



THE BULLETIN

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PTA[®]
everychild.onevoice.

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Founders Day February 17, 2009

PTA has played a vital role in the lives of children locally, regionally, and nationally. Through parent involvement and advocacy we have advanced the organization and kept alive the original thought process of our founders which is to improve the lives and futures of **all** children. Although events have changed our world and conditions have changed worldwide this idea remains the same.

Every year PTAs are encouraged to celebrate Founders Day which is February 17, 1897. The founders of PTA are Phoebe Apperson Hearst and Mary McLellan Birney and the founder of Georgia's Congress of Colored Parents and Teachers Selena Sloan Butler. These courageous women worked beyond the accepted barriers of the day to improve the lives of all children regardless of their background and by doing so they took action to right the wrong.

We are fortunate today to be a part of the largest child advocacy group in the country and to have such a diverse ethnic representation coming from all economic backgrounds and lifestyles. It is this diversity that encourages all of us to continue in the way of our founders by speaking for "every child with one voice".

Please take a few minutes to find out more about these women and recognize them in a way befitting a founder with pride and commitment to bettering our children's world.

Charla Sparks
Second Vice President, Tennessee PTA
secondvicepresident@tnpta.org

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Founders Day	1
From The President's Pen	2
Take Your Family to School Week	2
It's Election Year for Tennessee PTA	3
Mary Lou Anderson Grant	3
Legislative Conference	4
National PTA TCBI Level II Training Report	5
Drinking Age Saves Lives	5
Memphis-Delta Region Round-up	6
PTA Hearst Awards	6
Health and Safety Poster Contest	7
OMDRplus Update	7
Dates to Remember	8





From the President's Pen

As many of you know I teach preschool part time when I am not wearing my various PTA hats. I am frequently amused and delighted with the comments my children make to me. They may tell me that they "love" me or they may point out my "hairy" arms or my less than perfect teeth. And all of this is fine—it goes with the job.

Recently a little girl in my class said to me, "The police haven't been to my house." I didn't really know where she was going with this so I said, "Okay." She then said to me, "We're not behind." It was one of those heart breakers that you occasionally hear when you work with children. This four year old was, of course, referring to our economy in crisis. Children are aware of our problems even when we think they do not notice.

All of our children in Tennessee and the nation are feeling the effects of a tough economy that may continue to decline even more. It is up to us to be there for them and to reassure them that we will not let them down. What can we do as parents? We can simply stay involved. We can speak out against cuts in education and family and children's programs. We can talk to our legislators about making the right choices for children. We can insist that life be better for all children—rich and poor, urban and rural, those with learning disabilities and the gifted, the troubled child with few friends and those who seem to have all the tools to succeed in life.

Join us in Nashville February 17 and 18 to speak on behalf of all children. Our children need us to advocate for them loud and clear!

Cindy Dearing, President
president@tnpta.org

Take your Family to School Week February 8-14, 2009

PTA Take your Family to School Week was established in 2006 as way to lead up to Founder's Day, February 17, 1897. The thought process is simple, to connect families to their children's schools and the experiences that are taking place in those schools.

There are various activities and information available for your local unit's *PTA Take Your Family to School Week* including the event promotion poster, Web banners, and "Follow the Signs to Family Involvement" posters and membership form, available at www.pta.org/familytoschool.

Please let us know what your local unit did to promote this activity. Email me at secondvicepresident@tnpta.org

Have a great experience.

Charla Sparks
 Second Vice President, Tennessee PTA
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It's Election Year for Tennessee PTA!

This is the year to elect new leadership for Tennessee PTA. The Nominating and Leadership Development Committee will meet in February to elect a slate of officers to present to the convention delegates. The Committee will also make recommendations for each chairmanship of the Tennessee PTA Board of Managers. Please keep in mind these are only recommendations. The newly elected Executive Committee will meet after the convention to elect the chairmen.



You will be electing a president-elect, first vice president, second vice president, third vice president, secretary, and treasurer. The Nominating and Leadership Development Committee will present a slate of nominees to the convention delegates at the Annual Convention on Thursday, April 16, at the first General Meeting. At that time, additional nominations will be accepted from the floor for each office. Should there be additional nominees from the floor, you will be given the opportunity to cast your ballot on Friday prior to the second General Meeting.

In the November mailing, your president received a copy of the Tennessee PTA Board of Managers Interest Form. If you would like to be considered for an office and/or a chairmanship, please complete the form, place it in an envelope marked "CONFIDENTIAL" and return it to the State Office by the deadline which is February 13, 2009. The envelopes will be opened in the presence of all members of the Nominating and Leadership Development Committee.

Serving on the Tennessee PTA Board of Managers is a privilege and careful consideration should be given to the commitment. Customarily there are three board meetings each year at which attendance is required. Each board member is also assigned committees on which to serve. As a member of the Tennessee PTA Board of Managers, you become a representative for the entire state, not your local unit, council or region.

Tennessee PTA is looking for strong leaders who will make the commitment and lend their talents to serving the children of our state. Should you have questions regarding any position, please contact the State Office by phone (1-888-782-5712) or email (ptaoffice@tnpta.org) and your questions will be directed to the appropriate person.

Evelyn Pelletier, Chairman
Nominating and Leadership Development Committee

Mary Lou Anderson Reflections Arts Enhancement Grant

A limited number of matching grants of up to \$1,000 are awarded each year to local PTAs for student-centered programs focused on arts education. Special consideration is given to programs that reach large numbers of students, especially students who are at risk. At risk is the term applied to children whose environmental, familial, and/or socioeconomic situation may affect their academic success or ability to learn.

The grant program complements PTA's long-standing commitment to quality arts education in public schools by providing funds to local PTAs to establish or enhance school arts programs in one or more arts areas: visual arts, photography, music (including dance), and literature (including theater). Local PTAs must submit complete applications and provide funds that match the amount they are requesting from the national PTA organization. For additional information visit the National PTA website at www.pta.org. The deadline for applications is **May 1, 2009**.

Who Wants To Be An Advocate February 17 - 18

It's almost time for the Legislative Conference! You may find the registration form on the website at www.tnpta.org. We need everybody that can possibly attend.

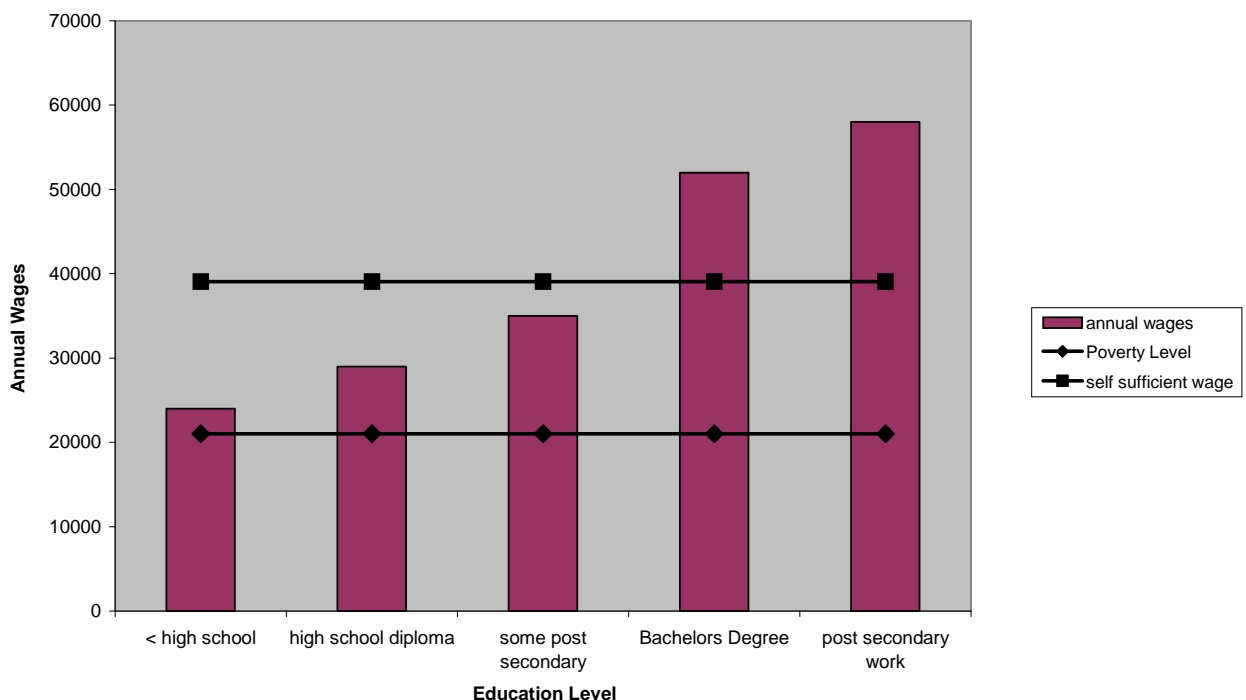
This is a very critical time for our state. With tax revenues dropping, it is going to be very difficult to balance the budget this year. The main hope we have is that several legislators, as well as Governor Bredesen, have said they won't cut the education budget for K-12. You may think then, why do we need to talk to them? Mainly because there will be many competing priorities for what limited amount of money there is. We have to make sure we keep education funded without a decrease.

Another reason to keep education funding in place is the effect it has on the economy. Look at the chart below. What's the difference? If we can increase the education level, the annual wages will go up, families will be able to purchase what they need instead of having to rely on government, the stores will see increases in sales, which leads to higher tax revenues which leads to more money for education and then the circle begins again, bringing more and more families out of poverty. We play a crucial role in this circle. We have to keep the legislators feet to the fire and improve our education system.

This year at Legislative Conference we will focus on the specific bills that are part of our priorities. Guest speakers scheduled for Tuesday afternoon include Commissioner Webb, Jerry Winters with Tennessee Education Association and David Picker, President of the Tennessee School Boards Association. We hope to have the sponsors of the bills talk to us-as well as lobbyist, Dan Hartley. Mr. Hartley will speak to attendees Tuesday evening about how we can best express our views to elected officials. Come find out what you can do – you really can make a difference.

Debbie Monroe
Tennessee PTA Legislative Chairman
legislative@tnpta.org

Annual Wages vs Education Level (ACT 2007)



National PTA TCBI Level II Training Report (Training Capacity Building Initiative)

I was honored to serve this year as one of two (2) Tennessee PTA (Training Capacity Building Initiative) representatives at the National PTA 2nd TCBI training session held in Chicago, IL October 2-5, 2008.

Also attending from Tennessee was Jessica Starr (TCBI Level I training) and our own Betsy Landers, the National PTA Secretary/Treasurer, who also took part in the Level II training, which was held from Friday evening 10-3-08 thru Sunday morning 10-5-08.

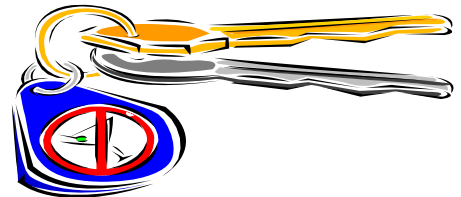
I was one of twenty eight (28) returning TCBI Level I trainers from the original class of 2007 selected to take part in a new training initiative that focused on deliberative dialogue forums & moderating skills. The main goal of the Level II training was to teach us the skills needed to convene and conduct a community or state-wide forum on key topics critical to PTA, such as the "Closing the Achievement Gap" Issue.

TCBI trainers are asked to be used at least three times during the year. TCBI volunteer trainers will be able to facilitate training that provides local-level leaders and members with the skills and resources necessary to achieve local unit goals. Workshop materials provided to the TCBI volunteer trainer by National PTA will focus on the five drivers found in the 2007-2010 PTA strategic plan:

- Leadership
- Membership
- Diversity
- Organizational Effectiveness
- Financial Viability

A TCBI training workshop "Preventing Theft in the PTA" is scheduled for the State Convention April 2009. It will be conducted jointly by Jessica Starr (TCBI Level I trainer) and me. To schedule a workshop presentation for your PTA or local unit board contact the state office at ptaoffice@tnpta.org. You may also contact me or Jessica Starr.

Charles E. Scott
cescott@fedex.com
National TCBI Trainer-Level II
Tennessee PTA Diversity Board Chair



Data Shows Drinking Age Saves Lives

Minimum 21-year-old drinking age laws prevented an estimated 4,441 drunken driving deaths in the last five years alone, according to a new report released recently by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. (NHTSA)

NHTSA Acting Administrator David Kelly, who presented the report at a symposium on the subject led by Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) said, "Turning our back on these laws would be a deadly mistake. Minimum drinking age laws are among the most effective measures ever used to reduce drunken driving deaths among America's young people."

In addition to estimating lives saved due to 21-year-old minimum drinking age laws, the new NHTSA study shows the number of lives saved by motorcycle helmets has risen sharply in recent years, paralleling an increase in motorcycle use. Agency estimates indicate that lives saved by helmets rose from 1,173 in 2003 to 1,784 in 2007. For the five year period ending last year, fully 7,502 lives were spared because motorcyclists used helmets.

The news statistical report examined a series of additional safety issues, and showed that in 2007 alone: frontal air bags saved 2,788 passengers age 13 and older; child safety seats saved 358 lives of children age 4 and under; seat belts saved 15,147 and could have saved another 5,024 lives had they been worn by all vehicle occupants involved in fatal crashes.

Borrowed from: Southeast ACTS Newsletter, January 2009

Memphis-Delta Region Round-Up

We have welcomed several new units as well as reinstated units since the beginning of school. Both the Memphis Council and Shelby County Council hosted a PTA University in January. Reflections, the Safety Poster, Multi-Media contests and the Citizenship Essay contest are going on now. We're looking forward to viewing all of the entries from our talented students.

The region's Fall Conference was held in October at Chimneyrock Elementary. Mrs. Cheryl Floyd was elected Region Director for 2009-2011. Senator Reginald Tate of Memphis brought us updates on happenings in Nashville. Another important thing we took care of was our Legislative Survey. This survey was conducted by Tennessee PTA-to learn what we think PTA's priorities should be when lobbying our representatives.

The most important thing accomplished at Fall Conference was nothing that we did during the meeting. It all happened beforehand. Operation Delta Cares was a way for us to say "Thank you" to military members from the Delta who are serving in combat areas. In the invitations to Fall Conference, a list of suggested donation items was distributed. Our region members brought in seven large boxes full of items for our troops. The Memphis-Delta Region cares and it shows!! A special Thank You to Congressman Marcia Blackburn's Bartlett office for working closely with us to get these donations delivered to a Marine detachment from the Delta! Memphis-Delta Region R·O·C·K·S!

Kim Dyer
Memphis-Delta Region Director
memphisdeltaregion@tnpta.org



Phoebe Apperson Hearst Family-School Partnership Award

Celebrate the power of partnerships with National PTA's **new** Phoebe Apperson Hearst Family-School Partnership Awards. Your PTA has given students an edge by meeting the National Standards for family-school partnerships. Now you can get national recognition and possibly win up to \$2,000. The three categories for judging are: Outstanding Family-School Partnership Award, Family-School Partnership Award of Excellence and Family-School Partnership Award of Merit. Applications are due by 11:59 p.m. March 1, 2009.

Your PTA may apply online at www.pta.org/hearst. There are no fees and all local, council, and region PTAs in good standing are eligible to apply. All applications will be subject to competitive review. If you would like for Tennessee PTA to submit your application, please send your application to the state office on or by **Monday, February 23, 2009**. Please contact the state office at ptaoffice@tnpta.org or president@tnpta.org should you have questions. Good luck!

Health & Safety Poster Contest

This is a reminder that all Safety poster entries are due into the State Office on or before March 1, 2009. The two themes are “Stranger Danger” for grades K-8 and “Stop the Violence”, a multi media event for grades 6-12. The rules for these programs can be found on the Tennessee PTA website at tnpta.org.

These topics were selected as a way for parents and children to discuss both of these areas. School should be a safe place but getting to and from school has become dangerous for some students. Children are abducted waiting for the school bus or waiting for parents to pick them up from the playground hours after school has dismissed. “**Stranger Danger**” can be prevented if children are supervised getting to and from school. Personalized backpacks and clothing offer a way for strangers to call children by name and trouble can follow.

“**Stop the Violence**” allows 6th – 12th grade students and parents discuss bullying and problems of violence they are encountering in their lives or in the areas surrounding them. Some areas may have more of an issue than others but this is becoming more prevalent across the country. Students can express themselves in areas of Music, Film/Video and Visual Arts.

For more information about these programs please visit the Tennessee PTA website at tnpta.org.

OMDRplus powered by Just Between Friends is Ready!

Just Between Friends is pleased to be the exclusive/official software platform for OMDRplus, PTA®’s official unit management web-service. With OMDRplus powered by Just Between Friends, we’ve taken a fresh start of providing you with membership tools in an easy-to-use web-based package.

Local Council and Unit Leaders

OMDRplus powered by Just Between Friends gives you a powerful suite of tools to help you run your PTA while it helps the parents in your community balance the activities and connections in their daily lives. Fun and easy-to-use, time saving modules and capabilities include:

- Member Management
- Communications
- Directory Creation and Update
- Parental Community Building / Social Networking
- Volunteer Management

Just Between Friends also helps you reach your fund-raising goals.

If your unit or council has not yet started-up with OMDRplus powered by Just Between Friends, simply have your president use our PTA Group Start-up Wizard. It will take you about 10 to 15 minutes to complete. Find out what information you’ll need to have ready to complete the wizard.

OMDRplus powered by Just Between Friends is different than the original OMDR with many new features and an enhanced structure that is easier to use and more powerful. If you or your unit has used the original OMDR in the past, you’ll be able to get your information from the original OMDR into OMDRplus and simply make any changes needed to ensure accurate data in the new system. If you’re looking for support for the original OMDR, please contact the National PTA Information Center directly.

Please contact Julia Sheffler by phone (412-561-0600) to get more information or get started.

Dates to Remember

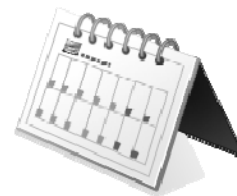
February

Black History Month

- 1 – 2 African American Read-In
- 8 – 14 PTA Take Your Family to School Week
- 8 – 14 Heart to Heart: Read With Me
- 13 – Tennessee PTA Board of Managers Interest Forms Due
- 14 – Valentine's Day
- 16 – President's Day
- 17 – PTA Founders Day
- 17 – 18 Tennessee PTA Legislative Conference

March

- 2 – Reports Due to State Office
- 2 – Read Across America
- 8 – Daylight Savings Time Begins
- 11 – National PTA Legislative Conference
- 17 – St. Patrick'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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