

# Blazer

Volume 7 Issue 4

FEBRUARY 2002

Dear Parents,

We are in the process of registering students for their classes for the 2002-2003 school year. It is very important that students and parents give serious consideration to the selections of these courses. The master schedule is constructed and teachers and instructional aides are hired on the basis of students' course selections therefore, students are expected to take the classes for which they have registered. As in previous years, we will provide a period of time during the summer for students who may have a need to change their course selections. Because of budget restraints, we will need to have our request for staff completed sooner than in the past. Therefore, we will not have the entire summer to complete the master schedule and request additional teachers. It is very important that we have as accurate a registration count as possible. Please consult your child's counselor if you have questions concerning course selection or the registration process.

Blair High School has just received great news! Blair has produced seventeen semifinalists in the Intel Science Talent Search. Blair High School produced more semifinalists than any other school in the country. **Yes, Blair High School is number one in the country!** The entire community should be proud of this outstanding accomplishment. Congratulations to the students, their families and the teachers and staff at Blair High School for their efforts in making this possible.

A few weeks ago, a number of Blair students were involved in gang incident at Sun Shine Park. While no one was seriously injured, when large numbers of individuals and weapons are involved, the potential for serious injury becomes very likely. Our staff is working very closely with the police and have identified the individuals involved. We have met with the parents of the students involved and feel that we have the situation under control. There have been no additional incidents.

I am, like every principal, concerned about the safety of our students and staff. When an incident such as this occurs it causes one to reflect on the security measures that are in place and to question if we are doing enough. After reviewing our procedures with the staff and the police, I feel the program in place to insure the safety of our students and staff at Blair is as solid as any school in the area. **Your child is safe at Blair High School.** Can this type of incident ever again happen at Blair or, for that matter, any other high school? Unfortunately, the answer is yes, but you have my assurance that the students and staff at Blair, MCPS security staff and the county police are working together to prevent any such recurrence. You can help by encouraging your children to support one another by reporting the presence of outsiders or any suspicious activity to any member of the school staff.

Sincerely,  
Phillip F. Gainous, Principal

## Intel Science Semifinalists and Finalists Announced

Seventeen students from Montgomery Blair High School were named semifinalists in the *61st Intel Science Talent Search*. Representatives from Science Service, which administers the program, announced the semifinalists on January 16 at ceremonies held at Montgomery Blair. The Science Talent Search semifinalists were selected from 1,592 applicants and represented 31 states, the District of Columbia and Guam. Students were judged based on their individual research ability, scientific originality, and creative thinking. Research projects covered all disciplines of science, including chemistry, physics, mathematics, engineering, social science and biology.

Blair has the largest number of semifinalists of any high school in the country. They are: **Jennifer Alyono, Jacob Burnim, Radhika Char, Steven Chemtob, Enoch Chu, Byron Drumheller, Jennifer Helgeson, Robert Jin, Fun-Chen Jou, Nancy Ku, Jean Li, John Li, Edward Lin, Alexey Rostapshov, Rahul Satija, Gregory Vieira and Bingni Wen.**

Each of the semifinalists received \$1,000 in recognition of their scientific achievements and Blair received \$17,000 to be used for the school's science and math programs. Science Service, a nonprofit organization that administers the program for Intel, also recommends these students to select colleges and universities for admission and financial assistance.

The list was trimmed to 40 finalists on January 30 and MCPS was the only school system in the Washington area with finalists this year. The four finalists, one from Walt Whitman HS and three from Blair will attend the Science Talent Institute in Washington, D.C. in March to participate in final judging and compete for college scholarships totaling \$530,000.

*Blair's Science Talent Search Finalists are:*

**Jennifer Christy Alyono**, for her engineering project, "Development of an Electrochemical Biosensor for Phospholipase C Based on Supported Hybrid Lipid Bilayer Membranes." Alyono's project seeks to simplify methods for detecting the presence of biological molecules, essential in a number of medical applications, including diagnosis and treatment of diseases, identification of biohazards and research in life sciences.

**Jean Li**, for her earth and space sciences project, "Chemical Origins of Extraterrestrial Organic Macromolecules in Carbonaceous Chondritic Meteorites." The project investigated the origin of carbon compounds in primitive meteorites and the mechanism for their development.

**Jacob Samuels Burnim**, for his engineering project, "On the Scaling of Electronic Charge-storing Memory Down to the Size of Molecules." Burnim analyzed the performance impact of shrinking random access memory (RAM) for computers from micrometer scale to molecular scale. His calculations suggest that some forms of this new memory should be able to function nearly as fast as present-day memory and store data at least 20,000 times more densely.

## PTSA President's Letter

It is hard to believe that the school year is half over and that second semester is here. The PTSA and the Blair community had some good moments during a difficult fall. Our College Night in December was a success. Almost 300 parents and students came to learn about the process of planning for life after Blair. We plan to do this again next fall. Many thanks to the Guidance Department and Guidance Advisory Committee for all their efforts. The Citrus sale went smoothly and once again produced more revenue than in previous years.

Now with less than five months left in the school year, the PTSA is gearing up for the **Silent Auction** in April and **After-Prom** in June. We need your help. A donation form for the Silent Auction is included in this newsletter. In past years we have had an amazing array of donations. We hope that everyone will participate in the Auction so that we can continue to support our school. Information about After-Prom is on page 12. We urge everyone, especially parents of freshmen and sophomores, to get involved with this important and fun event.

But even more important, we want your participation in school activities and committees. With over 3100 students, Blair is a huge and diverse community. However, most of the volunteer work at Blair is done by a few dedicated people. We want to encourage all parents to consider how they can help as well.

**Come to the PTSA Meeting on Tuesday, February 19, 2002.** This meeting will be held in the SAC at 7:30 PM and will feature a **Blair Volunteer Fair**. Learn about the many activities and volunteer possibilities at Blair. We hope there is something for everyone. You can help with street safety, student achievement issues, After-Prom, Blair Fair, spring sports, staff support, signature program planning or communications. Help meet the challenges that face our school and our children by volunteering at Blair. If you can't attend the meeting and want more information, call us!

Thanks—see you on February 19!!

*Marilyn Shoenfeld and Louanne Smith, Co-Presidents*

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Building a Diverse Community:  
*The First Open Space Conference  
in Downtown Silver Spring*

Saturday, March 9, 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Silver Spring residents

(including high school students) are invited!

Admission is free. Lunch is provided.

To register for the conference or for more info., visit [www.impactsilverspring.org](http://www.impactsilverspring.org), or contact Mary Murphy at [Mary1206@aol.com](mailto:Mary1206@aol.com) or 301-587-4326.

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## PTSA Treasurer's Report - January

The PTSA is well on its way towards reaching its fundraising goals again this year, and have already exceeded revenue targets in two categories: Membership and the Citrus Sale.

As of December 31, the Membership Committee had registered almost 500 members, who have contributed \$13,007 in dues and additional gifts. Although this far exceeds our financial target, which was \$10,000, we are less than halfway towards our participation goal, which is 1,000 families and teachers. The committee continues to sign up new members each week and, if you haven't done it yet, please join.

The Citrus Sale also enjoyed its most successful year ever. Gross revenue was \$9,756, up from \$9,100 last year, and the PTSA netted \$4,686, which is 22% over the target. Hat's off to co-chairs **Ed and Jane Freestone**, who continued the tradition established by **Jack and Susan Baer** of steadily increased sales, putting us on a 4-year streak.

Also, as of December 31, the PTSA had \$25,938 in the bank, and can meet all of its planned operational expenses for the year. Having paid off the classroom TV monitors last year, we increased the budget this year for student and teacher activities. **All that is needed to enable this is to have another successful annual Silent Auction in April.**

*Rich Celotto, PTSA Treasurer*

## PSAT Retake

Most 10th and 11th grade students at Blair HS took the PSAT in October, 2001. Our score sheets never got to the College Board offices; they are still in quarantine at the Post Office in Trenton, New Jersey. The Guidance Department has been working with the College Board to arrange an alternate test. This information was received at Blair on January 29, 2002:

- The PSAT will be given again during school on Tuesday, Feb 26, 2002 for students to retake the test.
- There will be a 2.5 hour delay on Feb 26th for students who are NOT retaking the test.
- There will be two versions of the PSAT on 2/26. One version is the "alternate secure PSAT"; juniors should take this version which will report scores in the usual fashion. The second version is "non-secure"; it a test that has been previously given and can be used for guidance purposes only.
- MBHS guidance will be sending a letter home to all students. Students have to sign up to take either version of the test. There is no cost to students.

## Honor Code

Blair is implementing an Honor Code in February. The Honor Code delineates, codifies, and defines the ethical standards and principles to be followed by all students and faculty of the Blair community. It addresses the faculty's responsibility in maintaining the Code as it applies to tests, quizzes, term papers, notebooks, projects, examinations, reports, homework, or any other work. The Code also defines the consequence for violation and delineates the appeal process. In early February, teachers will be distributing and explaining the contents of the code, the intention, and the consequences for violating the Code. Students will be asked to sign a form indicating that they have read, support, and agree to follow Blair's Honor Code. They will also receive a copy of the Code to keep in their notebook for the remainder of the year.

## Your Opinion is Important

The Office of Shared Accountability will be conducting a survey on academic instructions, how well students, teachers, and parents work together, school administration, and school building and equipment. This year, the Office of Shared Accountability will be sending out the *Surveys of School Environment* in March to students in Grades 6, 8, 9, 11 and their parents, who will have an opportunity to give their opinion about their student's education. Every survey that is completed and submitted will help make the educational experience provided by our school even better. So, please complete the survey and return it in the postage-paid envelope that will be provided.

## Financial Obligations

In response to parents' concerns, Montgomery Blair High School will be issuing obligation letters every four weeks to the parent/guardian of students with financial obligations. These obligations are incurred when students lose or fail to turn in books, pay lab fees, or lose IDs. Non-payment of these fees places a tremendous financial burden on Blair, including the ID fee of \$5 for each replaced ID. We suggest that parents discuss the issue of the financial obligation with their student and give him/her a strategy to employ, such as keeping an extra ID in his file with his grade level administrator or keeping a spare ID in his backpack. A workable strategy will help students to alleviate the financial obligation for replacing IDs. Parents also need to know that report cards are withheld when students have a financial obligation. If you receive a notice of a financial obligation, we ask that you follow the directions for payment and clear the obligation. This way your child will receive his report card and you can supervise his/her educational progress at Blair. In partnership with you, we can insure your child a quality education in a first-rate school.

## 2000-2001 PTSA CONTACT LIST

### EXECUTIVE BOARD

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### Membership Update

The Membership Committee would like to encourage *all Blair Families* to join the PTSA. Our current membership totals are good, but not as high as they should be given the size of Blair. We have 496 members and many of these are Blair staff members. If you are ready to join, send your name and contribution (\$10 basic or more) to Blair PTSA at PTSA Membership, 51 University Blvd East, Silver Spring, MD 20901.

### Parking Alert!

Parents are reminded that visitor parking during the school day is only allowed in the Colesville parking lot. Cars that are illegally parked in the University parking lot will be towed. After parking, visitors should go to the main office for a visitor's pass. The front office staff at Blair likes to be helpful, but they will not handle cash dropped off for students. Please make other arrangements if you need to get money to a student.

## PTSA CALENDAR

### February

12	Report cards distributed
13	7:00 PM Community and Hispanic parents meeting, Long Branch Community Center
14	7:30 PM Solo & Ensemble Concert, Blair Aud.
18	NO SCHOOL - Presidents' Day
19	7:30 PM <b>PTSA meeting</b> , SAC
21	7:30 PM After-Prom Planning meeting, SAC
26	PSAT, re-test or delayed opening

### March

1	Magnet Arts Night
7	7:30 PM Band Concert, Blair Aud.
8-10	Athletic Booster's Mulch Sale
13	Community/Hispanic parents meeting, LBCC
14	7:30 PM CAP Open House
15	Montgomery Area Science Fair
19	7:30 PM <b>PTSA meeting</b> , SAC
23	7-10 PM Desert Dance and Mostly Music Auction, <i>Call for reservations at 301-585-5002</i>
28-April 5	NO SCHOOL - Spring Break

### April

8	Interims mailed
10	Early release day
	Community/Hispanic parents meeting, LBCC
11	Maryland Functional Reading Test
	Early release day
16	7:39 PM <b>PTSA meeting</b> , SAC
17	Maryland Functional Math Test
23	Report cards distributed
23-24	MCPS College Fair, Gaithersburg, MD
26	<b>Blair Fair and Silent Auction at Blair</b>

for more Calendar information see [www.mbhs.edu](http://www.mbhs.edu)

### Support the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Mulch Sale

This year's goal is to sell 4,000 bags. Our Athletic Boosters raise money to support all the school sports teams and cheerleaders. *Order information is on page 10.*

### 2002 School Start Date Announced

The Board of Education has approved the 2002-2003 School Calendar. The first day of school will be **Tuesday, August 27, 2002**. Keep this in mind while you make summer vacation plans.

### Volunteer at Blair

Blair has many volunteer opportunities for parents, including activities that can be done from home! Tell us how you would like to help, subscribe to the Blair listserve where many volunteer jobs are announced, or contact Carolyn Henrich Packer at 301/681-0873 or by email at [c\\_henrich@pta.org](mailto:c_henrich@pta.org)

## Chips Named Best in State

Ana Mittal, Newsbriefs Editor

Silver Chips won the 2000 Marylander Award for the second year in a row for best high school newspaper in the state serving a population greater than 1,200 students. The contest was sponsored by the Maryland Scholastic Press Association (MSPA).

Chips received a first place rating in the contest and outstanding scores in the categories of Content and Coverage, Writing and Editing and Design, for a total score of 97.175 out of a possible 100.

The association lauded Chips for strong writing and reporting. "The sophisticated level of writing and reporting is light years beyond most high school newspapers, and the topics approached are timely, relevant, complex and bold," a judge noted.

Chips was also credited for representing diversity. "From the names and faces featured in [Silver Chips], the rich diversity of the school is clear to the reader and is obviously celebrated. Students of various ethnicities appear to be represented in context," wrote a judge. The MSPA also commented on the newspaper's layout. "Staffers clearly understand how art—particularly informational graphics and boxes—can add to the reader's understanding of the story," wrote a judge.

Chips also won the Marylander Award in 1993, 1996 and 1999. Earlier this year, Silver Chips writers swept the MSPA Individual Writing and Editing Contest, winning half of the awards.

*Reprinted from Silver Chips on line [silverchips.mbhs.edu](http://silverchips.mbhs.edu)*

## Blair Not Fully Benefiting From Giant and Safeway

If you shop at Giant and Safeway, have you registered to contribute your bonus A+ bucks to Blair? A quick check on the Giant web site shows that only 365 shoppers are contributing to the Blair account for a current total of \$1,547 in contributions. It is not too late to join. These programs continue through the end of March 2002. Stop at the store customer service desk to sign up. You can also register on line at [www.giantfood.com/bonuscar\\_plus\\_pin.cfm](http://www.giantfood.com/bonuscar_plus_pin.cfm) and [www.proghqtrs.com/safeway](http://www.proghqtrs.com/safeway). The Giant school code is **00906** and the Safeway code is **0757**.

During the months of February and March, you can stop at any Chevy Chase Bank branch, open a new account, and earn 1,000 points for the school you have already designated through the Giant program. It's that easy! Help Blair get a larger share of the dollars that these businesses have set aside for area schools. The program is not limited to Blair parents. Encourage your neighbors, family and co-workers to sign-up for Blair.

## Recognition Committee Report

**John Mathwin**, journalism teacher and sponsor for Blair's award winning newspaper, Silver Chips, has been nominated by the Blair PTSA Teacher Recognition Committee for the *Agnes Meyer Outstanding Teacher of the Year Award*. Silver Chips has received numerous awards and recognition, all of which can be credited to John Mathwin for his stellar example of what journalism should be. He has been devoted to the young people of Blair for 32 years and has imprinted his journalism integrity on all of his present and past students. Today, many have questioned the integrity of the media. Are sources reliable? Is the report objective? What role does a newspaper have in a community? Under John Mathwin's guidance, students writing for Silver Chips are constantly reminded of their duty and obligation to a free and honest press to rework their articles if the answer to these questions is less than "yes."

We wish John Mathwin luck with this very special award. From our perspective, he has already won in the hearts of so many at Blair. Thanks and good luck, John Mathwin!

### Three Montgomery Blair Teachers Achieve National Certification

**Jeffrey Newby, David Swaney, and Carole Tomayko** achieved National Certification in the Fall. The Certification is awarded by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and is achieved only after a challenging, year-long process. The award recipients agree that the exam itself improved their teaching skills. **Carole Tomayko**, an English teacher and 20-year veteran of Montgomery County schools, says that her "students are benefiting from the new things I have learned." **Jeffrey Newby**, in his 6<sup>th</sup> year teaching Modern World History agrees, "yes, definitely, I have learned what is meaningful to kids and how to draw real-world connections. The focus is on the student." **David Swaney**, an A.P. Government teacher, also has 6 years of experience and finds that the exam "fostered a lot of constructive reflection" resulting in a "more organized and more confident" approach.

The National Certification exam requires the completion of a portfolio that extensively documents each professional's teaching approach, as well as a final day-long exam. The massive box of materials usually arrives in September and the teachers have six months to complete the portfolio, which make up sixty percent of the final grade. Precise instructions on each of the six sections of the portfolio are included and involve two videotaped classroom lessons. The methods that are to be documented in each section range from how an individual teaches her particular discipline, how to work with groups of varying size, how the professional interacts with family and community, and how the needs of special-needs and speakers of different languages are met. Each facet of the examination process highlights the personal development of the student and encourages a teaching philosophy that enables the kids to make real-world connections to the curriculum.

These three professionals practice what they teach. In addition to an exhausting course load, student mentoring, and community outreach, they each volunteer their time to Montgomery Blair. Jeffrey Newby coaches basketball; David Swaney coaches the swim and dive teams; and Carole Tomayko has sponsored the literary magazine in the past. Their motivation to be challenged and to be the best teachers possible is evidenced through their achievement of National Certification and their continued commitment to the Blair community. **Congratulations to Jeffrey Newby, David Swaney, and Carole Tomayko!**

### Jonetta Russell Retires

After 44.5 years of teaching science, **Jonetta Russell** retired in January. Her mantra, "ignorance is not bliss," has guided students throughout the county and, particularly, at Blair to live science instead of just learning it. She loved teaching biology. Jonetta Russell initiated the successful expansion of the county's biology curriculum to incorporate Advanced Placement (AP) Biology, including lobbying school administrators to use double period blocking. She was the county's first AP Biology teacher and led workshops to train other teachers.

As a consultant for The College Board, Jonetta Russell traveled throughout the Middle States Conference to explain the trends in the AP curriculum to her colleagues. The College Board also disseminated to teachers nationwide an instruction unit titled "Wonder Plants" that she developed about hormones in plants. She has also served for several years as an AP essay examination reader.

In 1991, she took on a brand new challenge as the research coordinator for the magnet at Blair. During her tenure at Blair, 18 Blair students have been selected as Intel finalists [i.e., in the top-40]. Blair is the only high school in the history of the Intel competition to place three top-10 finalists in one year (1993). Just this past January 15<sup>th</sup>, Intel announced the semifinalists for the 2002 competition and Blair students placed first in the entire country, having 17 semifinalists. What a great tribute to Jonetta Russell as she leaves Blair.

The entire Blair community will feel a void as she leaves. She has raised the standards for all students. Sharing her love of scientific research with the larger community, she has volunteered for the past 21 years as assistant director of the Montgomery Area Science Fair, sponsored by the National Institutes of Standards and Technology whose goal is to encourage middle school and high schools students throughout the county to propose research, find mentors, and submit projects that will be judged by professionals in the field. From the parent community at Blair, we wish **Jonetta Russell** well and thank you for being so devoted to the study of science and passing that joy on to so many students across the entire county.

*Tina Slater and Emily van Loon, PTSA Staff Recognition Committee*

## SILENT AUCTION DONATIONS

Our Annual Silent Auction will be held on Friday, April 26 in conjunction with Blair Fair, and we need your donations. Your contribution doesn't need to be expensive or exotic (but if you insist, we don't mind). Would you be willing to donate lessons - computer skills or dance, music, voice, or sewing lessons? Donate your professional services, or an item from your inventory? How about a weekend getaway at your cabin/beach house? Do you have "treasures" (antiques; dishes; clocks; glassware; jewelry, exercise equipment, etc.) tucked away in your basement/attic that continue to take up space in your home? Ever heard of re-gifting (the art of passing on those unwanted gifts that you received for the holidays)? Now that you've got the idea, you can contribute to the success of Blair's Silent Auction. Need more suggestions? How about gift certificates; tickets to sports events/shows; handmade crafts; movie passes; gardening; pet sitting; or a theme basket. Whatever you have to offer, we can use to help our school - make a donation to the Blair PTSA Silent Auction! Donation information received by March 29 will be included in the auction catalog and all contributors will be acknowledged at the auction. Please use the form below to make your contribution, or contact Elsie McGuire at (301) 587-0510 (home); (202) 496-7541 (work) or by email: [elsie\\_mcguire@mckennacuneo.com](mailto:elsie_mcguire@mckennacuneo.com) to arrange your donation or for more information.

**Montgomery Blair High School  
Parent-Teacher-Student Association  
Silent Auction Donation Agreement  
Friday, April 26, 2002**

Name of Donor \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/grandparent/friend of \_\_\_\_\_

*Blair Student*

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Description of donated Item(s)/Service(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Value of item(s)/service(s) \_\_\_\_\_

This offer is valid from \_\_\_\_\_ through \_\_\_\_\_  
*Date* *Date*

Unless the donated item (tickets, gift certificates, etc.) is enclosed, this signed form will be considered the official document for redemption. Donation enclosed? (CIRCLE ONE) **Yes**    **No**

The undersigned agrees to donate the above mentioned contribution to the Montgomery Blair High School Parent-Teacher-Student Association. This donation will be used at the silent auction on April 26, 2002. A complete list of donors and their contributions will be listed in the auction program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature of Donor* *Date*

**RETURN COMPLETED FORM TO: MONTGOMERY BLAIR HIGH SCHOOL,  
ATTN: PTSA SILENT AUCTION, 51 UNIVERSITY BLVD E., SILVER SPRING, MD 20901-2451**

## Media Matters

Among the many things your son or daughter may not have shared with you about Blair are the services offered in the media center. We have 30 new Dell networked computers and an adjacent computer lab. Our collection has more than 20,000 books and magazines, and an impressive selection of online databases. These databases include World Book, Encyclopedia Britannica, Land and Peoples, Cumbre, Gale Collection (for literature, US and world history), Congressional Quarterly, and NewsBank and Proquest, and fantastic research tools that put newspaper and magazine articles from as far back as the 1970s, at your fingertips. Many of our Internet-based research and research tools can be accessed at home. The usernames and passwords are on page 10 in the student handbook.

The media center is open before and after classes and during lunch for students to work independently. Teachers frequently schedule their classes to work on assignments in the media center. Our staff includes two media specialists: **Lisa Hack** (ESOL, Special Education, Foreign Languages, Science, Math, Fine Arts, Tech Ed. and the Magnet) and **Robert Lasco** (English, Social Studies, and CAP) and four media assistants. Media assistants **Betty Dadpay**, **Donna Franklin**, **Susan Madden**, and **Mary Wild** are always “on the floor” to help with the big stuff, such as navigating the Internet, selecting the best research tools, resolving technical glitches, and recommending books, and with the little stuff such as making overhead transparencies, using the color printer, and operating the photocopier.

This year, there is a renewed emphasis on every parent’s favorite subject — reading. To motivate students to read, we are initiating an incentive program that awards points for books read and prizes at different levels. We have ordered comfortable new furniture for a soon-to-be-completed reading corner. We welcome suggestions from students and parents on appropriate additions to our collection.

To learn more, click on Media Center on Blair’s main page, or type in [imc.mbhs.edu](http://imc.mbhs.edu) at the address bar. Information posted there includes code of conduct, circulation policies, and web-linked class assignments.

*Mary Wild, Media Assistant*

## Blair SGA Hard at Work

The Student Government Association has been working on many projects lately. One recent success was the collection of approximately 5,000 cans and non-perishable food items that was a joint collaboration with the Students for Global Responsibility in December. Other projects that the SGA is currently working on include a September 11<sup>th</sup> memorial scrapbook, a blood drive at Blair, and an alcohol awareness program that will take place in the Spring. If you have any questions for the SGA, contact the SGA office at 301 649-2866.

## Blair Math Department

Give struggling math students a few more weeks to learn the subject matter and what happens? At Blair, the answer has been a resounding success. As reported in the *Blazer* last year, the pilot project took 60 Algebra I students and gave them a double period for Algebra. After the first unit test, the original group was regrouped so that the students were moving at a pace that fit their ability. Two of the groups took the final exams on schedule in January and June. The other group took longer to finish the material, into a few weeks of summer school, but the results were that 100% of these students received credit for Algebra I. This year the program has expanded to include a double period for Geometry as well as a larger group in Algebra I.

A new program that the Math Department will be instituting in February is the “Math Ladder to Success.” This program awards a superstar lanyard and pins to students who have had success in math class. Awards will be given for the following: an increase of one or more letter grades or maintaining an A from 1<sup>st</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> marking periods, an “A” on the math final, a 4.0 average for a marking period, triple “A’s” for a semester, or being named “Student of the Month” by their math teacher. When students reach the 10th level of the Ladder, their final reward will be a TI-92 calculator. Students who qualify for an award on the “Math Ladder to Success” should bring their second marking period report card to Ms. Hofman, math resource teacher, or Ms. Larson, math instructional aid, in Room 238. If parents, guardians, or students have any questions about the program they may call Barbara Hofman at 301-649-2870.

## Magnet Electives

There are 25 elective courses in the Magnet Program that any current sophomore and junior can select for next school year, as long as they meet the prerequisites for the course. Many non-Magnet students currently enjoy and are successful in courses like Marine Biology, Origins of Science, Astronomy and Advanced Application Software. All students will receive an MCPS Course Bulletin that describe these courses and the prerequisites. Course descriptions can also be found on the Blair web page at [www.mbhs.edu](http://www.mbhs.edu). All of the Magnet electives receive honors credit. If any student has a question regarding these courses, please see Ms Steinkraus in room 351, any magnet teacher or his/her counselor.

The next *Blazer* deadline is March 15, 2002.  
Send electronic copy to [KINGLIN@aol.com](mailto:KINGLIN@aol.com)

## Guidance Report

Registration for the school year 2002-2003 started in January because of the lengthy process to register 3,000 students for 7 or 8 classes per term. Early registration will also allow Blair to plan their staffing needs for the next school year. Parents are reminded to encourage their students to challenge themselves and to take a look at all the interesting electives offered at Blair, especially for upper classmen. **Barbara Drumm** of Blair's Guidance Department also met with parents at the January 15<sup>th</sup> PTSA Meeting to explain the registration process and answer questions.

The two main guidance resources that parents should know about are the "yellow pages" that are in the student plan book and the Career Center web page at [www.career.mbhs.edu](http://www.career.mbhs.edu). Both resources have information about high school graduation requirements and college and career resources. If you have specific concerns or questions, call the Guidance department at 301 649-2810.

Sophomores are being introduced to the Bridges program during a presentation offered in their Health class. The Bridges program is available to all students to explore career and college information through the Web. Each student is encouraged to start a portfolio in Bridges and to begin collecting their career and college interests. For complete access information see the student plan book.

Juniors are reminded that they are expected to take an SAT or ACT test this spring. Many students may also take the SAT II and AP (advance placement) tests in subjects that they are completing this spring. Test schedules and deadlines are listed in the "yellow pages" and online at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com). Juniors will meet with their councilors in May or early Fall to get started on the college application process. The steps for college planning are also in the student plan book and the Career Center web page at [www.career.mbhs.edu](http://www.career.mbhs.edu).

Student athletes must file a student release form with the NCAA Clearinghouse before they can be scouted by colleges. Forms are available in the Career Center.

All students are invited to the Career Center to meet with college representatives, pick up Summer Search resources, and to get started with the Bridges program. College representatives come to Blair most often in the Fall. Since the schedule is always changing, students can check for information on the Career Center Calendar or through Info Flo/school announcements.

**FAFSA** (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) Applications are available in the Career Center. The MD State Scholarship deadline is MARCH 1st. This deadline also applies to the Hope Scholarship Program and Guaranteed Access Grant program. The US Dept of Education are strongly encouraging students to submit the FAFSA electronically at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov). If you need assistance, contact the Career Center for times and dates of FAFSA workshops.

## THOMAS EDISON

Blair upperclassmen may want to consider taking classes at the Thomas Edison High School of Technology where students have a jump-start on many college and technical degrees. Students take classes at Edison in the morning and return to Blair for the rest of the school day. Courses include: Automotive Body Tech, Service and Technology, Biotechnology, Carpentry and Construction, Cosmetology and Cosmetic Services, Drafting and Design, Electronics Engineering, Graphic/Electronic Media and Web Design, Heating /Air Conditioning, Hotel/Travel, Medical, Network Operations and more... Students apply directly to Edison. This year the deadline is March 22, 2002. Contact Edison admissions at 301 929-6920 or your student's Guidance councilor at 301 649-2810.

**March 15, 2002, *The Career Discovery Fair.*** Parents and students level K-12 are invited to an enlightening eye-opening, "hands on" evening, with career specialists showing off their talents and allowing career exploration for you and your family(s). Additional details will be sent to area schools and radio stations. Bus transportation sites are planned.

**April 13, 2002, *NAACP Youth Summit, "Bridging The Gap,"*** at Richard Montgomery HS. Check the Career Center for additional details and flyers.

**April 23-24, 2002, *MCPS National College Fair,*** Montgomery County Agricultural Center, Gaithersburg, MD, is open to all juniors.

## SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Please check the MCPS Career Information Coordinator (CIC) Scholarship Database @ <http://filemaker.mcps.k12.md.us/scholarships/> for printable scholarships.

## ACT-SO

The Afro-Academic, Cultural, Technological and Scientific Olympics (ACT-SO) is a program designed to recruit, stimulate, improve and encourage high academic and cultural achievement among African-American high school students. The ACT-SO program centers on the dedication and commitment of community volunteers and business leaders who serve as mentors and coaches to promote academic and artistic excellence. There are 24 categories of competition in the sciences, humanities, performing and visual arts. For more detailed information and a peek at their web site go to <http://www.naacp.org/programs/act-so/actso.html>.

## College-Bound Program

The University of Maryland Counseling Center has a program for high school students interested in getting a "running start" on college. The program covers study skills, campus life, and college resources and is held on Mondays from 4:30-6:30 pm, February 25th through May 20th. The program includes workshops on textbook reading, writing, time management, exam skills, note-taking and includes campus tours. University of Maryland students are also part of the program, giving advice and information about majors and living on campus. Total cost is \$225. A summer session is offered in July. To register, call Shirley Browner at 301 314-7702.

## Coach's Big Win

Over the course of his 21-year career as the girls basketball coach at Blair, **Bill Lindsey** has won a state championship, been to the state tournament five times, and has compiled a 64 percent winning percentage. On January 11<sup>th</sup>, with Blair's 45-39 win over Gaithersburg, he reached another milestone: 300 career victories. Bill Lindsey has coached some of the best teams in the county, including an undefeated state championship team in 1982, and has coached young, inexperienced teams.

He is not only a coach but, also, a mentor for the hundreds of girls, who are/were involved in the basketball program at Blair. As a former player and current assistant coach, I have learned a lot about basketball and even more about life from Coach Lindsey. He treats both wins and losses as learning experiences for the players and building blocks for the following games. He has earned the respect and admiration of his current and former players, player's parents, and coaches across Montgomery County.

*Shira Fishman, Blair Graduate*

Follow Blazer Sports online at  
<http://silverchips.mbhs.edu/>

## Annual Spring Mulch Sale

Spring will be here soon, and the **Blair Athletic Boosters** are selling garden mulch. Pick up your mulch and pay \$3.50/bag or have it delivered (within 10 mile radius of Blair) for \$4.00/bag. Delivery/pick up dates are March 8, 9 and 10<sup>th</sup>. Order your bags of Dennison Shredded Hardwood from the Blair Athletic Department at 301 649-2840 (leave a detailed message for Coach Jimmy Short), email to [James V. Short@fc.mcps.k12.md.us](mailto:James_V_Short@fc.mcps.k12.md.us) or mail order form to Jimmy Short/Mulch Sale, 51 University Blvd East, Silver Spring, MD 20901.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Quantity \_\_\_\_\_ Pick up @ \$3.50 \_\_\_\_\_

or \_\_\_\_\_ Delivered @ \$4.00 \_\_\_\_\_

Total Cost \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for supporting the Blair Athletic Boosters

## Band and Orchestra

The band and orchestra have been humming with activities in preparation for concerts and competitions. The Band/Orchestra Boosters are preparing to host the 2002 Winter Guard Competition on February 16<sup>th</sup> and planning a fundraising Desert Dance on March 23<sup>rd</sup>. The Desert Dance is being held in the SAC from 7:00-10:00 PM, \$10 per person. There will be a Mostly Musical Silent Auction and the Jazz Bands and Orchestra will provide the music. Call Andrea Schewe for reservations at 301-585-5002.

Finally, many of the students auditioned for the Maryland All State Junior and Senior Band and Strings Orchestra, the MCPS Senior Band and Strings Orchestra, and the MCPS Junior Jazz Band and the following students achieved membership in these groups: MCPS Junior Jazz Band: **David Crawford**, trumpet; **Gregory Jukes**, percussion. **Gregory** is also a member of the MCPS Junior Honors Band. MCPS Senior Band: **Samantha Hong**, flute; **Deborah Moody**, clarinet; **Kurt Schewe**, trumpet; **Kristen Hoven**, horn; **Kelly McQuighan**, clarinet; **Matt Carson**, clarinet. MCPS Senior Orchestra: **Ben Gaddy**, cello; **William Hwang**, violin; **Jessica Lue**, viola; **Daniel Tsui**, cello. Maryland All State Senior Band: **Deborah Moody**, clarinet, **Kurt Schewe**, trumpet; **Kristen Hoven**, horn; **Matt Carson**, clarinet. Maryland All State Senior Orchestra: **Ben Gaddy**, cello; **William Hwang**, violin; **Daniel Tsui**, cello; **Jeanne Yang**, violin; **Elizabeth Kim**, violin.

Four Blazers, who are also members of the Montgomery County Youth Orchestra (MCYO), performed at Carnegie Hall in New York with National Festival Orchestra on January 17-21. Senior **Rahul Satija** and junior **Lisa Kim** claimed second and third seats in the first violin section, senior **Tiffany Lin** was sixth seat in the viola section, and junior **Kristin Hoven** was second french horn.

### BAND AND ORCHESTRA CALENDAR

February	1-3	Maryland Jazz Focus – All State Jazz
	12	WSSC Black History Month Concert – Jazz Band A
	14	Solo & Ensemble Concert at Blair Aud
	16-17	2002 Winter Guard Festival – Hosted by Band/Orchestra
	21-24	MMEA Conference in Baltimore – All State Junior/Senior Band and Senior Orchestra
March	1	MCPS Ensemble Festival
	2	MCPS Solo Festival
	7	Thursday Concert – Ensembles and Jazz Band A
	18	All State Junior Orchestra in Federick
	20	MCPS Band Festival – Symphonic Band
	23	Desert Dance and Mostly Musical Silent Auction – Jazz Band A and B; Orchestra
	25	MCPS Orchestra Festival Orchestra

**BLAZER SPORTS**

The winter sports season has been very exciting and rewarding so far for the Wrestling Team, Swimming Team, and Boys and Girls Basketball Teams. We are looking forward to some State Playoffs. You can support the teams by attending their events and rooting for the Blair Blazers!

**Play-off Schedules**

**Boys and Girls Basketball**

**Regional Tournament**

1 <sup>st</sup> Round:	Girls Feb 22	Boys Feb 23
Quarterfinals:	Girls Feb 25	Boys Feb 26
Semifinals:	Girls Feb 27	Boys Feb 28
Finals:	Girls Mar 1	Boys Mar 2

**State Tournament**

Mar 7,8,9	Girls UMBC	Boys UMCP
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**Wrestling**

County Tournament: Feb 15, 16 Blair HS  
 Regional Tournament: Feb 22,23 Sherwood HS  
 State Tournament: Mar 1,2 Western Maryland College

**Swimming**

Division II Championships: Feb 9, MLK Swim Center  
 County Diving Championships: Feb 15, 2:30, MLK  
 County Swimming Championships: Feb 16, 8:00, MLK

**WINTER SPORTS AWARDS NIGHT**

The Winter Sports Awards night is Monday, March 18 at 6:30 PM in the SAC. Everyone is invited to come, support and honor our winter sports athletes. Teams represented are Boys and Girls Basketball, Swimming, Wrestling, Indoor Track, Pompons, and Cheerleaders.

**SPRING SPORTS PRACTICE STARTS MARCH 1.**

Contact the coach and listen to Info Flo for times and dates of pre-season meetings. Athletes **MUST** have an up to date physical and a parent permission form to start practice.

- |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| TEAM-Coach                             | TEAM-Coach                            |
| <b>Var. Baseball</b> -John Macdonald   | <b>JV Baseball</b> -James Frank       |
| <b>Boys Lacrosse</b> -Robert Gibb      | <b>Girls Lacrosse</b> -Mike Horne     |
| <b>Var. Softball</b> -Louis Hoelman    | <b>JV Softball</b> -Janell Salazar    |
| <b>Boys Tennis</b> -David Ngbea        | <b>Track &amp; Field</b> -James Short |
| <b>Boys Volleyball</b> -Rajesh Rathnam | <b>Coed Vball</b> -John Mott          |

**Got Books?**  
 The Takoma Park Middle School PTA is collecting used books and videos to sell at their **International Night & Used Book Sale**. If you have books and videos to donate, call Cathy Bernard, 301 585-3248. Items can also be left at the Takoma Park MS office. Looking to buy some used books? The Book Sale will be held on Friday, March 15, 2002 starting at 6:00 PM. The event will be at Takoma Park MS on Piney Branch Road.

**CAP NEWS**

The Communication Arts Program completed the first semester successfully and is moving into plans and projects for second semester. Early in January, CAP Alumni Night drew more than 30 alumni from the classes of '99, '00, and '01. Students and parents heard about the college selection process and life after CAP.

Recruitment season has ended and decisions are being made about the CAP Class of 2006. Acceptance letters will be mailed in early March. Students who are accepted will be invited to CAP Showcase Night on March 14<sup>th</sup>. The evening is open to all students and parents in the program and is an opportunity to see projects, videos and papers from the year and to meet and talk with students and teachers at all levels. Check the Spring Edition of the CAP newsletter for an update on events in the program.

*Dolores D'Angelo, CAP Coordinator*

**Spirit Club is Selling Spirit Stuff!**

- Flashing Button \$2
- Alumni Mug \$1
- Tattoos \$.25
- Zipper Pulls \$.25
- Megaphone and Pom \$1

*Contact the Spirit Lady at 301 681-2831*

**Final Registration for Takoma Park Youth Soccer and Baseball**  
 February 22nd (6:00-9:00 PM)  
 and February 23rd (9:00-noon)  
 at the Takoma Park Municipal Building,  
 Maple Ave, TkPk.

**The Wall of Honor**  
 Purchase a plaque for the Wall of Honor and commemorate your student's years at Blair! The plaques are sold by the Blair Spirit Club and are tax deductible. The funds raised are used to support Montgomery Blair High School. There are three sizes available:

- small 3 5/8 x 1 3/4: max 3 lines of 25 letters / \$20
- med 4 7/8 x 2 3/8: max 3 lines of 25 letters / \$50
- large 6 3/8 x 3 3/8: max 4 lines of 25 letters / \$100

For information call Susan Madden at 301 649-2831.

# Blazer

Montgomery Blair High School PTSA  
51 University Boulevard East  
Silver Spring, MD 20901-2451

Non-Profit Org.

U.S. Postage

**PAID**

Silver Spring MD

Permit No. 191

*PTSA Silent Auction  
... see page 7*

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## Preparing for Blair's After-Prom Celebration!

Each year, Blair parents, staff, students, and the community contribute their time and money to host **After-Prom** for our seniors, juniors, and their guests. We have a casino, a money machine, games like laser tag and a moon bounce, plenty of food, souvenirs, and so much more. A great time is had by all, students and volunteers alike. After-Prom will be held on June 2<sup>nd</sup> from 1:00 a.m.- 5 a.m. While After-Prom was originally intended as a way to keep celebrating students "off the streets," it has become a traditional end of the school year event. Of course, hosting a party of this size takes both money (around \$18,000) and lots of volunteer hours. We are looking for both. Students do not pay admission so we suggest that *everyone* consider donating in honor of the class of 2002! Get involved and contact the After-Prom Chairperson, Diane Foley, at 301-258-1944 or >diane.foley@baesystems.com. If you can't volunteer, please consider donating a door prize!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**I am donating**      \_\_\_\_\_ **\$22 in honor of the class of 2002!**  
                                  \_\_\_\_\_ another amount, please specify \_\_\_\_\_  
                                  \_\_\_\_\_ a door prize.

**I would like to volunteer**      \_\_\_\_\_ to help on the committee;  
  \_\_\_\_\_ to serve as a chaperone on June 2, 2002.

Return to: Montgomery Blair After-Prom c/o Diane Foley, Blair High School PTSA,  
51 University Boulevard East. Silver Spring, MD 20901-2451