



# BUSHY PARK PTA NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2025

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**JANUARY 20**  
SCHOOL CLOSED

**JANUARY 23**  
END OF 2ND QUARTER  
3 HOUR EARLY DISMISSAL

**JANUARY 29**  
PROFESSIONAL WORK DAY  
SCHOOL CLOSED

**JANUARY 31**  
5TH GRADE MOVIE

**FEBRUARY 5**  
**PTA MEETING**

**FEBRUARY 5**  
3 HOUR EARLY DISMISSAL

STRATOSPHERE SOCIAL  
FAMILY FUN NIGHT

**FEBRUARY 6**  
3 HOUR EARLY DISMISSAL

**FEBRUARY 7**  
SCHOOL CLOSED

**FEBRUARY 21**  
SWEETHEART DANCE

**FEBRUARY 28**  
TALENT SHOW

## NOTE FROM THE PTA PRESIDENT

Dear BPES PTA Members and Families,

Happy New Year! I hope this message finds you and your loved ones refreshed and ready for an exciting 2025. As we head into the second half of the school year, the PTA is excited about the events, programs, and opportunities we have planned to support our amazing students, teachers, and staff. Thank you for your continued involvement and enthusiasm. Here's to a fantastic year ahead!

Warm regards,  
Voula Augustin  
PTA President



# THANK YOU!

Thank you to all of the BPES families who joined us for Family Bingo Night on January 10th. Congrats to all of our big winners!



**A huge shoutout to our fabulous Family Bingo Night chairs – Jenn Ivester, Tara Benedetti, and Michele Hutto!** Your efforts made it a night to remember, filled with fun and joy.

# UPCOMING PTA EVENTS

## FAMILY NIGHT OUT

FEBRUARY 5TH

**MORE DETAILS  
COMING SOON!**

Join us for Family Fun Night at Stratosphere Social! Dive into an evening filled with thrilling activities like bowling, ax throwing, arcade games, and immersive virtual reality experiences. Don't miss out on the fun—bring the whole family for a night of laughter and excitement!



A PORTION OF THE PROCEEDS WILL BENEFIT THE BPES PTA.

STRATOSPHERE SOCIAL  
1332 LONDONTOWN BLVD  
ELDERSBURG, MD 21784

## TALENT SHOW - FEBRUARY 28

**TIME TO UNLEASH YOUR INNER SUPERSTAR!**

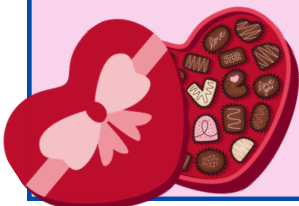
WHETHER YOU'RE A SINGING SENSATION, A DANCING DYNAMO, A JOKE-TELLING GENIUS, A JUGGLING WIZARD, OR A POETRY WHISPERER,

THIS IS YOUR SPOTLIGHT MOMENT! GET READY TO DAZZLE! STAY TUNED FOR DETAILS ON HOW TO REGISTER.

## SPREAD LOVE AND KINDNESS

**IT'S TIME FOR THE PEOPLE WHO NEED PEOPLE'S 18TH ANNUAL CHOCOLATE BOX CHALLENGE**

**February 1-10** we will be collecting mini heart-shaped chocolate boxes. And as part of our ongoing efforts to provide essential support and comfort to Individuals In need, we are seeking snack donations for distribution at our local shelters. Please consider donating Individually wrapped cookies, chips, fruit snacks and Capri Sun juice pouches. Every small contribution makes a significant difference in the lives of those who need it most.



**ALL DONATIONS CAN BE LEFT IN THE BINS AT BPES OUTSIDE OF THE FRONT OFFICE.**

THE *Sweetheart Dance* RETURNS ON  
**FEBRUARY 21ST**

**WANT TO BE ONE OF THE FIRST TO FIND OUT THE THEME? JOIN US AT OUR NEXT PTA MEETING ON FEBRUARY 5TH!**

Mark your calendars for the 2025  
**BPES PTA STEM AND CAREER NIGHT**  
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26TH  
6:30 - 8:00 PM

Have a Career that you'd like to talk to BPES students about or a fun STEM activity that you'd like to share?

If so, sign up for a booth with this code or email: [candice.gerstner@gmail.com](mailto:candice.gerstner@gmail.com)



## BUDDY'S JOKE DEN

**WHY DIDN'T BUDDY THE BEAR EVER GET LOST?**

Answer on page 5

# BEAR HUGS SPOTLIGHT



THE BPES PTA IS PROUD TO RECOGNIZE STAFF MEMBERS WHO GO ABOVE AND BEYOND TO MAKE OUR SCHOOL A SPECIAL PLACE. INTRODUCING THE BEAR HUGS SPOTLIGHT—JOIN US IN GIVING A BIG "BEAR HUG" TO THIS MONTH'S HONOREE!

## MRS. PERRY 3RD GRADE

### What is your favorite childhood book?

My favorite childhood book as a very young child was *Go Dog Go!* In elementary school, I read and reread *The Little House on the Prairie* series. The poor librarian tried to get me to try new titles, but I was hooked.



### Do you have a favorite color, and why?

As far as I'm concerned, blue is the best color. It's the color of the sky, ocean, and lakes. I feel that it goes with everything, so it's no surprise I have a lot of blue in both my clothing and my home.

### If you could have any superpower, what would it be?

If I could choose any superpower, I would choose the ability to fly. I love to travel and I really dislike traffic, so flying would be the ultimate thrill.

### What's your dream vacation spot?

Since I love to travel, my dream vacation would be to go to Australia. I would like to spend a few weeks exploring all the different places there.

### What was your favorite game when you were in elementary school?

My favorite recess game was playing tetherball. I was tall as a young kid, so this was the one 'sport' I could excel at. I had terrible coordination, so I was usually one of the last kids chosen in team sports.

### What inspired you to work in education?

When I was in middle school, I knew I wanted to help people. I had to write an observation paper and a friend of mine suggested I go and see his mom, who was a kindergarten teacher. I was amazed at what the students could do, and the palpable joy in the classroom.



## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

**WE ARE IN NEED OF A FEW VOLUNTEERS TO ASSIST THE EVENT CHAIRS FOR OUR UPCOMING ADULT BINGO ON FRIDAY, MARCH 28, 2025.**

THIS YEAR WILL HAVE AN EXCITING NEW TWIST, STAY TUNED FOR MORE DETAILS!



### COMMITTEE CHAIRS NEEDED FOR:

#### BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

RESEARCH AND PROVIDE DIFFERENT TYPES OF BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES.

#### WALKING WEDNESDAYS

THIS PROGRAM HELPS ENCOURAGE EXERCISE DURING RECESS.

#### BELONGING TOGETHER

FREE FAMILY FUN TO CELEBRATE THE DIFFERENT CULTURES WITHIN BPES.

#### CULTURAL ARTS

THIS COMMITTEE PROVIDES PROGRAMS THAT EXPOSES STUDENTS TO A VARIETY OF PROGRAMS THAT CAN INCLUDE MUSIC, ART, DRAMA AND MORE.

#### COMMUNITY SERVICE

THIS POSITION WILL HELP ORGANIZE MONTHLY SCHOOL SERVICE PROJECTS.

#### FUNDRAISING

THIS POSITION HELPS WITH COORDINATING SPONSORSHIPS AND DONATIONS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.

INTERESTED? EMAIL [BUSHYPARKPTAVOLUNTEER@GMAIL.COM](mailto:BUSHYPARKPTAVOLUNTEER@GMAIL.COM)

# LUNAR NEW YEAR

LUNAR NEW YEAR IS A BIG HOLIDAY IN MANY ASIAN COUNTRIES LIKE CHINA, VIETNAM, AND KOREA.

EACH YEAR IS CONNECTED TO A ZODIAC ANIMAL—2025 IS THE YEAR OF THE SNAKE!

IT STARTS ON THE LUNAR CALENDAR AND CELEBRATES NEW BEGINNINGS WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS.

2025 IS THE YEAR OF THE SNAKE

SYMBOLIZES WISDOM, CHARM, AND TRANSFORMATION. KNOWN FOR THEIR DEEP THINKING AND GRACE, THOSE BORN UNDER THIS SIGN EMBRACE GROWTH AND RENEWAL. IN 2025, THE SNAKE INVITES US TO REFLECT, GROW, AND EMBRACE NEW BEGINNINGS.

**GONG XI FA CAI**

WISHING YOU GREAT HAPPINESS AND PROSPERITY



## TRADITIONS AROUND ASIA

### CHINA

FAMILIES HAVE LARGE FEASTS WITH DUMPLINGS AND NOODLES. THEY ENJOY DRAGON DANCES, FIREWORKS, AND LANTERNS, ESPECIALLY DURING THE LANTERN FESTIVAL, WHICH MARKS THE END OF THE CELEBRATION.

### MALAYSIA

CELEBRATIONS LAST 15 DAYS WITH FAMILY VISITS, BRIGHT DECORATIONS, AND TREATS LIKE PINEAPPLE TARTS AND PEANUT COOKIES.

### VIETNAM

HOMES ARE CLEANED AND DECORATED WITH KUMQUAT TREES AND PEACH BLOSSOMS. FAMILIES GATHER TO ENJOY STICKY RICE CAKES (BÁNH CHỨNG), FRESH FRUITS, AND EXCHANGE RED ENVELOPES (LI XI).

### PHILIPPINES

LUNAR NEW YEAR IS CELEBRATED WITH A MIDNIGHT FEAST CALLED MEDIA NOCHE. ROUND FRUITS SYMBOLIZE UNITY, AND FOODS LIKE STICKY RICE AND LONG NOODLES BRING GOOD LUCK. PEOPLE WEAR POLKA DOTS FOR PROSPERITY, SET OFF FIREWORKS TO WARD OFF BAD SPIRITS, AND OPEN DOORS AND WINDOWS FOR GOOD FORTUNE.

### SINGAPORE

FAMILIES ENJOY STICKY RICE CAKES (NIAN GAO) AND PINEAPPLE TARTS. THE CHINGAY PARADE FEATURES FLOATS, LION DANCES, AND COLORFUL PERFORMANCES.

### KOREA

PEOPLE WEAR HANBOK, HONOR ANCESTORS WITH CEREMONIES, EAT RICE CAKE SOUP (TTEOKGUK), AND BOW TO ELDERLY (SEBAE) TO RECEIVE BLESSINGS AND MONEY (SEBAETDON).



## BEARY GOOD BOOKS AHEAD



AGES 2-6

**Let's Celebrate Korean New Year!**  
Michelle W. Park

Ring in the Lunar New Year with this sweet picture book by Emmy-winning TV host Michelle W. Park. This heartwarming story follows two sisters as they explore the Korean traditions of Seollal while learning about the importance of family. The author's own dumpling recipe and a fun activity are included at the end!



AGES 4-8

**Goldy Luck and the Three Pandas**  
Natasha Yim

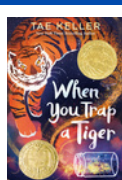
It's Chinese New Year, and Goldy Luck's mother wants her to take a plate of turnip cakes to the neighbors. The Chans aren't home, but that doesn't stop Goldy from trying out their rice porridge, their chairs, and their beds – with disastrous results.



AGES 8-12

**Kaya of the Ocean**  
Gloria L. Huang

Anxious thirteen-year-old Kaya has always been afraid of everything — but when she learns she is the descendant of a Chinese water goddess, she'll have to master herself to master her powers



AGES 9-11

**When You Trap a Tiger**  
Tae Keller

Would you make a deal with a magical tiger? This uplifting story brings Korean folklore to life as a girl who goes on a quest to unlock the power of stories and save her grandmother.



AGES 12-17

**When You Wish Upon a Lantern**  
Gloria Chao

Acclaimed author Gloria Chao creates real-world magic in this luminous romance about teens who devote themselves to granting other people's wishes but are too afraid to let themselves have their own hearts' desires — each other.



ADULTS

**The Teller of Small Fortunes**  
Julie Leong

A wandering fortune teller finds an unexpected family in this warm and wonderful debut fantasy, perfect for readers of Travis Baldree and Sangu Mandanna.

## HAVE YOU SUBMITTED YOUR "WE LOVE BPES" HEART YET?

Your artistic designs will be showcased on the BPES bulletin board in February. The deadline for heart submissions is January 30th!

[CLICK FOR THE TEMPLATE](#)

## GEAR UP WITH YOUR BPES SPIRITWEAR AND LET YOUR BEAR PRIDE SHINE

From cozy hoodies to fun tees, we've got something for everyone!



[CLICK TO SHOP](#)

<https://1stplace.sale/43944>



Answer to Buddy's Joke from page 2

A: Because he always had his BEAR-ings!

## BPES STAFF SNACK CART SIGN UP

Bring a smile and tasty treats to our hardworking teachers and staff by contributing to the January snack cart. It's our way to show appreciation for their dedication.

[CLICK TO SIGN UP!](#)

Send in your donated snacks to the front office by Thursday, January 30th at 9:00 AM.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!**



## AFTER SCHOOL BASKETBALL (GRADES 2-5)

We will be hosting an after-school basketball program at Bushy Park Elementary School this Winter. The program is open to 2nd through 5th graders and will take place on **Wednesdays from 3:50 - 4:50 pm** with Ms. Birsa and Ms. Lyter.

This is a 6-week program that will run from February through March. The sessions will begin with ball handling skills and then some practice dribbling, passing, and shooting. The session will end with basketball games (knock-out, etc.) and/or scrimmaging..

This program will run **Wednesday, February 12 - Wednesday, March 19.**

Each student is \$110. Additional siblings are \$90 each.

[CLICK HERE TO SIGN UP](#) or Scan the QR Code



## WINTER BREAK HAS ENDED, AND IT'S THE PERFECT OPPORTUNITY TO JOIN THE PTA!

Welcome back, everyone! We hope your winter break was filled with joy and warmth. As we dive into the second half of the school year, we invite you to join the PTA and contribute to our wonderful community!

### BY JOINING THE BPES PTA, YOU CAN:

★ **SUPPORT OUR SCHOOLS**  
Assist in organizing events, fundraisers, and programs that benefit our children. ★

★ **BUILD CONNECTIONS**  
Connect with other parents, teachers, and community members who share a passion for education.

★ **BE A VOICE FOR STUDENTS**  
Advocate for constructive changes in education and school policies. ★

[CLICK OR SCAN BELOW](#)



# NEXT PTA MEETING

## WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 5

### AT 7:30PM

LOOK FOR THE ZOOM LINK IN YOUR EMAIL OR ON OUR FACEBOOK PAGE

## STAY UP TO DATE ON EVENTS AND REMINDERS:



[FACEBOOK](#)



[PTA WEBSITE](#)



JANUARY 2025