

Winter recess next week; spring fundraiser orders due tomorrow; last night's budget forum; staff luncheon & more.

BIRCHWOOD ELEMENTARY

Weekly bulletin -- February 14th, 2013

Buddy sends his love to Birchwood students and their families.



No school next week (Feb. 18-22) -- winter recess. Enjoy the break from school.



Tomorrow (Fri., Feb. 15th) is the last day to place an order for the spring fundraiser! Brochures with order forms went home in backpacks last week.

[Gertrude Hawk Chocolates](http://www.gertrudehawkchocolates.com) also offers online ordering (which means you can send the link to friends and family anywhere!):

<http://www.gertrudehawkchocolates.com/fund-raising/welcome>

Click "Group Member Sign Up" and enter 702491

[Dutch Mill Bulbs](#) offers flowers for a beautiful garden this summer--they come with instructions and are guaranteed to grow. Still don't trust your green thumb? Consider donating your flower order to beautify Birchwood's school grounds.



Birchwood earns 50% of all sales...Pull out those order forms now!

The Staff Appreciation Luncheon is Wed., March 13th.

This is an opportunity to show Birchwood's teachers and staff how much we appreciate their hard work. (You'll find colorful "shapes" coming home in your child's backpack on which they can write a note of appreciation--we'll use these in the centerpieces at the luncheon.) Volunteers are needed to serve during these shifts:



9:00-11:00, 11:30-12:30, and 12:30-1:30.

Also taking sign-ups for the following dishes and donations:

- * Tossed Salad w/ Italian dressing
- * Assorted Dinner rolls w/ Butter
- * Antipasta Tray
- * Favorite Rice Dish
- * 1/2 Tray of Vegetable Lasagna
- * Chicken Piccata
- * Bowls of Whole Fresh Strawberries
- * Chocolate Dipping Sauce
- * Pound Cake
- * Fresh Fruit Tray
- * Box of Joe w/ cream & sugar
- * Tropical Punch
- * Sparkling Grape Juice
- * Small Bottles Water
- * 2 Bags Ice
- * 1 Roll Saran Wrap, Foil & Gallon Storage Bags
- * Bags of Chocolate Kisses
- * Cash Contribution (suggest \$3-\$10)

To sign up, contact Lori Lembo by March 4th: lorilembo@verizon.net (or leave a note in the main office). [FLYER](#)

"Either you try to make a difference, or you make a difference by not trying." New York's schools are facing fiscal crisis, due in part to shrinking state aid for education. If you would like to know how to advocate for better funding, the materials from Monday night's region-wide advocacy event at Niskayuna High are now posted on the Niskayuna Schools homepage:

<http://www.niskayunaschools.org/>

You'll find the presentation, an advocacy toolkit, contact information for our elected officials, and more resources. Tell your story!

Meanwhile, **the second community forum on what to do about Niskayuna's school budget deficit was held last night.** Once again, Birchwood was well-represented with several parents providing thoughtful comments during the public input period. Members of the Board reiterated that the lines of communication are open. (Editor's note: I wrote an email to schoolboard@niskyschools.org and got thoughtful replies from *two* Board members.) Meeting materials and budget survey results are posted on the [Niskayuna Schools homepage](#).

The next budget forum is March 7th. More info: [District Budget Calendar](#).

If you'd like to join an emerging workgroup of parents who are concerned about the district's use of resources, click [HERE](#) or contact [Kim McClive-Reed](#).



Hey Box Tops heroes, guess what? You just earned another \$375 for Birchwood! That's money that can be spent on programs like class trips and school assemblies. You can see how each sheet adds up...If every family turned in 1 sheet of Box Tops or Labels each month, we'd earn about \$250/month! Beginners welcome! Click on the logos above to learn how it works, and find instructions and printable collection sheets on our Fundraisers website:

<http://birchwood.niskypto.org/pto-fundraising>

Prizes for February will be announced tomorrow. Start collecting for March now!

Be a Box Tops hero at work: Check your company's mailroom--paper reams and other office supplies may contain Box Tops logos too. Perhaps you can even leave a collection box, so other employees can share the joy of raising money for schools...?

Popcorn Friday tomorrow!

Kids are having fun in ASEP classes after school! Mr. West's classes have not begun yet, and there's still room:

Baseball (grades 2-5), Mondays beginning March 18th

Run for Fun (grades 3-5), Wednesdays beginning March 20th

To sign up, print p. 7 of the [Winter 2013 ASEP Schedule](#) (hard copies available in the main office). Questions? [Pam Ober](#) or [Dawn Farrell](#).

Volunteering at Birchwood next year...99 slots filled!

[View open positions and sign up online](#)

Or print the [sign up form](#) (updated)



Feature position: Coordinate a Fundraiser

(e.g. Entertainment Books, Fall Foods, Holiday Shoppe, Spring Flowers)

Fundraisers allow the PTO to provide financial support to programs like school assemblies, classroom workshops, the Staff Appreciation Luncheon, class trips, school-wide social events, and more. Pick one fundraiser to coordinate--you can team up with a friend or spouse, or have the pleasure of being the sole person in charge. All are open to your input. These are one-time programs, so your service is only for a month or two. And you can feel good about your contribution all year long! No experience necessary. (Interested in all of them?? [Email us](#)--you might be just right for VP of Fundraising position!)

Questions about a position? Explore the [PTO website](#) or email us at: birchwood@niskypto.org. *Please select your position by Thurs., Feb. 28th.*



[February Lunch Menu](#)

New Lunch Payment Website: MySchoolBucks.com

(use the same login as MyNutriKids)



Got any of these items laying around?

Fun pencils (unsharpened)
 Decorative erasers
 Tattoo stickers
 General stickers
 Bouncy balls
 Unopened McDonalds Happy Meal toys
 (or other fast food toys)
 Coloring books and crayons (again, new
 and unopened)
 Other unused party favors

We can put them to good use as prizes at the Fun Fair! Just leave a bag in the Main Office, attn: Fun Fair. Thank you!

Fun Fair is Friday, March 8th

6:00-8:00pm

[FUN FAIR FLYER](#)

Questions? [Tara McKenna](#) and [Paulette Doudoukjian](#)



School banking this Friday

7:45-8:30am

Turn in [reading reports](#) by
March 31st...\$3 per book!

Haven't gotten around to opening an account for your child? Now would be a great time! Birchwood will earn \$5 on all new accounts between now and March 31st. It doesn't take long, you only need a \$1 deposit to start, and your child can earn money for getting good [report cards](#) and for writing [book reports](#)! Meanwhile, they learn the value of saving money. There really is no down side--check out the website:

[CapCom School Banking](#)

[Youth Application](#)

Questions? [Francesca Hill](#)

Feedback? [Click here](#)

Add/update an email address? [Click here](#)

The Birchwood Bulletin is produced by the PTO Communications Committee in cooperation with the Birchwood principal and staff.

To submit information for the weekly bulletin, please email [Birchwood@niskyPTO.org](mailto: Birchwood@niskyPTO.org) by Sunday night of the week you want it to appear.

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<http://birchwood.niskypto.org/>

Birchwood school homepage:

www.nisk.k12.ny.us/birchwood

Niskayuna School District:
<http://www.niskayunaschools.org/>

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