

## PTA Board Meeting Notes

December 1, 2010

Mantua Elementary School

The president called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM. Present at the meeting were:

**Executive Board:** Nicole Armstrong, Teresa LeMair, Lori Prendergast, Lori Recher, Sandy Spector

**School Representatives:** Jan Marie Fernandez, Cheryl Thompson, Tina Tingler, Janet Sottolano

**General Membership:** Margaret Scheele, Haydee Cooper, Christie Choi, Anna Kim, Shannon Murphy, Ken Moles

The minutes from the November meeting were reviewed and approved.

**President's Report:** The directory is going to press soon. The publication was held off until the front office received all of the emergency cards, to ensure more accurate data. Monika Brenner is working on the hard copy.

**Treasurer's Report:** Some more money for Spirit Wear was raised at the Thanksgiving Luncheons. The rest of the inventory was sold. Spirit Wear is slightly under their projected sales overall. The Book Fair raised over \$17000. The credit card sales are still being totaled. This number doesn't include expenses. The Drama Club went over their expected ticket sales. There are checks still coming in - Scott Friedman has been getting money & receipts.

**Principals' Report:** The Thanksgiving Luncheons went very well, as did the Book Fair. The luncheons fed about 1900 people in total. On Nov. 15 the Chamber Chorus, led by Ms. Dini, performed for the School Board, which went very well. At the beginning of November Jan Marie attended a conference of VA principals, as a featured speaker as Principal of the Year. Discussions included fair grading practices of students, taking support systems and backgrounds into consideration.

Additionally Jan Marie and four teachers attended a Brain & Learning conference at MIT. Standing theory promotes teaching to a student's dominant brain orientation, however, new research seems to void this theory.

In December the Choral concert is Monday the 20<sup>th</sup> at 7:00. Winter Sing Along will be on Dec. 22<sup>nd</sup> at 9:30. Mantua will have two hour early closing that day as well. The school's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary is coming up in Sept. 2011. We will now be celebrating next year (fall). There will be a number of different activities. After the holidays, we'll ask for volunteers from parents and staff to go over different event possibilities

The Walk for Hearing event happened in November. A small group from Mantua participated. Money raised will be coming to the ASL account.

Janet reported that the annual food drive raised 3400 lbs. of food. This will feed at least 300 people. Three classes were awarded prizes for collecting the most. Ms. Rutherford's class (over 700 items) won for the upper grades. Ms. Loach's class won for the lower grades. For the TC program, over 200 items were collected by the 5<sup>th</sup> grade class. We may have another drive in June as well.

Jan Marie commented on the community service programs required at the middle & high school levels. It will soon be required at the elementary level as well. Mantua has already instituted community service programs for the 3<sup>rd</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> grades. The 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade classes wrote letters to soldiers on active duty. The 5<sup>th</sup> grade classes wrote letters to retired veterans. A number of vets have written back, and have been very appreciative. Some of the letters will be read on Good Morning Mantua. The classes are planning on repeating this program Valentine's day.

Cheryl reported that the AAP students in 6<sup>th</sup> grade will be testing tomorrow.

### **Report of First Co-Vice-Presidents for Community Outreach:**

Margaret Scheele - Parenting with a Purpose seminar is next Thursday. About 45 people have returned forms already. Lori P. will be covering if Margaret can't be there. There has been one request for a Spanish interpreter, which Ken Moles is following up on.

Debbie Schwartz asks that we all be reminded that items for the Alert News needs to be in by end of business on Fridays. There have been too many late requests that simply cannot be accommodated.

Kids Care Club has 2 events coming up. This Saturday with the Cub Scouts is the annual Raking Leaves for Seniors. Friday there will be a story on the local news. We need to follow up on where/when, to possibly get a clip. Dec. 7<sup>th</sup> the Club will be making cards and bookmarks for a senior center.

Chat n Chew books have arrived, and are in the teacher mail boxes. Dec. 13<sup>th</sup> will be the first meeting.

Destination Imagination held a meeting about a month ago, and was well attended. We may have a Mantua team for this Spring after all, but this is not confirmed yet.

Drama Club leaders Tom Kearney and Leslie McKnight have agreed to come back for next year.

Reflections had a lot of entries. Lori P. worked with Judi West to judge entries. Mantua winners were announced in the Alert News, and they went to the next cluster for judging. Six student entries went on to the District level, where they will compete against students from other schools. They include: Kayley Snyder, Maya Heinzen, Amelia Kim, Sammy Hong, John DeCarlo and Jacob Brotman-Krass. A big thank you to Jackie DeScisciolo for running the program.

### **Report of Second Vice-President for Membership and Fundraising:**

Membership reports that checks are still coming in. We're on target from last year. We have just over 300 families that have joined. Now that the database is running well, we'll see if there is a way to target families that have not joined. If we decide to try target marketing, next year we should do so before the directory comes out. It was mentioned by Teresa that "a lot of new elementary families aren't aware of what the PTA

does". Membership fees is in fact a fundraiser as we have to pay State and Fairfax county dues. We are hopeful that the directories will be out before the December holidays.

Auction - as of this morning about \$8500 in donations has already been received. We are waiting to see if more come in Dec & Jan. Parent letters went out yesterday. Meri Farling is handling staff and faculty letters.

Christy Choi reported that Ms. Hartwell's class won the Box Top competition. Approx. 5548 were collected school-wide. This is well over our goal. She is also collecting Labels for Education (Campbell's). Their processing is different from Box Tops for Education, and is a little more laborious.

The first restaurant night at Noodles & Co. went well, but we don't have an amount yet. There may have been a problem with the cashiers attaching receipts to the flyer, which we will need to look into for subsequent restaurant nights.

Sally Foster is not doing well with the online-only program. We budgeted \$4000, but have only \$500 so far. It will be running through the end of year, but the big push is soon (Dec.4<sup>th</sup>?) for orders to be received by Christmas.

Yearbook is starting to work on a theme. Yearbook reps. (parents) are still needed for about half of the classes.

DVDs sold last year in June have gone out, or the parties have been contacted for pick up. We are currently selling Alice in Wonderland DVDs as well. Jane Dunfee offers this service to the school. It was suggested that we should post the events that will be recorded on the website.

Ken Moles reported that the Community Building Network is in the process of developing the language breakdowns for Mantua. The data collected is just the student names and language spoken at home. Though still processing the data, it looks to be about the same as last year. %8 Korean. Approx. the same for Spanish. There is a move to try to redirect the Network to improving communication community-wise, as well as evolving social networking.

**Report of the Volunteer Coordinator:** Letters were sent to each class that still needed parent volunteers. So far the response has been great. Now all classes have room parents.

We still need a coordinator for the Talent Show.

**Old Business:** Wayne Hudders, who has been attending the Annandale Boundary Studies, e-mailed that Mantua still has not been mentioned. They are currently talking about eliminating the split feeders, and are asking for input from all residents. They will be making recommendations in January. There is a meeting tomorrow night at Annandale HS from 7-9.

After Jan., Fairfax County Facilities digests the information and then makes a presentation. Following that there will be public meetings followed by the vote. There is the concern that there is less visibility of what Facilities is doing, and we do not want to be blindsided by their presentation, as has happened in the past. Frost and Woodson reps. have recommended that all "feeder school parents" should be aware. Nicole knows of at least three people attend these meetings regularly, and will keep us informed.

The proposal for a Bus Depot at Pickett & Little River Turnpike has been withdrawn.

**New Business:** A question was raised on whether the PTA has considered holding extra curricular activities in thee mornings before school. The PTA does offers these. FLEX is going on in the morning. Robotics and Dramarama are being considered as well. The principals do not have an issue with morning activities, as long as we do not overwhelm teacher space.

This question led to a general discussion of procedures that parent volunteers should be following while on school property. Recently there have been some safety concerns regarding the parent/student ratio and appropriate monitoring of the students. There seems to be a need for formal volunteer guidelines, and perhaps training as well. An additional student behavior contract might be in order. Jan Marie and Nicole will first discuss the school's requirements from volunteers, and then we will proceed with formal guidelines.

It was also raised that all volunteer committee chair positions should have a job synopsis to follow, however some of the documentation may be missing. Lori P. will follow up on this.

Meeting adjourned at 8:15.