

PTA General Meeting

April 12, 2012

Mantua Elementary School

The president called the meeting to order at 7:13 PM. Present at the meeting were:

Executive Board: Lesley Kowalski, Jennifer Epley, Shannon Murphy, Lori Recher, Sandy Spector, Lori Prendergast

School Representatives: Jan-Marie Fernandez, Cheryl Thompson, Tina Tingler, Janet Sottolano, Brian Collins, Paul Malc

General Membership: Margaret Scheele, Christie Choi, Kerry Hogg, Nicole Armstrong, Monica Cameron, Teresa LeMair, Anbu Vijay, Susan Brown

The Minutes from the March meeting were reviewed and approved.

Spring Carnival Report: Kerry Hogg gave the Carnival Report first since she had to leave the meeting early. The post-Carnival survey results indicated that the big hits were the Rock Wall and Dunk Tank. We truly appreciate the volunteers who sat in the rain for the Dunk Tank! The question was raised if we will still be doing the Dunk Tank without Cheryl next year. The Volunteer Lounge put on by the teachers was also a big hit. Most of the complaints revolved around some of the games being too hard for K-3. Planned changes for next year include moving some of the booths out of the K & 1 classrooms. Some of the teachers had items in their classrooms misplaced. We are considering holding the Carnival from 11-2. It is much harder to get volunteers for that last hour. We are looking into incentives for volunteers to help in that regard. This year there was an issue with Colonia Day being too close for volunteer parents of 4th graders. We may do away with the Silent Auction baskets due to their cost vs. money raised. We will be changing the Booth Coordinator job to Carnival Rep., and possibly dropping the class banners altogether. And this year we ran out of cakes at the Cakewalk by 2:00. We may include cake donations as a requirement of each class.

President's Report: Lesley started off by thanking Monica & Jan-Marie for their work on the grant application. Thanks to them, Mantua won the Phoebe Apperson Hearst Outstanding Family-School Partnership Award. The \$2000 grant will be used to bolster the Parent Resource Library with materials in various languages. The Destination Imagination team comprised of Mantua graduates won 2nd place, and move on to the next level - to be held in Knoxville, TN in May. Our own Odyssey of the Mind team won 1st place, and move on to their State level this Saturday. Lesley reminded us that the month's noteworthy dates

are listed on the bottom of the agenda.

Treasurer's Report: Sandy reported that we are still reconciling the numbers from the Spring Carnival. The net looks like \$12,100, and we budgeted \$13,000. The check was made out for the GreenHawks, \$2500 in expense. We still need to get the invoice from Woodson HS. The Final Auction numbers are covered in the report - \$14,000.

Principals' Report: We received information that Ms. Graap, Ms. Borelli & Christine Clifford put in for a mini grant. They were awarded up to \$2785, and will be meeting soon to make up a plant list. We have to account for every cent that we spend. Lori pointed out that Andrea Mains might be able to get us a discount on some of the plant material.

In March, the 5th grade met with Dr. Jones about cyber bullying. Feedback has been excellent. Dr. Jones has gone to 70 schools this year to give this talk. The After School program for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing kids started yesterday. Jan-Marie commented that she thought the Carnival went very smoothly. The VIP lounge seemed to be a big hit. The last week before Spring Break was the Human Growth & Development unit for the 5th & 6th grades. Today was the 4th grade's turn. Their unit is just one day.

Coming up, we have Secretary Appreciation Week. April 28th is the All County Elementary School Chorus. Approximately 700 6th graders come together, practice for one day, and then hold a performance. Orientation for AAP is April 30th. This covers 3rd grade students coming in for AAP. Kindergarten Orientation is May 7th. The Raccoon Run is May 12th. Literacy and Heritage night is May 3rd. May 2nd is a celebration for Kathleen Leonard for her nomination for Teacher of the Year, held at George Mason's Center for the Arts.

Tonight the County is voting on the possibility of June 15th being the last day of school. If so, it would be a full day. The 6th grade Graduation Ceremony would be held in the morning, and the party in the afternoon of the 15th. The PTA meeting will have to change - now tentatively scheduled for June 12th.

May 7th starts Teacher Appreciation Week. May 14th starts Principal Appreciation Week.

Cheryl reported on testing. Ecart's are down to one test. We have a couple of weeks till the SOLs start. They run May 14 to June 1, with tests every day. The schedule is out, which has been set by the State.

We have 7 people retiring this year, and another 7 that are moving or staying home with babies, etc. There will be a lot of interviewing coming up. In an Alert News coming home soon, there will be details on how the feedback from parents for placement will be done differently. It needs to be done earlier. We will be using a form that has been used throughout the county, and will have a June deadline. The mixed age classes (grades 1-2), will stand at this point. As for flex teaching, Family 3 is using a flexible approach *within* the classroom instead of between the rooms. We are collecting data, to analyze at a later date.

Report of First Vice-President for Community Outreach: Margaret reported that something will be coming home in Tuesday folders next week regarding the Parenting in the Digital Age seminar. This seminar will follow a shortened PTA meeting. It will be discussing the latest research on social media, covering parent involvement and limitations.

Girls on the Run is underway. There are 2 sessions going, with 34 girls training for a 5k.

The Kids Care Club is making posters for this year's Raccoon Run.

Report of Second Vice-Presidents for Membership and Fundraising: Jennifer reported that we are very excited about the Auction numbers, and she is already talking to possible new committee chairs. We are working on the GreenHawks basketball game. During the week of the game we will sell tickets before school. Woodson's Booster Club will be running the concessions, which is *not* what we had originally planned. They will be selling hotdogs, pizza, popcorn, etc. We will be selling pom-poms and mega phones. Additionally, the GreenHawks will be selling their own souvenirs. We will man their table and get a percentage of the sales. There will also be a raffle.

Chick Fil-A Restaurant Night is coming up, as well as Family Fun Comic Book Night. There is still time to order yearbooks, but the price has gone up.

Report of the Volunteer Coordinator: Teresa reported that emails will be going out regarding coverage for the Teacher Appreciation Luncheon, Field Days, and year-end parties. Regarding the GreenHawks game, basketball t-shirt orders were due yesterday, and ticket sales are still under way.

Old Business: There was no old business

New Business: A question was raised by a room parent for 4th grade classes, regarding use of the word "bully". The school's anti-bullying policy is in the Students Rights and Responsibilities. One of the administrators will have spoken to every class on appropriate behavior. At the middle of the year there are reminder lessons with particular grade levels. Counselors have gone to training recently on these issues and have done turn around training with the staff. The Administration addresses it individually when it is brought to them. Every teacher holds a morning meeting at least once a week, to discuss child and class responsibility. The school has found that sometimes when a teacher has just discussed it or a counselor has come in, you'll hear the children talking about bullying. There is concern that the word is being over used and inappropriately

used. For example, is bullying actually happening or is someone being mean for one instance? For all incidents that happen inside the school, the first stop is always the classroom teacher.

The Fungi Award: This month's winner is Monica Cameron for her winning grant application for the Phoebe Apperson Hearst Outstanding Family-School Partnership Award. Thank you Monica for all the *many* things you do for Mantua!

Meeting adjourned at 8:21.