA Kit*, go to [PTA.org/OfficialKit](http://PTA.org/OfficialKit).

***The Official PTA Kit is available exclusively to PTAs in good standing.***

## Legislative Conference Review

I would like to extend a hearty ‘Thank You’ to everyone who attended our annual Legislative Conference. It was a great learning and advocating opportunity. Delegates from around the state were able to hear presentations highlighting pending legislation and educational priorities from David Pickler, President, Tennessee School Boards Association, Jerry Winters, Government Relations, Tennessee Education Association, Robert Greene, Assistant Commissioner, Tennessee Department of Education, Senate Education Committee Chairwoman Delores Gresham and House Education Committee Chairman Harry Brooks. This year, the emphasis was placed on the continuing budget crisis and we were encouraged to remind our legislators that education funding needs to be their top priority.

After dinner and the presentation to Senator Tim Burchett as Legislator of the Year, we held our ‘Who Wants to be an Advocate?’ training. Our guest speaker was Dan Haskell, a lobbyist who has worked for many different groups. He is currently working with the members of the Tennessee Business Roundtable on issues such as the increased standards for high school students and appointed directors of schools.

This year’s priority bills are those relating to Appointed Superintendents (HB0952/SB0908), Funding Education First (HB0290/SB0087, HB0212/SB0237, HB0210/ SB0269), and the Parental Choice Scholarship Program (HB0559/SB0751).

You can follow the progress of these bills by going to the state website [www.capitol.tn.gov](http://www.capitol.tn.gov) and clicking through to the General Assembly, or by going to Legislative Bill Search. The website has a feature that lets you list bills you want to follow in a folder titled My Bills. All action taken on the bills will be listed and updated automatically.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact your legislators. Mr. Haskell reminded us exactly as Representative Harry Brooks did last year, that relationships are the key in moving things through the legislature. Get to know your legislator! If they are in their office, they will most likely talk to you. Make yourself the person they call when they have a question about children and their education. Call them when you see an issue arising.

Hope to see you soon!

Debbie Monroe  
Tennessee PTA Legislative Chairman

## The PTA Audit

Auditing involves following financial transactions through records to make sure that receipts have been properly accounted for and expenditures made as authorized in the minutes and in conformity with PTA bylaws, standing rules, and budget limitations.

PTA bylaws indicate when an audit is to be made, its procedure, and when it should be reported to the membership. Record books should be audited at least once a year. Books should also be audited if a financial officer resigns, before the new officer assumes his or her duties, and at any other time deemed necessary.

The process for selecting/electing individuals to serve on the internal audit committee or for retaining a professional firm (with nonprofit accounting experience) will also be found in the bylaws of the PTA.

The purpose of an audit is

- To certify the accuracy of the books and records of the organization, and
- To assure the membership that the association’s resources/funds are being managed in a businesslike manner within the regulations established for their use.

Reprinted from the National PTA Money Matters Quick-Reference Guide



Dates to Remember

April

Alcohol Awareness Month  
Autism Awareness Month

23 – Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day  
24 – Arbor Day  
26 – National Volunteer Week Begins

May

3 – 9 Teacher Appreciation Week  
5 – National Teacher Day  
9 – Tennessee PTA Student Awards Ceremony  
10 – Mother’s Day  
25 – Memorial Day  
National Missing Children’s Day



**If you are no longer a PTA president, please forward this and all mailings immediately to your successor and forward the current president’s name and address to the Tennessee PTA Office.**

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