

Minutes of the January 14, 2008 PACA Meeting:

Columbus Academy parents in attendance: Jan Anasis, Ann Boeckman, Laura Bowen, Ken Brown, Sara Browning, Donna Caplinger, Barbara Castelli, Debbie Daoud, Beth Fisher, Ann Flaherty, Erich Hunker, Leanne Keith, Stephanie Leader, Beverly Moore, Janine Moulton, Prabha Narayanan, Lisa Newmark, Susan Pickering, Eric Ransom, Kevin Reis, Shelby Rhyne, Donna Simmons, Joyce Simson, Jan Thompson, Mary Jo Vara, Lisa Westwater, and Cynthia Zeigler.

Introduction and Approval of Minutes: At 8:05 a.m., PACA Board President Joyce Simson called to order the meeting, held in the Trustees' Room. She asked and received approval of the November 7, 2007 PACA minutes which had been previously emailed to Board Members.

Joyce then introduced the guest speaker, John Mackenzie, Headmaster of Columbus Academy, and a CA parent.

Guest Speaker John Mackenzie: John began his presentation by thanking PACA's many volunteers for their efforts. He noted that the "quality and commitment" of PACA's volunteers is greatly appreciated by CA's Administration.

John reported he had recently told CA's Trustees he thought fall 2007 was "his best in eleven years". A combination of good luck, new air conditioning in the MS and LS and the presence of temporary US Head, Gary Williams, were cited by John as contributing factors. For this meeting, John planned to review "big picture" projects occurring on campus and answer parent questions.

John told the group informal planning for CA's centennial year, 2011, has begun. That same year also represents the conclusion of CA's current strategic plan. Consequently, John and his team have begun thinking about future plans for the school. Future plans will include a strategic capital fundraising campaign to occur around the time of the school's centennial celebration. The beneficiaries of this capital drive will include the endowment, student financial aid, and faculty and staff compensation.

CA is close to hiring an architectural firm to develop a master strategic facilities plan. John is eager to see this project started.

A Diversity Committee has been formed to review CA's current policies and practices. John mentioned that this group includes faculty, parents, students and Trustees. They are carefully evaluating our practices relative to our peer group of independent schools.

The Trustees Education and Student Life Committee is evaluating the school's current athletics programs. John noted that approximately 85% of our MS and US students play at least one campus-sponsored sport. The national participation rate is much lower- at 20%. John and this group view CA's athletics programs as a natural extension of the school's educational programs. Questions such as the addition of new team sports (e.g. bowling) are being considered.

The Board of Trustees has formed a non-trustee committee, chaired by marketing guru and CA parent, Cheryl Krueger, to evaluate CA's "brand". John told the group it is vital to understand and address how outside constituencies such as selective colleges and the greater Columbus community view the school. Issues such as inconsistent marketing collateral are being addressed by this committee.

John told us he chairs a faculty and trustee committee that is considering many important issues, such as the proper placement of 5th grade (i.e. is 5th grade MS or better situated in LS?). Also, John believes there is significant demand for a 3 year old program. No decisions are being made right now by his group. However, they are carefully evaluating these types of issues. John noted that this group's work dovetails into the master facilities plan work commencing soon.

Professional searches continue for two key roles: Head of US and a Director of Admissions. There are no internal candidates for the former position, but several excellent internal seekers for the latter one.

To a parent's question regarding the state of campus security, John described current conditions, including locking external doors, faculty and staff use of key cards and regular "lockdown" drills to prepare students for emergencies. CA has sought expert outside assistance to improve campus safety. A 2 way communication system is being implemented for emergency response across campus. Also, the launch of the "3N" system for emergency notification has begun.

Another parent asked for an update on the Annual Fund. John deferred to Erich Hunker, Assistant Headmaster, to answer with the most current information. As of January 14th, participation is 5% higher than the same time last year. John and Erich described for the group a simple formula for assessing a school's financial health: the endowment should roughly equal the annual operating budget to be considered in "good" financial health. CA is currently in this position.

To a parent's question regarding the college admissions process, John noted that 95% of CA graduates receive their college degree in four years. The national figure is a low 52%. He feels CA is helping its students prepare for college.

Joyce thanked John for his presentation.

Report from PACA Treasurer, Mary Jo Vara: Mary Jo distributed hard copies of PACA's financial position through January 13th. To date, total PACA net income was approximately \$79,000.

Committee Reports:

Donna Caplinger, Co-Chair of the Senior Party, announced a date for the Senior Party, June 1st.

Kevin Reis, Co-Chair of Athletics, reported that the winter sports program was off to the printer, with 200 copies expected to be returned. It is a smaller program than the fall one, due to fewer teams playing in the winter months.

Eric Ransom, Co-Chair of Arts, reminded the group that the Faculty and Parent Talent Show will be February 23rd. He thanked Blythe Brown, chair of the first-ever Talent Show (held two years ago), for laying the groundwork for this year's planned success. Tickets will be \$20 in advance and \$25 at the door. A \$100 sponsor category, with reserved seating, is also available. All proceeds will go to school art and music programs. To encourage attendance, Eric will be providing each faculty and staff member with a complimentary ticket.

The Faculty Recognition Committee Chairpersons, Bev Moore and Leanne Keith, reported great success for the annual faculty and staff "cookie day" project held December 14th. They had 85 bakers, 20 volunteers and 6 US students put together and deliver holiday cookie boxes for every faculty and staff member. These gift boxes were really appreciated by faculty and staff with many letters and emails of gratitude sent to PACA.

Joyce introduced Evelyn Kelley-Antoine and Barb Castelli as the new, official Co-Chairs of this year's Antiques Show. She expressed PACA's thanks to both women for volunteering to help Ann Flaherty.

Ann Flaherty updated the group on the Antiques Show scheduled for April 25, 26 and 27th. Lecture speakers will include a gardening expert from local NBC channel 4, as well as the owner of downtown retailer, The Urban Gardener. New this year will be two hands-on gardening workshops: one for adults and the second for children. Back again are many of prior year's financial sponsors, including Limited Brands, Carpenter & Lipps, Vorys LLP, The Huntington Bank, Plaskolite, and Glimcher Realty Trust. Returning food sponsors include Cameron Mitchell, Sher Bliss, and Brownie Points. Individual sponsorship solicitations will be sent out this month to CA families.

PACA Member-at-Large, Lisa Newmark is reviewing PACA's bylaws and will report on her findings at a future meeting.

PACA Member-at-Large, Debbie Daoud announced plans to include MS students as part of the Host Family program. She will participate in an upcoming MS assembly to recruit students to join in the welcoming process for new MS students.

Prabha Narayanan, Chair of Parent Education, announced two upcoming seminars to be held in the Trustees Room. These are "Raising Resilient Children and Adolescents" by Robert Brooks of the Harvard Medical School and "The Childhood Roots of Adult Happiness" by Edward Hallowell, an accomplished author. Prabha will advertise via Viking Voice and hard copy "backpack" mail to make sure parents are aware of these PACA-sponsored opportunities.

Beth Fisher, Co-Chair of Service, announced a January 21st blood drive for US students. A pancake breakfast will be served. Also, Friday March 14th will be another US Service Day.

Sue Pickering reported that SCRIP income is up over last year's performance to date. More than \$4,500 has been raised this academic year. She thanked users of the Kroger reloadable card for boosting SCRIP's numbers. Also, Lisa Westwater procured a large corporate account for the program. The next campaign will occur after spring break.

Cynthia Zeigler, Head Mother of LS, noted an upcoming skating party for children and parents on Friday February 8th, a teacher conference day.

With committee reports finished, Joyce concluded the meeting at 9:45 a.m.

Submitted by Sara Browning, PACA Secretary