



*Turning the Page*

# TTP Newsletter

May 2010

Volume 8, Issue 5

Friends,

Things are busy at Turning the Page as both our programs and the school year wrap up and as we begin to transition into our summer season. As Carpe Librum comes to a close next week, we are excited to move forward with our 2010 Summer Museum Trip series that will kick off in June. Thank you all for your support in both our programs and our sale!

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## FINAL FOUR DAYS OF CARPE LIBRUM

Doors close Monday, May 24th at 8pm

Carpe Librum, our beloved book sale fundraiser, is drawing to a close. Don't miss our final discount days! Everything in the store is \$2 or less, from books to DVDs. You can fill up bags or boxes of books for even greater savings! The sale is located at the Shops at 2000 Penn, just across the hall from Johnny Rockets!

Location:

[The Shops at 2000 Penn](#)  
2000 Pennsylvania Ave, NW

Hours:

Weekdays, through May 24: 10am - 7pm (May 24 until 8)

Saturday, May 22nd: 10am - 6pm

Sunday, May 23rd: 11am - 6pm



We would also like to take this time to thank the generous people who make this sale possible each year, including book drive hosts, individuals who donate books, and our volunteers. Turning the Page would like to extend our appreciation to [The Shops at 2000 Penn](#), [Office Movers](#), and [McBride Real Estate Services](#) for their generosity. We couldn't have done it without each of you!

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## **Funder Spotlight: Cafritz Foundation**

*TTP thanks Cafritz for years of support*

Here at Turning the Page, we are grateful to the foundations that, year in and year out, provide us with invaluable funding. We would like to take this time to thank the Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation, which has provided us with generous funding annually for the past nine years. According to Cafritz Foundation Program Officer Tobi Printz-Platnick, “The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation has funded Turning the Page since 2001 for its holistic approach towards improving DC public schools.”

Indeed, Turning the Page’s work fits into the Cafritz Foundation’s mission of “improving the quality of life for residents of the Washington, DC area.” Since its founding in 1948 by Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz, the Foundation has become the largest private, independent Foundation focused exclusively on the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. Since 1970, awards totaling more than \$314 million have been granted. Just in the last 10 years, \$169 million has been awarded to more than 960 organizations in the areas of Community Services, Arts and Humanities, Education, Health and the Environment.

Turning the Page would like to express heartfelt thanks to the Cafritz Foundation for its generous support of our programs. Particularly during these challenging economic times, your support is so very much appreciated.

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## **Payne's PTA President Shares With DC City Council**

*“We need to bring these issues to their attention”*



Years ago, the playground at Payne Elementary was badly damaged by arson. Since then, it has remained in disrepair, posing a safety hazard to children and an eyesore to the public. One parent has decided to do something about it.

Phyllis Johnson-Dunham, concerned about the playground as the school's PTA president and mother of two Payne students, recently attended a TTP workshop on “City-Level Advocacy.” At the workshop, participants were encouraged to select a topic or issue of concern to them, develop a



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short speech on the subject, and prepare to testify before the DC City Council. Ms. Johnson-Dunham wrote a passionate appeal on behalf of her daughters' school, citing the safety, behavior, and health issues presented by the damaged playground facility. She went on to deliver her testimony at an April 22 hearing of the council's Committee of the Whole, requesting that the council hold DCPS and the Office of Public Education Facilities Management accountable to reasonable standards of repair.

Her testimony evoked a strong reaction from City Council Chairman Vincent Gray, who voiced concern that such problems were common throughout the city, and that repairs and renovations were not being fairly distributed. Ms. Johnson-Dunham was very pleased with the experience: "It was great having the opportunity to talk to the city council. It felt like I actually had the opportunity to make a difference. It was a great experience. I look forward to doing more in engaging the city council. Hearing Vincent Gray comment—I knew he was on the same page, I knew I was being heard—it made me confident."

Ms. Johnson-Dunham's testimony has indeed made a difference. "It has opened up some doors and opportunities. Bonnie [Cain], the [Councilmember] Tommy Wells' education representative, has contacted me and we are in contact weekly. It has made an impact. We are getting the exposure that we need. We need to do more testimonies; we need to bring [these issues] to their attention."

Ms. Cain toured Payne's playground facility on May 19.

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## **Earth Day Community Service Project**

**Browne E.C. PTA sponsors family service event**



Despite forecasted rain and cooler than normal temperatures, members of the Browne Gibbs Young Education Campus community turned out on Saturday, April 24th to volunteer at an Earth Day event sponsored by [EarthShare](#). Promoted by the school's PTA, the event was full of work, fun, and educational discussions. Together, families headed from the school, just off Benning Road NE, to [Kingman and Heritage Islands Park](#), located just a few blocks away near RFK stadium. There, Browne families and TTP staff joined volunteers from across the city in an effort to clean



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garbage from the river and the islands. Volunteers scoured the riverbeds looking for trash and debris, left deliberately behind in some cases and brought by the river current and wind in others. One parent noted that “the kids really had a great time, they got all into it, picking up old bottles and cans. They even had a competition who could collect the most items!” Besides picking up food wrappers, Styrofoam cups, and even a radiator, families discussed why it was important to help keep our communities clean. Said one student, “we found radiators, a car engine, a basket off a bike, rugs. People must be crazy. All this junk does not belong in the water; how are the fish supposed to live?”

For over a year, the parents who participate in Browne’s Parent Teacher Association (PTA) had been contemplating organizing a service project for their school community, but other concerns, such as filling executive board positions and raising awareness, were more pressing. Then this spring, PTA member Ms. Malika Walters decided to take on a service project in earnest, and together with TTP staff, identified the Earth Day cleanup sponsored by EarthShare as their project. The PTA reached out to students and families in the school, asking for volunteers, and despite the rain, seven parents and their students turned out early on the cold and damp morning. Following clean-up efforts, Browne parents and volunteers from the Kingman Island clean-up site joined hundreds of other volunteers working at similar sites across the city at Anacostia Park, where a celebration took place including a free picnic for volunteers, informational booths, free t-shirt and grocery bag giveaways, and a concert featuring a reggae band. Parents, students, and teachers alike agree; more events like this need to be planned in the future. Says Browne fifth grade teacher Ms. Deater Brown, “the students really enjoyed themselves [and] we need to continue events like this” in the future!

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