



# BEST/PTO NEWSLETTER

Bedford Elementary Schools Together/Parent Teacher Organization  
Providing a Forum for Communication, Enrichment, and Support  
January 2010

## Letter from the President:

As I sat looking out my window a few days ago at the snow that seemed like it would never end, I realized that we are close to the half way point for the school year! While that is a comforting thought, there is still a lot to be done before the end of the year.

One of the biggest tasks for the next two months is planning and assembling volunteers for the carnival/circus in March. This event (as I am told) is one of the biggest undertaking BEST sponsors. That being said, I am enlisting everyone to consider taking a role, no matter how small you may think your contribution is, as it will make a difference in the success of the carnival/circus. This one fundraiser can enable BEST to lend its financial support to a lot of programs for the students at Davis and Lane not only for this academic year but possibly the following year.

The format of the event does depend on the volunteers and the willingness of families to take an active role in the event. During the next few days the executive board will be finalizing the events we hope to offer on March 20. I welcome people to email me and let me know what they may be willing to offer in the preparation and the day of the event.

I look forward to hearing from folks! In the meantime keep thinking warm thoughts.

Lyn Kapilian  
President BEST/PTO

## In the Schools

Here are the educational enrichment programs planned for January. BEST-PTO has provided financial support towards making these happen.

### **Shocking Facts about Electricity**

Tom Wahle of Techsploration will visit the 5th graders on January 11th and 12th. Mr. Wahle presents his exciting show, "The Shocking Facts about Electricity". In the show, he demonstrates the fundamental laws of electricity and magnetism using devices such as a Van de Graff generator, Tesla coil, and a light saber to show.

After the show, each 5th grade class participates in a hands-on workshop the class which uses a unique electronic building system to quickly **design and build basic electronic circuits**. The students learn about basic electrical components such as resistors, switches, photo sensors, lights, motors, and electromagnets.

## **Weather with Barry Burbank**

On Tuesday, January 19th Lane School 5th graders will welcome WBZ Meteorologist Barry Burbank. In addition to discussing severe weather systems, Mr. Burbank will talk to the students about:

How factors of weather come together to create weather; (i.e., how humidity, wind, temp, clouds, air pressure, and the jet stream create and move varied conditions in and out of our area.)

Why the weather changes so quickly in New England, i.e., the old adage, "If you don't like the weather in NE, wait a minute".

Is global warming a real threat? Why don't we see warmer winters if the temperature is rising in the Earth?

How kids can use clues from weather all around them to predict weather!

## **Support Your Schools**

**Box Tops:** Check out this web site for huge savings and more \$\$ for the school <http://www.boxtops4education.com/earn/clip/Coupons.aspx>  
Thanks for your continuous support! Our next deadline is February 2010 - so please keep clipping. Some new places to find Box Tops are on Avery notebooks and folders. Keep sending in your clippings via Kid Mail. We have set the goal for \$2000 this school year. Keep clipping!



**Bedford "Spiritwear":** For those of you who purchased Spiritwear, we hope you are enjoying it. 100 percent of the net proceeds support BEST/PTO in its mission for enrichment in the schools. The hats were so popular that, unfortunately, there was a backorder and a few still remain to be delivered. For those of you affected, we appreciate your patience.

Below is a list of several other items on hand and available for purchase. They will be sold on a first come first served basis. Please email Davis VP Peter Ricci at [bedfordriccis@verizon.net](mailto:bedfordriccis@verizon.net) if you are interested.

*Available now:*

Hooded sweatshirts

Youth medium, and large

Adult medium, large and extra large

PJ Pants

Youth Large (14-16)

Adult Small, Medium, Large, Extra large

Long sleeve T-shirts

Youth small, large extra large

Adult small, medium

Short sleeve T-shirts

Youth Medium, large, extra large

Adult small

**It's Easy Being Green:** *Submitted by Peter Ricci for the Green Committee*

With the New Year comes the tradition that people make a resolution. Why not make one of them the act of trying to be a better recycler?

Take that extra second to think about putting something in the recycling bin vs the trash. Help your kids learn the value of recycling by giving them the proceeds of the bottle return money, if they help collect and return the bottles.

Hopefully, the boxes and packaging from this season's holiday gifts went into a bin, rather than a trash bag. If not make a mental note to do this for next year, or at any parties coming up. Setting a brown bag up to collect wrapping paper and packaging, helps that immediate need, and my kids love to do the "basketball toss" into the bag with the wrap.

Having kids ride the bus, or carpooling makes good earth sense, and also fosters independence and socialization skills. Keeping extra cars off the road reduces emissions and saves fossil fuels. When possible, make a plan for doing multiple errands in a motor vehicle to make your trip more efficient, rather than many in and out trips.

## **Community Corner:**

**Bedford TV, "The Best Show In Town":** Check out the new **Bedford Community Calendar** (<http://www.bedford.tv/calendar>). This is a great way for you to find out what's going on around town or to promote your own community event.

Please take our online survey to help us improve our service. Visit our website at [www.bedford.tv](http://www.bedford.tv) and follow the link to take the 1-minute survey and you could win a Bedford TV t-shirt!

### **BedfordKids.com**

Visit [www.bedfordkids.com](http://www.bedfordkids.com), a web site for families with children ages 0-18 in Bedford, Massachusetts, and surrounding communities. You'll find a local calendar of events; things to do (activities, classes, sports, clubs, camps, museums, zoos, farms, playgrounds, story times, family-friendly restaurants); preschool & childcare options; information on Bedford Public Schools (K-12); local and statewide parent resources (support groups; health + wellness; job search); a Welcome to Bedford guide; Bedford + Neighbors community links; and an active site-related Yahoo email discussion group.

**Bedford Education Foundation Reception:** Join us for our first Bedford Education Foundation Reception Saturday, January 30, 2010 at 7:00 pm in Palio's Italian Grill, 94 Hartwell Avenue, Lexington, Massachusetts. A fun evening intended to bring the Bedford community together to support our Public Schools. Ever wonder how some teachers are able to enhance classroom curricular creativity and innovation in the classroom? Come learn about The Bedford Education Foundation. The BEF promotes classroom innovation and empowers teachers and students to meet the growing challenges of the 21st century. Great raffle items and door prizes (iPod Touch, Boston Red Sox Tickets, Celtics Tickets, New England Patriots Tickets, etc.) Tickets \$25 per person Available for purchase through the Bedford Recreation Department: <http://www.bedfordrecreation.org/> (Category: Special Events)

### **Bedford SEPAC Parent Coffee Friday January 22, 8:30-10:30 AM at Whole Foods Café**

Parents and guardians of children with special needs or learning challenges are invited to attend a coffee on Friday January 22, from 8:30-10:30 AM sponsored by Bedford SEPAC (Special Education Parents' Advisory Council). Come and share concerns, information and support in a relaxed, informal setting. SEPAC generally holds parent coffees the fourth Friday of every month at Whole Foods Café, 170 Great Road, Bedford. Questions? Contact Irene Gravina at [igravina@yahoo.com](mailto:igravina@yahoo.com) or (781) 275-6535.

For information about Bedford SEPAC events, activities or membership, go to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/BedfordSEPAC> and sign up to receive notices of upcoming events.

**Dr. Ross Greene on Managing (and Resolving) Challenging Behavior in Children and Teens, Tuesday January 26**

On January 26, 2010, Bedford Special Education Parents' Advisory Council (SEPAC) in collaboration with Bedford Youth and Family Services will host a presentation by Dr. Ross Greene, Associate Clinical Professor in the Department of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School and author of the highly acclaimed books, "Lost at School: Why Our Kids with Behavioral Challenges are Falling Through the Cracks and How We Can Help Them" and "The Explosive Child". Dr. Greene is the originator of the Collaborative Problem Solving (CPS) model, an approach to working with children or teens to identify and manage the specific problems or skill deficits that are at the root of most challenging behaviors. The presentation will take place in the Bedford Town Hall Auditorium from 7-8:30 PM. All are welcome.

For more information, contact Irene Gravina at [igravina@yahoo.com](mailto:igravina@yahoo.com) or (781) 275-6535 or BYFS at (781) 275-7727.

**Bedford SEPAC Winter Potluck Dinner Social, Saturday January 30**

Bedford Special Education Parents' Advisory Council (SEPAC) invites all parents or caregivers of children with special needs or learning challenges to a winter potluck dinner social on Saturday January 30 at 6 PM at the home of Carol and Mike Hand. Bring a favorite dish to share and enjoy an informal evening with friends and neighbors. Good food and good company guaranteed!

For more information or to RSVP, please contact Irene Gravina at [igravina@yahoo.com](mailto:igravina@yahoo.com) or (781) 275-6535.

**Could You Use Help with Home Heating Bills?** The Fuel Assistance Program may be for you! The Fuel Assistance Program provides a benefit for home heating for Bedford residents of all ages who meet income guidelines.

Household Size	Yearly Gross Income
\$29,126	
2	\$38,087
3	\$47,049
4	\$56,011
5	\$64,973
6	\$73,935



Those who enroll in the Fuel Assistance Program are also eligible for free home weatherization, free heating system repair or replacement, free energy-saving devices, and discounts on some utility bills.

To apply, Bedford residents under age 60 should call Bedford Youth and Family Services (YFS) at 275-7727 and those 60 or over should call the Bedford Council on Aging (COA) at 275-6825. Please be assured that all information will be held in the strictest confidence. Remember, your taxes paid for this program, so if you think you qualify, apply for the benefits you deserve!

**Bedford Youth & Family Services:** Check out Bedford Youth & Family Services new winter newsletter available on line at <http://www.bedfordma.gov/index.php/youth/youth-a-family-home.html> or in hard copy at our Town Center offices!

**YFS Wins Prestigious Pickard Award:** Bedford Youth and Family Services (BYFS) received notification from the Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA) this week that Bedford will be one of three towns honored to receive the Kenneth E. Pickard Municipal Innovation Award as

part of the MMA Annual Meeting January in Boston. Bedford will be honored for the Parent Education series coordinated by BYFS and involving several town organizations in collaborating on a cohesive program for its residents.

In the award letter Geoffrey Beckwith, Executive Director of the MMA, said, "Your Parent Education Series has demonstrated your dedication, commitment and ability to increase the effectiveness of local government by successfully implementing a unique and creative program." The Town will be presented with the award at a reception Saturday, January 23rd at the Sheraton Boston where the other Innovation Contest and Town Report Contest winners will be honored.

In the application for the award, BYFS Director Sue Baldauf highlighted the goals of developing and coordinating a parent education series –

- Ensure a positive community wide approach to raising our children to be healthy, caring adults.
- Establish a year long calendar that both meets parent need and avoids schedule conflicts that can negatively impact family life.
- Develop a culture of coordination and communication among different groups, avoiding duplication of effort.

She credited Bedford Community Partnership (BCP) as the impetus to develop such a series based on discussions at their regular monthly meetings. The group would hear about unsuccessful school parent association attempts to garner attendees at their planned parent education events as well as schedule conflicts with last minute parent education workshops being offered without attention to or even awareness of what other groups were doing. Initial plans began a couple years ago with representatives of all school parent associations meeting to plan a coordinated effort, and program evaluations of those early attempts further enhanced the offerings over the past two years. The current award winning series includes more local groups and new collaboration, with several speakers offering themselves at no or low cost and the sponsoring organizations of several workshops sharing in speaker costs.

Baldauf was quick to note the success of the series as being due to the many groups sharing in providing the workshops. In addition to BYFS, other groups featuring workshops include John Glenn Middle School, Bedford Family Connection, A Place to Grow, LEAP School, Friends of the Bedford Library, Bedford Special Education Parents' Advisory Council, Middlesex Partnerships for Youth, Bedford Public Schools, and the Violence Prevention Coalition. "We could not do this without Town and Selectmen support – Bedford is lucky to have this department as a resource," Baldauf stated. Town funds helped with brochure printing and mailing costs.

The Kenneth E. Pickard Municipal Innovation Award is sponsored annually by the MMA to recognize cities and towns that have developed unique and creative projects or programs to increase the effectiveness of local government. It is named in honor of Kenneth E. Pickard, executive secretary of the Massachusetts League of Cities and Towns from 1969 to 1973. Any city or town that is a member of the MMA is eligible to apply. Innovations can be instituted in any area of local government and should address a problem common to municipalities in Massachusetts in a new and different way.

For questions about the series or for more information contact 781-275-7727.

#### **MAKE SURE OUR KIDS ARE CYBER SAFE**

Speaker: Middlesex Partnerships for Youth with Margie Daniels, Director and Onyen Wong, Assistant District Attorney

When: Tuesday, March 2, 2010

Time: 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Location: Bedford Town Hall Auditorium

Target Audience: All Parents and School Personnel

The internet offers almost limitless opportunities to gain knowledge and make contact with others. When used appropriately, it is a powerful and positive tool. However, school staff and parents need to be aware of the risks inherent in this technology. Effective prevention and intervention strategies for parents and school staff and administrators will be outlined and discussed.

Middlesex Partnerships for Youth, Inc., is a private, nonprofit organization affiliated with the Middlesex District Attorney's Office and designed to foster collaborations among community leaders, public safety agencies, and educators to safeguard students in Middlesex County. Bedford Public Schools is a member of the Partnership.

Sponsored by Middlesex Partnerships for Youth, Bedford Public Schools and Violence Prevention Coalition of Bedford (VPC)

**Mixed Media Art class (Ages 4 - 6):** Design your own paper mache puppet heads!! Projects will evolve by adding details, fabric, and decoration and will include a short puppet show. The class will explore the use of water color, tempera, and acrylic along with other art materials with a variety of projects to stimulate the imagination and develop fine motor skills, all while having fun!! All supplies provided. Classes held at The Corner at the Town Center Building, 12 Mudge Way, Bedford, MA. Mondays, 1/25 - 3/22 (no class 2/8, 2/15) 7 wks. 9:00 AM – 10:00 AM; Fee: \$90, (\$85 for Bedford residents). To register: [www.bedfordrecreation.org](http://www.bedfordrecreation.org) or call 781-275-1392

**Lane Weaving and Drawing class (gr. 3—5) w/ Penny Leslie:** Students will be able to choose from several different media. There will be flat looms for weaving with a variety of yarns, ribbons and fabrics to create a decorative piece, a wall hanging, pillow cover, or shoulder pouch. For those interested in further developing their skills in drawing and self expression, there will be plenty of drawing and painting supplies along with ideas and guidance from the instructor. Lane Cafe, Tues. 1/19 - 3/16 (off 2/2, 2/16) 3:00 - 4:30 (7 wks) Fee: \$90 Bedford Residents. To register: [www.bedfordrecreation.org](http://www.bedfordrecreation.org) or call 781-275-1392

#### **2009-2010 BEST/PTO Officers**

**President: Lyn Kapilian**

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**Vice President (Davis): Peter Ricci**

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**Vice President (Lane): Susan Miele**

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**Secretary: Kristin Ferrari**

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**Treasurer: Diane Bernstein**

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#### **BEST Committee Chair Open Positions**

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- 5<sup>th</sup> grade
- Green committee
- Celebrating Differences
- Parent Advisory Council
- Transportation Safety Committee