

PTA General Meeting

January 12, 2012

Mantua Elementary School

The president called the meeting to order at 7:08 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

General Membership: Christine Choi, Teresa Willebeek-LeMair, Kathy Phillips, Margaret Scheele, Christine Clifford, Antonette Crego, Anbuchellam Vijay, Sharon Schechtel, Julie Lifland, Kerry Hogg, Dan Johnson, Jill Johnson

The Minutes from the November meeting were reviewed and approved.

President's Report: Due to logistical concerns, we will not be having a virtual meeting. We will, however, set up a conference-call number for the February meeting. Thank you to Kathleen DeCarlo for the Chuck E. Cheese Restaurant Night. As it was the first night of Winter Break, it was not heavily attended, but a good time was had by all. The new format report card review meeting held earlier this evening with Jan-Marie went well. We have nominated Kathleen Leonard for the Washington Post Teacher of the Year award. VA Lottery's Super Teacher nominations are being accepted now. If anyone is interested in nominating a teacher, it is important that we get a copy of all essays for the teacher's file.

At the VA PTA 2011 Convention, it was resolved that "the Virginia PTA respectfully requests the Governor to allocate a fair share of the \$544.8 million FY2011 budget surplus to K-12 public education, to begin to restore funds cut from K-12 public education in Fiscal Years 2009, 2010, and 2011."

Lesley reminded everyone that if you want to do something at the school (clubs, etc.), to please let the PTA be aware of it. The next Restaurant Night is January 24th at Baja Fresh. There will be a Talent Show rehearsal that night as well. More important upcoming dates are listed on the bottom of tonight's Agenda.

The PTA at the state level is more involved in advocacy issues. We here at Mantua are more focused on our kids and providing programs for them. That said, Jan. 22-23 are Advocacy Days in Richmond. Anyone interested in attending/details must email Lesley by tomorrow.

A big thanks to Monica Cameron & Jan-Marie for working on a grant proposal for the school. We will hear back on that towards the end of the month. The National Book Foundation has an additional grant available, and we are always looking for volunteers to get involved. The Chat n Chew program would be eligible for this grant.

The exhibition basketball game with the Green Hawks is scheduled for April 27th, and will be at Woodson HS. Gates open at 6:30, with the tip-off at 7:00. Cheryl is looking for a few ringers for the Mantua team ;) This event will have higher ticket prices than the school games, due to the Green Hawks appearance fee.

For February's meeting we are going to try a "Fun in February" event. Current ideas include a tap dance exhibition/lesson, or appetizers. We are accepting ideas for 30 minutes of fun 😊

Treasurer's Report: Sally Foster (including the Entertainment Book sales) did really well. We made \$13500, with very little overhead. The Book Fair made \$29000 (gross). The library proceeds will be around \$6000. The PTA paid for some staff development, and field trips this past month. The Restaurant Night at Noodles and Company made approximately \$550. The Chuck E. Cheese event netted around \$188. Sandy pointed out that we did not hold the Fall Raffle this year, and those funds need to be made up from other events.

Principals' Report: Jan-Marie welcomed all. The helicopter school-wide picture was held on Dec 2. Students were able to walk past the helicopter and speak to the pilots. On Dec. 6 there was a Parent Workshop on Helping Kids with Anxiety. The annual Winter Sing-a-long was held before Winter Break. There will be no school on Martin Luther King Jr. Day, nor on Jan 30-31 (Teacher work days). We will be ending the second quarter on Jan. 27th.

Mantua won the FCPS Wellness Golden Award for nutrition. In addition, any Fairfax County schools (including Mantua) that won this award, moved on to win Bronze for the National USDA Nutritional Awards.

Cheryl reported on the testing underway. They have just finished the Iowa Aptitude test for selected 6th graders. WIDA testing for the ESOL students, and CogAT and Naglieri testing for selected students is in progress. The Writing SOLs will be March 6th and 7th. Teachers are working with the students (5th grade especially) on writing prompts. SOLs start the second week of May (14th). The Alert News will include a schedule for grades 3-6. Cheryl reiterated a request - Please no vacations or late night activities in the month of May. All of the kids are doing well.

Tina reported on several additions to our staff: Elizabeth Moore, a new Special Ed. Teacher for the 4th grade, Merete Hansen, a new Kindergarten Assistant in Ms. Martin's class, and Lisa Dreyfuss, a Public Health Training Assistant, supporting Special students across several grade levels.

Report of First Vice-President for Community Outreach: Lori reported that the next Family Fun night is the Magician's Workshop. Ted Donat is running the Talent show. In total, 57 acts are slated for February 4th, and the show is being held in the gym. Concessions and programs will be sold. Margaret Scheele did a great job with last month's Parent Workshop speaker. We *did* record the presentation, and DVDs will soon be available in the library for check out. Girls on the Run was very successful this fall, and as a result there will be 2 groups this spring. Registration will be sometime in February. Flex Spanish & French are wrapping up. We still need a Spanish Flex teacher for the spring. Due to budgetary constraints there will be no Drama or Robotics offered. Chinese will continue for the next term.

Christine reported that the Community Building Network conference went well. She's hoping to have a meeting to create a networking system for minority families. Right now there are some issues with specific languages.

Report of Second Vice-Presidents for Membership and Fundraising: Shannon reported that there are a few memberships coming in now, brought on by the release of the directory. We are, for the most part, finished with membership sign-up. Christie asked about the availability of membership cards. In an effort to go green, we had stopped distributing them, however, they are available upon request.

Jennifer reported that the Mantua PTA now has a Facebook page. The Yearbook is in process. To date, 358 have been sold, but there is still time to purchase. There is also still a need for photos. The Restaurant Nights have been very successful so far, due to Kathleen DeCarlo. The Auction is coming up. There are currently 173 donations, including a great response from the teachers and staff. The class that turns in the most donations will win an Ice Cream Party. The deadline for donations has been extended to the 20th.

The fall Box Tops collection made \$1200. The next collection is starting soon - Jan. 23rd till Feb. 24th.

Julie Lifland & Kerri Hogg, our Carnival chairpersons, gave the first report on the Carnival preparations. We have great committee chairs. The 50th logo has been incorporated. Deanna Freemeyer is creating a publicity packet. The Jewelry Sale has been expanded to include accessories, and will remain in the library. There are new ideas for the prizes. We will have prize runners to keep the prizes stocked at the booths. We are also looking at purchasing a karaoke machine this year. The cost is approx. \$200. Cheryl raised the concern that the music cost far exceeds the equipment cost. There will be additional games and prizes geared towards the younger children. The Rock Wall will have 2 lines open to avoid last year's long line problem. There will be no punch cards this year - strictly wristbands. We will be using Sign-up Genius for all volunteers, including booths, set up and cleanup. It was noted that last year parents signed up their kids for jobs that were not appropriate (i.e. counting money). Sign-up Genius will help avoid these issues. The winning cakes from the Cake Decoration Contest will be put up for the Silent Auction. We will also put cakes contributions on Sign-up Genius. The Carnival is scheduled for March 24th from 11:00-3:00.

Report of the Volunteer Coordinator: Teresa reported that parents may be getting an email from their child's Room Parent regarding Yearbook Reps. There are still several classes without reps. Additionally we still need a few Basket Coordinators for Carnival, and quite a few Booth Coordinators. Drama Club DVDs of the "The Stinky Cheese Man..." are still available for purchase.

Old Business: There was no Old Business.

New Business: Christine reported that The Garden club is applying for another grant. The Kids Care Club is going to make bird feeders for the court yard, to keep it going for the winter. She is meeting with the teacher representatives to make plans for the spring.

The Fungi Award: This month's Fungi Award goes to Anbu Vijay for all of her work starting Mantua's first Destination Imagination team. Thank you Anbu!!

Meeting adjourned at 8:07.