



# Beecher Buzz

December 2007

*"Beecher Hills Elementary, where each round goes higher and higher!"*



*Happy Holidays!*

## Beecher Student Government Officers Inducted

Patriotic excitement buzzed through the Beecher Beehive Thursday, December 6, 2007! The melody of "Hail to the Chief" resonated throughout the gymnasium. Fifth grade secret service men, Corey Benjamin and Zachary McWilliams, secured the area for the entrance of our elected officers, and the crowd stood in honor of these young people's accomplishments. It was an exciting experience as the Beecher community listened to Parliamentary Drake Pugh, Treasurer



SGA Officers take their oath of office.

N'nasseri Johnson, Secretary Dajorae George, Vice President Ron Sanders, and President Kayla Reese take their vows to serve their school in the spirit of leadership.

Guest speaker, Brian Murray delivered an inspiring presentation. Mr. Murray is a coordinator at

GA State University. Afterward, Pres. Reese addressed the student body. Her stated initiatives include recycling, water conservation, and providing enjoyable activities for all students.

SGA's first official meeting will be Monday, December 17, 2007 from 2:40 P.M.-4:00 P.M. Beginning January 2008, SGA will meet every second and fourth Monday. Stay abreast of SGA updates via WBZZ daily broadcasts.

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## Ways Families Can Give Back During the Holidays

Parents who wonder how they can instill a charitable spirit in their children can employ some simple strategies this holiday season. Not only will they be giving back to their communities, they will be deepening their own family connections.

### Tips for family giving:

- **Set up giving banks.** Children who receive an allowance can divide the money into spending money, money for savings, and money for charity, all to be kept in different banks.

- **Have conversations about being thankful.** Promote the idea of giving back to the community.

Be a role model. Take your children with you when you volunteer. Talk to them about your donations.

- **Join an Adopt-A-Family Program.** Provide a home cooked meal or donate some needed clothing items.

- **Host a giving party.** Invite friends and neighbors over and have them bring "presents" for people in need—food or clothing items, toys for

impoverished kids, money for relief efforts, or whatever is appropriate for your theme. *Giving parties can also be held in lieu of kids' birthday parties.*

- **Gather unused toys to donate to disadvantaged children.** Really ambitious families can go on a volunteer vacation where families . . . assist Habitat for Humanity and Hurricane Katrina victims.

### Website :

Family Philanthropy Toolkit

Source: National PTA

### Homework Hotline

Monday—Thursday

4:00 pm - 9:00 pm

678-553-3029

A FREE service of

Atlanta Public Schools

**BEECHER is BEST!**

Title I

Distinguished

School

AYP 7 Years

## Recipes for Success:

### Practical Activities To Help Your Child Succeed

Each month students bring home a page full of fun activities, which are also great tools for parents to use to develop their children in all aspects of life—**Recipes for Success!** Here's what Beecher Bees are saying about Recipes for Success...

*"I like the money activity. I would trade my toys for money to help*

*others."*

-Ziquavious Finch, 2nd Grade

*"My favorite activity was cooperation. It was very fun and ... shows that there is no "I" in team."*

- Daniel Hines, 4th Grade

Parents receive Parent Involvement credit when students return signed forms at the end of each month.

## Add Beecher to Your Tax Deductions

The end of year is quickly approaching and tax time will be upon us. **Looking for another tax-deductible donation?** Please consider a monetary donation to the Beecher Hills PTA or the Beecher Hills School.

Major projects you can help

support at our school include a new playground and the 21st century communications lab. Also, we are looking for sponsorship for two Beecher Bees who are part of the APS Honor Chorus. Unspecified donations will go to the general fund.

### Fall Fundraiser Wrap-up:

# Thank You!

Special Thanks to all who participated in the Fall Fundraising efforts at Beecher Hills!! Your dedication and salesmanship have generated needed dollars to support student field trips, Teacher of the Year activities, club sponsored events and other educational programs here at Beecher!

To show our appreciation to our students who participated in the Fall Fundraiser sales, **we are having a party!** Party details are as follows:

#### Fall Fundraiser Party

Monday, December 17 @ 1:30 pm  
Beecher Hills Cafeteria



### SUPPORT BEECHER HILLS BASKETBALL !!!



**Coach & Officials are needed.**

**Contact: Ms. Rhonda Leach**  
Games Played at Gideon @ 4:15 pm

**GO BEES!!**

### Save the Date!

Beecher Hills Elementary 1st Annual  
**Father-Daughter Ball**

Date: Saturday, April 26, 2008

Contact: Mrs. Greene

adrienne\_greene@hotmail.com

Your financial support of our school and PTA benefits you in reducing your taxable income, but the benefit to our students is . . .  
**PRICELESS!**

## Earn Buck\$ for Beecher



While shopping for holiday meals, remember to link your spending to Beecher Hills!!

Following are several quick and easy ways to earn money for Beecher Hills, and shop for your family at the same time—and you don't have to travel outside of the community to do it!!

- Kroger Earning Plus Learning-Linked via Beecher Barcode
- Publix Partners Key Cards
- Wayfield Community Cards



## Great Job!

Thanks for your outstanding support for Beecher's Box Tops for Education fundraiser—Keep it up!!

**Reminder:** Only send Box Tops—Do not send Betty Crocker Points.

Visit the Parent Center for fun saving sheets!

Log on to:  
[www.bboxtops4education.com/activitycenter](http://www.bboxtops4education.com/activitycenter) for creative and useful tools for collecting box tops.

## Beecher 5th Grade Girls Participate in "Rites of Passage" Program

On October 25, 2007 the first session of the newly created "Rites of Passage Program" for Fifth Grade Girls at Beecher Hills Elementary was held. The program was developed by Dr. Angela Bolin, Beecher Hills School Counselor, and Mrs. Yvonnia Henderson, Community Volunteer.

"A rite is a ceremony or celebration. Passage refers to the movement from one stage to another. Thus, the adolescent rite of passage is a supervised developmental and educational process whose goal is to assist young people in attaining the knowledge and accepting responsibilities, privileges, and duties of an adult member of a society." (Warfield-Coppock, 1992)

The activities of the Beecher Hills



Beecher 5th Grade Female Rites of Passage Members, sponsor, Ms. Yvonnia Henderson (left) and guest speaker, Dr. Leslie Myers (right).

"Rites of Passage Program" will be geared toward promoting solidarity, self-discipline, cultural pride, learning about focusing/meditation, Eco-psychology, effective communication skills, career path exploration, men-

toring, leadership development and a sense of community. Participants will experience a tour of the community, interview elders in the community, and explore the changing roles of adulthood. The activities will celebrate African culture and art, promote community involvement and prepare participants for the coming-of-age celebration through African dance, song, art and crafts.

The program will consist of monthly sessions, October 2007 to May 2008. The Coming-of-Age Ceremony presenting the young ladies to the community will be held in May 2008. For more information on this program, please contact Dr. Angela Bolin at (404) 752-0785.

## Power of Choice: Health, Nutrition & Fitness for Beecher Students

[HealthMPowers](#) visited Beecher Hills Elementary on November 28, 2007. Students in Pre-K, Kindergarten, First Grade, Second Grade, Third Grade, Fourth Grade, and Fifth Grade were invited to developmentally appropriate health related assemblies.

The underlying theme in all of the presentations was the "Power of Choice" that each child has in eating healthy foods



1st grade students and teacher, Ms. Rhonda Leach participate in healthy exercise during HealthMPowers visit.

and exercising. The students were introduced to **Hardy the Heart, Windy the Lungs**, along with all of the other organs in the body! The younger students learned about making healthy food choices, while the older students engaged in an interactive Jeopardy game involving health, nutrition, and fitness.

Thanks to HealthMPowers for an informative and fun visit!



## Holiday Musical Messages

### Beecher Students Selected to APS Honor Chorus:

On Thursday, December 13, the **Atlanta Public Schools Elementary Honor Chorus** will have a holiday performance at the Margaret Mitchell House. The APS Honor Chorus will feature two of Beecher Hills' students: **Khalin Colson and Jillian Nunnally**.

The Atlanta Public Schools Elementary Honor Chorus will perform favorite holiday songs and carols. Following the concert, award-winning and beloved Georgia author, **Terry Kay** will read his holiday story, **To Whom the Angel Spoke**. Kay's powerful book celebrates the unifying power of Christmas.

Doors open at 5:00 p.m.; Concert begins at 5:30 p.m. This event is free and open to the public.

### Beecher Holiday Concert:

#### **Celebrating Carols from Around the World**

The Annual Holiday Concert will be held on Tuesday, December 11, 2007 at 6:00 pm. This year's theme is: **Celebrating Carols from Around the World**.

The performers include Beecher students from Pre-K through Fifth grade classes, as well as the Dancing Dolls, Orchestra, Band, Drum Line and High-Steppers just to name a few. Musical selections will feature songs representing France, Africa, African





## Holiday Greetings from the PTA



Jan Harp Domene  
National PTA President

There is a reason why the holidays are also known as the season of giving. We give our time to family and friends, we give presents to those who are important to us, and we often give donations to those in need. Whatever we give, it means a lot to those we honor with our gifts, and this is just as true for parent involvement as it is for handing out boxes with big bows.

While it's easy to see the excitement in a child's

eyes when they get a new toy, it's not always as obvious when a child is thankful for a family who's active in their lives. It may take a special event, like [Take Your Family to School Week](#), for their gratitude to show. Some day that weeklong celebration may be an internationally recognized holiday, but in the meantime, the important thing to remember during this season is that you don't need a special day to get involved in your children's lives. Their health, well-being, and education are reason enough.

*Seasons Greetings!*

*National PTA*

Robert Reese  
Beecher Hills  
Elementary  
PTA President



As you decorate your tree or put up your lights, remember to share a little joy; spread some holiday cheer and rekindle the LOVE that sustains us throughout the year.



**Beecher Hills PTA!**

## Will HR 900 "GREAT Plan" Really Benefit Beecher Hills??

Source: Georgia PTA e-Voice  
Excerpt from: Karen Hallacy  
Georgia PTA Legislative Chair

If someone walked up to you on the street and said "Would you like to never have to pay ad valorem (property) taxes again?", initially, you would probably say yes. Is there anyone who *likes* to pay taxes? But, if you thought for a second you'd realize what those taxes pay for and would wonder how those essential services would be provided in the future. Public safety (police, fire, jails, etc), **schools**, and county services (parks, road work, etc) need funding.

Speaker Richardson is proposing that all ad valorem taxes are repealed and that sales tax would make up the difference. The proposal, called the **GREAT** (Georgia's Repeal of Every Ad Valorem Tax) **Plan**, is somewhat silent on those details except to say that sales and income tax would take care of funding everything and he promises that counties and school districts would receive funding equal to the revenues earned in 2006 (not 2007 or 2008).

His plan would be to repeal many of the current sales tax exemptions. You would now pay taxes on food, medical services and prescriptions, insurance,

hair cuts, tax and legal services, lawn maintenance, memberships, tuition to colleges and private schools, doctor visits, maid services, babysitters/nannies, etc.

There is a worksheet on the Georgia PTA website ([www.georgiapta.org](http://www.georgiapta.org)), under Capitol Watch, that you can use to see if you would pay more or less in taxes. You can also find the most current version of the "GREAT" Plan at [www.thegreatplanforgeorgia.com](http://www.thegreatplanforgeorgia.com).

Approximately half of the funding for County Schools is generated by property tax revenues. *This proposed Georgia Constitutional amendment to abolish property taxes, **HR 900**, also eliminates local school boards' abilities to raise their own revenue to fund their schools. PTA opposes this proposed amendment because PTA supports the rights of local school boards (and municipalities) to raise their own revenue and administer that revenue. Those sources of revenue allow the local school boards to provide the services and programs that their constituents want. Isn't that why we elect local school boards and commissioners?*

**Let your legislator know that your school board needs to keep control of its local source of funding. Call your legislator now. Make a difference for your child, your school, your community. It's not hard and it is important.**

## Beecher Hills Elementary PTA of Excellence Certification Parent Survey

**Beecher Hills Elementary** is in the application process for a **Parent Involvement School of Excellence**. **We need the input of our entire school community to complete this quest.** Please take a few minutes to answer the questions below. The results of the survey and the outcome of this process will be shared with everyone at subsequent PTA meetings and via the newsletter. Please note questions 7-10 refer to The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) and the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 that has identified provisions for parent involvement in school decision making. These questions will help our school determine how well it is doing in these areas. Specials thanks to everyone partnering with us and participating in this process. Deadline for All Responses is December 21,2007.

1. Does the school regularly communicate with you about your child's academic progress and other school related activities? (At least once a month)

3-Always	2-Sometime	1-Rarely	0-Never	NA-No Opinion
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2. Does the school recognize, respect, and address families needs, as well as class and cultural differences?

3-Always	2-Sometimes	1-Rarely	0-Never	NA-No Opinion
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3. Does your school provide information to help you understand your child's curriculum, school expectations, and ways to help improve academic skills?

3-Always	2-Sometimes	1-Rarely	0-Never	NA-No Opinion
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4. Do you feel there are opportunities for you to volunteer at your school?( e.g. friendly school environment, diversity valued, a variety of volunteer opportunities)

3-Always	2-Sometimes	1-Rarely	0-Never	NA-No Opinion
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5. Do you participate in developing school policies that support student learning and parent involvement?

3-Always	2-Sometime	1-Rarely	0-Never	NA-No Opinion
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6. Does your school have partnerships with local businesses, youth services, churches, etc. that work with the school and families?

3-Always	2-Sometimes	1-Rarely	0-Never	NA-No Opinion
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7. Does your school have a Parental Involvement Plan or Policy?

Yes	No	Don't Know
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8. Were you a part of developing and approving the school's current written parent involvement policy and in planning and reviewing the school's Title I program?

Yes	No
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9. Does your school have a School Wellness Policy?

Yes	No	Don't Know
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10. Please let us know your ideas for improving Parent Involvement at Beecher Hills.

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**BEECHER HILLS**  
**2007—2008**  
**BASKETBALL SCHEDULE**

OPPONENT	DATE
CAPITOL VIEW	NOVEMBER 28
GIDEONS	DECEMBER 6
DUNBAR	JANUARY 14
TOOMER	JANUARY 21
D. H. STANTON	JANUARY 24
CAPITOL VIEW	JANUARY 28
GIDEONS	FEBRUARY 4
DUNBAR	FEBRUARY 11
TOOMER	FEBRUARY 19
D. H. STANTON	FEBRUARY 27

**LOCATION & TIME FOR ALL GAMES:**  
**GIDEONS @ 4:15 P.M.**

**GO BEES!!**

# Parent Involvement + Dedicated Teachers = Student Success!

Parent involvement at Beecher Hills has many different facets. This year our goal is to engage as many parents as possible, while meeting federal guidelines for parent involvement. We realize that many parents have very busy schedules. We do not take for granted the times that you make for parent activities at our school. To this end, we celebrate the tremendous response to recent activities and we anxiously anticipate the plans made for the second semester. Here's a snapshot of what has taken place since the last newsletter just in case you missed out...

## National Parent Involvement Day / Sudexho's Monthly Lunch Day / Pre-K Parent Meeting

On Thursday, November 15<sup>th</sup>, over 75 parents, grandparents and guardians enjoyed the traditional Thanksgiving lunch with students while celebrating these two significant events. Pre-K parents kicked off the day's events with their monthly meeting and annual Thanksgiving observance. Each adult received a Hollywood Videos coupon for a free rental—just in time for the holiday break.

## Kindergarten Thanksgiving Celebration

On Monday, November 19<sup>th</sup>, the auditorium was transformed with turkeys, pilgrims, native Americans and a medley of songs performed by the kindergarten classes. Over 40 parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles shared in a potluck feast that many of them provided. Each child created one of a kind placemats to present to a special guest to commemorate the occasion.

### Thanksgiving Luncheon Picture Gallery



Brandon Hudson & Grandmom



Jianna Jones & Parents



Cameron Marshall & Mom



Nzinga Jones & Dad

## Public School Parent Involvement Meeting

On Wednesday, December 5<sup>th</sup>, nine Beecher Hills parents participated in the December system-wide Title I parent involvement meeting at Turner Middle School. In addition to wonderful seasonal performances, parents were introduced to a learning resource entitled "Amazing Adventures." Each parent was given a video and companion workbook to use at home as supplement reading and math resources. These materials are available for check-out from the Parent Center, room 201. A special thanks to Trudi Williams, Katherine Adegasoye, Corinne Maddox-David, Linda Stovall, Muriel Kimpson, Sandra Blunt, Sherri Carleta Davis-Jones, and S. Carest Barnes for representing Beecher Hills at this meeting.

## And the Survey Says...

In late October, a survey was conducted to help guide plans for parent involvement activities. THANKS to nearly 90 of you who responded. **Here's what the majority of you said:**

- ⇒ **YES** to offsite evening or weekend events with low/no cost childcare.
- ⇒ Time and day preferences are: **Before PTA meetings, after school dismissal on M-Th and Saturday mornings.**
- ⇒ You want: **One week's advance notice via school calendar, email and special flyers as reminders.**

The following workshops are scheduled for January and February:

- \* ***What Students Need to Succeed – Saturday, January 19<sup>th</sup> @ 9 am Offsite***
- \* ***No Child Left Behind – Tuesday, January 29<sup>th</sup> evening PTA meeting***
- \* ***Helping Your Child Succeed on Standardized Tests – Tuesday, February 12<sup>th</sup> evening Test Prep Rally***
- \* ***Understanding Your Child's Love Language – Thursday, February 14<sup>th</sup> Time TDB***

## Mark Your Calendars—Take Your Family to School Week – February 10-16, 2008

-- Watch for special events to commemorate this special week!

## Keeping Children Safe During the Holidays

The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) urges parents not to let their guard down during the holidays. Shopping and traveling require extra attention and forethought to ensure children's safety.

NCMEC suggests talking to children about safety issues before heading to a crowded shopping mall or airport. Parents and their kids need a plan in case they become separated, which can happen more easily as crowds build through the holiday season. Some tips from NCMEC:

- Designate a spot to meet in case you become separated.



- Teach children to look for people who can help such as uniformed security officers or another parent with children.
- Never drop off older children at a mall or public place without a clear plan for picking them up—where, what time, what to do in case of a change in plans. Remind children to remain in the area where they become separated.

- Never dress children in clothing that displays their first or last names, which might prompt unwelcome attention from people looking to start a conversation with your child.

- If your child is traveling alone this holiday season, specify that the child will be alone when you make the reservation. Visit the airport or bus/train terminal prior to departure so your child knows what to expect.

- Encourage children, especially those traveling alone, not to become too friendly with other passengers or reveal any personal information.

*Source: National PTA*

## Celebrating Diversity in Your School During the Holidays . . .

Once December hits, parents and children are often faced with endless images of Santa, snowmen, toy commercials, and "blockbuster" department store sales. However, the deeper meaning of the holiday season often gets lost. As parents and teachers, the challenge can be how to appreciate the true meaning of the holiday season, while at the same time, recognizing and celebrating the different holidays that occur during this time:

### **Hanukkah, Christmas, and Kwanzaa.**

Here are some tips to celebrate the diversity of the holidays in the classroom.

#### **Hanukkah**

**December 4 (sundown) -**

**December 12 (sundown)**

- \* Students can research the history of Hanukkah.
- \* Students can play dreidel games.
- \* Have students make Hanukkah crafts.
- \* Students can perform Hanukkah songs.
- \* Enjoy traditional Hanukkah recipes.



#### **Christmas**

**December 25**

- \* Investigate different aspects of the Christmas celebration including the



tree, the decorations, the stockings, the carols, and more.

- \* Perform Christmas songs in either English or other languages.
- \* Create banners representing different Christmas customs from around the world.
- \* Investigate traditional foods for each culture and create them for the rest of the class to sample.
- \* Present skits representing each culture's customs.
- \* Make Christmas cookies.

#### **Kwanzaa**

**December 26 -**

**January 1**

- \* Have students discuss each of the seven principles and why they are important.
- \* Speakers can come in to discuss Kwanzaa and how it is celebrated.
- \* Celebrate a traditional Kwanzaa by having students handcraft gifts for each other
- \* Enjoy traditional Kwanzaa recipes



Source: [About.com](http://About.com)



DECEMBER 2007						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 World AIDS Day
2	3	4 PTA Executive Committee Mtg. Design Team Mtg.	5	6	7	8
9	10	11 Musical Showcase PTA Meeting Fundraiser Pick-up (Nominations Cmtte)	12 Theater Field Trip (First Grade)	13 Leadership Team Mtg Local School Council Atlanta Council Holiday Sharing Kennedy Bldg @ 7:00 p.m.	14 The Nutcracker Field Trip (Kindergarten)	15
16	17	18	19 Demonstration Of Learning (Systems)	20 Atlanta Council Dues Deadline End of 1st Semester	21 Winter Holiday Begins NO SCHOOL	22
23	24	25 WINTER HOLIDAY	26 NO SCHOOL	27	28	29
30	31 NO SCHOOL					
JANUARY 2008						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Happy New Year! WINTER HOLIDAY	2 NO SCHOOL	3	4	5
6	7 School Resumes 2nd Semester Begins	8	9 2nd Grade Parent Conference (2:30-3:30) Parent Meeting (6:00 pm)	10	11 Report Card Distribution	12
13	14	15 PTA Executive Board Meeting 6:30 pm Faculty Meeting	16	17	18 Leadership Team Meeting	19 Parent Workshop Jumping Jammin' Jellybeans 9:00 am—10:00am
20	21 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day NO SCHOOL	22 Design Team Meeting	23	24	25	26 Atlanta Council Parents Day Of Learning
27	28	29 PTA Meeting	30	31		

**Beecher Hills Elementary**  
**Dr. Robin C. Hall, Principal**  
 2257 Bollingbrook Drive, SW  
 Atlanta, Georgia 30311  
 Phone: 404-752-0785

**We're on the web!**  
[www.BeecherHills.com](http://www.BeecherHills.com)

**Beecher Hills**  
**PTA®**  
*everychild.one voice.®*

**E-mail:**  
[Beecherhillspta@yahoo.com](mailto:Beecherhillspta@yahoo.com)

Robert Reese, President  
 Carla Davis, Vice-President  
 Olivia Jones, Treasurer  
 Dione Morton, Corresp. Secretary  
 Avril Copeland, Rpt. Secretary  
 Terri Weekes, Parliamentarian  
 Terri Weekes, Parent Liaison  
 Clarence Benjamin, Tech Chair

Send articles to: Pamela Hunter  
 Newsletter Chairperson  
[beecherhillspta@news@yahoo.com](mailto:beecherhillspta@news@yahoo.com)  
 Next Issue: February, 2008  
 Article Deadline: Jan. 28, 2008

**Beecher Hills Activities & Events:**

**Beecher is a Beehive of Activity!**

- \* **Thursday, December 13, Winter Celebration Meal**—Join your child for a traditional holiday lunch. Adult meals are \$2.75
- \* **Thursday, December 13, Atlanta Council of PTAs Holiday Meeting**—Join Dr. Beverly Hall for an evening of sharing. Kennedy Community Center. 7:00 p.m.
- \* **Monday, December 17, Cookie Dough Participation Student Appreciation Party**—Students selling 12+ items spin the MONEY Wheel! 1:30 p.m. School Cafeteria.
- \* **Wednesday, December 19, Demonstration of Learning (Systems Culminating Activities)** - Check with homeroom teacher for details.
- \* **Thursday, December 20, End of 1st Semester**—Last day before winter break. School resumes on Monday, January 7, 2008.

**Have a safe & Happy Holiday!**



*Come Join Us!*



Rashad Cheney & Mom at Kindergarten Thanksgiving Celebration.



Beecher students enjoy KP Give Peas a Chance Assembly.

**Beecher Hills PTA Mission:**

*"Beecher Hills Elementary PTA endeavors to provide support to the school and community through Advocacy, Volunteering, Wellness promotion, and Financial resources to ensure All Students, Parents, and Teachers have the Ultimate Educational Experience."*



**Season's Greetings!**

As we approach the Winter Holidays and the coming of a new year, it is a great time to consider just how much we have to appreciate and celebrate. To this end, we have a talented teaching staff and committed support staff that show their commitment through providing standards-based instruction, setting high expectations, implementing effective instructional intervention, and maintaining a safe and nurturing environment—all of which are the ingredients for insur-

**Happy Holidays from Dr. Hall**

ing success for all students.

We also appreciate the strong parental support and community, university, and business partnerships that help to support the vision, mission, and goals of Beecher Hills Elementary School. Indeed, our "village" is thriving as we continue to work with our loyal school partners and strive to establish new partnerships. Moreover, I commend you for the high level of involvement in your child's education by supporting our school initiatives, attending parent meetings, participating in programs, serving as chapter-

ones on field trips, volunteering, joining the PTA, and the countless ways you contribute to the unique "educational oasis" that is known as Beecher Hills Elementary School.

Let us continue to work together to achieve even greater distinctions for our students and the school.

**May you have a relaxing and rejuvenating holiday!**

