

## **Walt Whitman High School PTSA Minutes**

**November 18, 2008**

### **Minutes**

#### **Welcome**

PTSA Co-President Sue Kanter welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order.

#### **Minutes**

Clarification in Oct. 21 President's Report: If approved by Dr. Goodwin, a student can serve 100 hours of community service and shorten the year long probation period to 6 months. The minutes were so amended, and the motion to approve the amended minutes of the October 21, 2008 meeting passed.

#### **SGA Report**

Doug Acker, SGA President, reported on activities that have taken place this past month including: blood drive, canned food drive, upcoming coat drive, and Kenya Connect fundraiser. The blood drive was so successful they had to turn students and parents away. Kenya Connect project raised \$950. Coat Drive recipient is Park Lawn Middle School. SGA is planning a project to promote Aids Awareness Day on Dec. 1<sup>st</sup>. The collection of General Mills box tops is down. Box Tops for Education is a program that rebates money to our school for box tops sent to General Mills. The SGA will raise Program awareness to get more families participating in the program. Recycling efforts continue as the SGA works with the Green Team. 2<sup>nd</sup> period delegates clear recycling bins that have been set up throughout the school. Three Whitman students will be attending a gala at the Russian Embassy in honor of Walt Whitman.

#### **Arts Forum**

Marjorie Scott announced the annual Whitman Arts Forum to be held this year on Dec. 3<sup>rd</sup>. For the past 7 years, Whitman has hosted this event that brings Admissions Reps from Art Schools, as well as Liberal Arts and large universities with Arts programs. Students are invited to come and talk with the reps about their programs whether the student plans on being an art major or is just interested in a strong arts program. It is a wonderful opportunity for students to show their portfolios and take part in interviews. There are generally 25 schools represented from across the country. Reps usually have slide show or power point presentations as well as financial aid and scholarship information available. Acceptances have been made on the spot. The interviews are great practice for future interview sessions. Any MCPS student may attend.

#### **Principal's Report**

Dr. Goodwin reported that there is discussion about Inauguration Day attendance for MCPS students. An Algebra make-up MSA scheduled for that day as well as high school exams complicate the matter. MCPS has been working with other neighboring Maryland counties on a potential calendar change and Dr Goodwin will let us know the outcome asap. Homecoming Week was a great success. The fall sports season finished strong and winter sports tryouts were during the past weekend. There is no word yet re classroom fees, class size, or budget for the next academic year. Forensics will be offered for the first time next year. Science teacher, Don

DeMember will be teaching the class. Everyone is looking forward to the upcoming Musical, Damn Yankees, as well as the Choral and Instrumental music concerts in December.

**Presentation: “Parenting Skills to Help Teens Avoid Risky Behaviors,” Mary Atwater, Psy.D**

PTSA Co-President Vicky Strella introduced Dr. Mary Atwater, a clinical psychologist and Whitman parent, who helped facilitate the anti-alcohol abuse “Every 15 Minutes” program held two years ago at Whitman. Dr. Atwater emphasized the importance of reciprocal, honest communications between teens and parents as a key factor in preventing substance abuse. The full text of Dr. Atwater’s presentation is on the Whitman website at

[http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/whitmanhs/parents/ptsa/ptsa\\_meeting\\_minutes/atwater.htm](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/whitmanhs/parents/ptsa/ptsa_meeting_minutes/atwater.htm)

Handout of this presentation can be found at

[http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/whitmanhs/parents/ptsa/ptsa\\_meeting\\_minutes/atwater.pdf](http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/schools/whitmanhs/parents/ptsa/ptsa_meeting_minutes/atwater.pdf)

**Co-President’s Report**

Vicky Strella thanked 9<sup>th</sup> grade parents: Jodie Rasch, Joan Ishimoto, and Wendy Banner, and 11th grade parent, Rebecca Kahlenberg, for coordinating their respective grade-wide networking nights. 10<sup>th</sup> grade networking night “Driving” will be held on Dec. 9<sup>th</sup>.

**Treasurer’s Report**

Janice Mehler presented the report. A portion of the money earmarked for the Stressbusters speaker will be restored to the budget since so much money was raised at the event.

**Vice Presidents’ Reports**

Membership: Jay Kaufman reported that membership is down 33% from last year. The drop in membership equates to a \$13,000 drop in income that would be used to meet budget. He is hopeful that more parents will respond to recent directed email and directed mail appeals.

**Committee Reports**

Post Prom still has some major committee chairs to fill. Contact Vicky Strella, [Strella@att.net](mailto:Strella@att.net), if interested in volunteering.

Newcomers and International Families will host an evening information and networking event on January 13<sup>th</sup>.

**Future Meetings**

There will be no December meeting. Please note day change for January PTSA meeting is **Wednesday, January 21<sup>st</sup>**. Attendees will have an opportunity to tour the newly installed Language Lab.

Meeting was adjourned at 9pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Noelle McHugh (Recording Secretary)

