



Mantua PTA News

www.mantuapta.org

November 2005

Mary Jo Kavjian President's Message

September is a distant blur and Halloween candy now fills my house. As we prepare for Thanksgiving, let's take time to reflect on what has been accomplished so far. As I prepared this list, it became obvious that there are many parents who have given generously of their time and talents to help us get where we are today. If you have not already done so, I hope you will look at the available opportunities and consider giving a few hours of your time to help make them successful.

Ice Cream Social – In what was one of the largest turnouts in recent history, the ice cream social was a wonderful kickoff to the school year. The weather was good and everyone had a great time. Thank you to Julia Margulies for organizing this event. She did it even though she had already resigned from the Community Spirit Committee. Thanks also to the parents and 8th grade girls who volunteered to help scoop ice cream, sell tickets and hand out water and glow sticks.

Sally Foster – Lynn Richmond did a fantastic job organizing this fundraiser. At the November PTA meeting, she announced that the net profit is close to \$15,000. We are extremely grateful for the countless hours Lynn contributed to this cause, as well as the many people who helped her sort and deliver the orders to the classrooms.

Mantua Basketball – Tryouts were held and teams have been created. Mantua basketball is a wonderful program that enriches the lives of the children and adults who participate. Thank you to Rob Mead and the many other volunteers who helped with tryouts and volunteered to coach the teams and/or referee the games.

Silent Auction -- The Silent Auction Committee was working hard on this major fundraiser even before the school year started. Carole Thomas, Faye Henris and Pete and Loren Brandman have put together this year's catalog and it is now available on-line. Check in so you can bid on the many great items and services that are available this year. Thank you to everyone who called businesses requesting donations, donated an item or became a sponsor.

I did mention available opportunities didn't I? There are still areas where we need more volunteers.

Hospitality Committee – I am still looking for a chairperson for this committee. There are two important events that still need to be planned – desserts for the deaf program dinners beginning in January and the Teacher Appreciation Lunch in May.

Community Spirit Committee – We still need people to volunteer to head up our restaurant nights and trips to professional sporting events. Most of what is involved in organizing these events is telephone calls and flyers. These are good projects for the working parents. The time commitment is minimal and has a short life span.

Alert News Distribution – Volunteers are needed to make copies of the Alert News and distribute them by class to those parents who do not receive this information via email. I have two volunteers covering November and December. The time commitment is approximately 30-45 minutes each Tuesday. Please consider volunteering one month (or more!).

Take Home Reading – We need volunteers to read with the children. This program supplements the help the children receive in the classroom and at home with their parents. While the program is for the K-2 students, you can still help if your children are older. We have had grandparents volunteer and well as parents whose children have already gone on to Frost and Woodson.

My last request is for you to join the PTA if you haven't already done so. If you just forgot and figured it was too late, it's never too late. Please join and help support the PTA and our efforts on behalf of your children. For more information about any of these opportunities, please visit the website or contact me at kavjianPTA@aol.com.

Jan-Marie Fernandez, Cheryl Thompson, and Tina Tingler...

Message from the Mantua Principal's Office

Whenever you see a child light up with enthusiasm, pay attention. Each childhood passion is a seed to potential adult happiness!

— Dr. Edward Hallowell

On Thursday, October 20th, we held our first Principal's Book Club discussion. We had a wonderful group of women attend and had a lively discussion about Dr. Edward Hallowell's book, *The Childhood Roots of Adult Happiness: five steps to help kids create and sustain lifelong joy*. For those of you who have not been able to read the book let us summarize some of the essential messages.

Dr. Hallowell explains that research has shown parents and teachers can greatly increase the chances that children will grow up happy by instilling the following characteristics – *Optimism, Playfulness, a Can-Do Attitude, and Connectedness* (the feeling of being a part of something larger than yourself). More than any single factor, **connectedness** in childhood is the key to a happy adulthood. If a child can find someone, any person, who is active in the child's life and who loves him or her absolutely and unconditionally, that love is the closest thing to an inoculation against misery that we have. A National Longitudinal Study involving 90,000 students in grades seven through twelve revealed that there are two factors that protect children from negative outcomes – *a feeling of connectedness at home and a feeling of connectedness at school*.

He also explains that people are happiest in a state of *flow*. Flow as defined by Psychologist, Csikszentmihalyi, is when you are one with what you are doing. Children know flow well. They call it play. **Play** is one of the childhood roots of adult happiness. You usually reach a state of flow when both the challenge the activity poses, and your skill at the activity are high. Play is any activity in which there is room for spontaneous invention and/or change. The opposite of play is not work; indeed our best work is playful. Dr. Hallowell feels that some children are not learning how to play because they spend too much time with videogames, computers, and television, or they are overscheduled, or their parents are obsessed with efficiency and productivity. He encourages parents to find times with their children for *human moments*, any moments when you are engaged with other people, live and in person.

As we move into Mantua Basketball season, Dr. Hallowell shares some important insights about sports and play. *By making victory or stardom or discipline the first goal, you can kill the fun and the benefits of the sport for the children, play that is fun leads to practice*. **Practice** grows naturally out of play. Discipline that lasts usually begins in love of an activity and the desire to get better at it or at least to do it again. We are disciplined in what we love to do! However, he also emphasizes that a measure of discipline has to come from the person in charge, and must be enforced, not merely recommended.

The next step is for children to reach **mastery**. Mastery is a feeling while achievement is a benchmark. Once you feel mastery, you want to feel it many times. Mastery is the great motivator because people like to do what they do well. Some people do not feel mastery even when they have accomplished something extremely difficult, because of excessive criticism and excessively high expectations. Dr. Hallowell also reminds us that some people believe that you can instill self-esteem simply by offering praise. But this does not work. Self-esteem and confidence come from the experience of doing something well.

Mastery then leads to **recognition** and recognition is the feeling of being valued by others, especially others whose opinion that person respects. When you learn to do something well and someone else values your having done this, you feel a sense of pride in yourself and a feeling of connection outside yourself. Dr. Hallowell reminds us that the road to happiness runs from **connection** through **play** to **practice** and discipline on to **mastery** and **recognition**. He also reminds us that when you provide too much to your children, you deny them both the opportunity to deal with adversity and the opportunity to create and sustain their own joy.

The Principal's Book Club will be discussing another book in January. We will be sharing some options for our next book in the Alert News. We hope you will be able to join us at our next book discussion!

MANTUA DRAMA CLUB PRESENTS, "WITCHY, WACKY AND WILD"

Join us for an evening of comedy, drama, dancing, singing and lots of laughs. Meet some fun and funny witches and hear some fabulous music and see some wonderful dancing.

WHEN: Friday November 18th and Saturday November 19th

WHERE: Mantua gym

TIME: 7 pm

ADMISSION: By donation

Saturday performance will be interpreted.

1st and 2nd graders will delight you in THE NEW BROOM, 3rd and 4th graders will astound you in THE TRIAL OF HANSEL AND GRETEL, 5th and 6th graders will keep you laughing in BORDER SKIRMISH, and 4-6th graders will entertain you with songs from three very famous Broadway shows.

Bring the whole family and have some good clean fun.

THE BIDDING HAS BEGUN *at auction.mantuapta.org*

- ❖ **Bidding started on November 9 and there will be staggered close dates:**
- ❖ Just in Time Specials: 11/22
- ❖ Entertainment & Merchandise: 11/30
- ❖ Getaways & Services: 12/7
- ❖ Faculty Fun & Restaurants: 12/14

There are still opportunities to help with this effort!

1. Making a donation <http://auction.mantuapta.org/makedonation.html>

Please consider making a donation to the auction - every family in the neighborhood has something to donate! You can tell us about your donation online or by filling out the form sent home. Even if you do not have a child attending Mantua Elementary School, please consider donating to the auction because the PTA supports the community itself in many ways.

2. Becoming a booster <http://www.mantuapta.org/boosters/>

Do you feel like you'd like to help out, but don't have anything to donate? Please consider helping us achieve our goals by being a booster with a tax deductible donation of \$25 or more. Make a tax deductible donation using PayPal by using the link.

Checks can be made payable to *Mantua PTA* and can be sent to:

Mantua Elementary Auction
c/o Carole Thomas
9107 Horner Court
Fairfax, VA 22031

3. Encouraging your employer or businesses you frequently patronize to donate or become

sponsors : http://www.mantuapta.org/auction/forms/auction_solicitation.pdf
http://www.mantuapta.org/auction/forms/sponsorship_2005.pdf

THE SALLY FOSTER FUNDRAISER IS A HUGE SUCCESS

Thanks to your generosity, we had another great Sally Foster fundraiser this year. This year, our profit from Sally Foster will exceed \$16,000! Remember that you can continue to shop on www.sallyfoster.com through January 15, 2006. 50% of each sale made will go straight to our school.

Congratulations to all of our terrific Sally Foster contest winners for the 2005 campaign:

- Ms. Baker's third grade class won a CD/Stereo system for being the classroom with the most fundraiser participants.
- Ms. Cajati's fourth grade class won a \$50 book card (to be used for her classroom's library) for being the classroom to sell the most (dollar-wise) during the fundraiser.
- Maddie Love (Grade 6) was our top student seller again! She won a \$25 book card and an IPOD Mini (in addition to all the wonderful Sally Foster prizes)!
- We also had six winners who had their names picked during our Back-to-School night drawings. They were: Melinda Burroughs, Margot Kaplan, Lauren Sharman, Jennifer Watkins, Cryan Family and Carol Day.

A special thank-you goes to:

- Beth Rivelis and Jeannine Davies for lending their creative expertise to decorating the school display case.
- Our intrepid delivery crew: Carrie Clawson, Joshua Clawson (Carrie's preschool-age son!), Claire Fritzingler, Jeannine Davies, Dena Gudahl, Angie Falcone, Shu-chen Tsung and Gayle Novak.

Please contact Lynn Richmond if you have any questions on (703)280-0220 or lynnrichmond95@cox.net. Thank you!

r

A HUGE Thanks to our 2005 Auction Sponsors!

Platinum:

Judy Wonus, RE/MAX Allegiance, TEOCO Corporation

Gold: The Christopher Companies, Dr. Girish Banaji, DDS
and Mary Thyfault Clark, RE/MAX Allegiance

Silver: Fisher Group,LLC, International Motors Saab,
Renewal by Andersen, The Computer Workshop, Inc.