

Lyon/Pleasant Ridge PTA Minutes
October 17, 2008

President Kristen Borth opened the meeting at 9:15a.m. in the Pleasant Ridge Library.

In Attendance: Kevin Dorken, Matthew Rich, Kristen Borth, Jennifer Massarelli, Robin Hinrichs, Laura Olsen, Debbie Shefren, Katie Konieczka, Dave Jones, Karen Toomey, Debbie Wells, Colleen Mackimm, Karen Friedman, Stacey Saef, Liz Price, Cheryl Kasner, Wendy Ban, Susie Feldstein, Michelle Langenbach, Sabrina Briggs, Ana Cassorla, Deb McMahon, Liz Quilici, Ellen Girard, Halleh Akbarnia, Heather McEllistrem, Virginia Thomas, Anne Carreon, Matina Ingallinera, Kristin Miller, Cathy O'Shaughnessy, Susan Steel Ishida

Approval of the Minutes

The minutes of the September 9, 2008 meeting were approved.

Officer's Reports

Treasurer—Laura Olson reported the following changes to the Profit and Loss Month to Month comparison. In September PTA, took in \$4000 from Anderson Books. This is from last year's Spring Lyon/PR book Fair. On the expense side, Laura paid roughly \$2000.00 for Pumpkinfest, \$2000 for Cultural Enrichment, and about \$2000 Literary Programs. Next month's report will include receipts from Spiritwear, the Directory, and PTA registration. She also noted that the Checking Account Balance was negative. This was strictly a timing issue. However, the Money Market had an adequate positive balance. The PTA liquidated the CD that matured the beginning of October. We will roll this over again after our cash flow evens out after Pumpkinfest and Book Fair. Laura also passed out the budget for information. Contact Laura if you have any questions.

President—Kristen Borth thanked the people who made a difference in PTA in the month of September. She said thanks to Debbie Wells and Chris Northwick for organizing the Room Parent program. She also thanked Wendy Ban and Tammy Lundal for completing the Directory. The directories were delivered to families this week. Sandy Brennan has also worked very hard completing the volunteer data base. Kristin thanked Jen Roberts and Karen Anderson for all their work with Global Language. At the beginning of the year this involves a lot of communication with the

company that provides our Global Language Program and with the parents. Ellen Girard has worked really hard organizing the grant process for us, and finally, Mary Hershey helped get Walk to School Day going, communicating with the staff at Pleasant Ridge to make it work. Kristin reminded us that all the volunteers are what make PTA work.

1st Vice President—Jennifer Massarelli asked all the board chairs to check their mail.

Teachers' Representative Reports

Debbie Shefren reported for Lyon School about the word study program. Word study is one component of the Language Arts program at Lyon. It includes Phonics, spelling, and vocabulary. She gave a handout and short presentation to help parents learn how to help kids to increase their vocabulary. She stated that vocabulary is learned through reading, but students also need vocabulary to be able to read. They can learn this through read alouds and incidental speech as well as direct instruction. Ms. Shefren encouraged parents to do read alouds with follow-up discussion, talk with your child, encourage a wide variety of reading, embed new words in familiar contexts, change the language of your daily routines, and maybe do a “word of the week” to learn and practice a new word.

Katie Konieczka reported for Pleasant Ridge. She reported that the 3rd grade is getting to the end of their 2nd unit in math, which is adding 2-3 digit numbers. They are completing weather power points which will be posted on the web. Part of the 3rd grade is also completing stories about the Titanic emphasizing summarizing and studies of setting. Part of the 4th grade is completing a unit on realistic fiction. The entire 4th grade is starting their simple machine science unit. They will be going to the Museum of Science and Industry as part of this. The 5th grade will be building their ecosystems starting next week. TREE is getting ready for grandparent week in November and doing a writing unit. All of the kids are doing Team building and Problem solving in PE. Mrs. Hoyer is starting an after school theater club next week in drama. In music the 5th grade has started working on the 5th grade musical which will be presented in December. The 3rd and 4th grade will have separate performances later in the year. The 5th grade also went to the Lyric opera at CHA this week. They had a great time. The teachers who got GEF grants for smart boards, a computer connected white board, love them and those who got the Document cameras have

received them and love them as well.

Committee Chair Reports

Pumpkinfest—Kathleen Butler reported that Pumpkinfest still needs volunteers. They are hoping to get some volunteers from GBS, but there is a football game at the same time. They have also contacted OLPH and the junior high schools, but will probably need more adult volunteers. Kathleen sent around a sign up sheet for more volunteers. Please come next Friday, October 24 from 4-8 p.m.

Lyon/Pleasant Ridge Book Fair—Stacy Saef reported that she and Karen Friedman are working hard on the Book fair. The theme this year is the Book Fair Safari. It will be Nov. 12-13. The hours will be Wed. 9 a.m.-8 p.m. and Thurs. 12p.m.-8 p.m. There will be two great family events: Pizza night from 6-8 p.m. on Wednesday and a Grandpersons evening and PR night on Thursday. Pleasant Ridge will have a poet in residence that and the kids will be performing their poems at the Book Fair Thursday night. Stacy passed around a volunteer sheet. She needs volunteers to work on decorations, work at event, and to do set up and tear down. Anne Prikos is organizing the volunteers this year. She will contact you. Megan Dunn Murphy is doing decorations. They will be set up on the Friday before the Book Fair. Set up and teacher preview will be on Tuesday November 11th. Stacy Saef stated that in previous year they have given Gift certificates to staff and free and reduced lunch students. At the Spring Book Fair Pleasant Ridge gave the teachers 20% off on all their purchases and gave the free and reduced lunch students a free book by the visiting author. After some discussion a motion was made to give the teachers a 20% discount for purchases and a gift certificate will be given to each of the free and reduced lunch students for \$10 of books.

Holiday Helper-- Kristen Borth related that Linda Nowlin and Beth O'Connor had called her and told her that they had asked the Scandinavian Ski Shop what they do with coats they are unable to sell. They agreed to donate the coats that are left over to needy kids in District 34. Deb McMahon reported that they have started up the Holiday Helper program. They have sent out letters to 88 families this year. People who signed up for a family will start getting information about their family this weekend. One of the Girl Scout troops will be putting out signs next week at both

schools about the food program. Just like last year the outerwear will be collected in November, the presents and food will be distributed in December. The food drive starts November 10th.

Benefit—Jen Farber reported that the benefit is the major fundraiser for PTA. She held a mini benefit forum a couple of weeks ago and over 30 people showed up. They developed goals, thoughts, and ideas. A subcommittee has also met to discuss Class gifts. About 20-30 people showed up for that meeting as well and had incredible ideas. Jen was pleased to report that many new people showed up. The theme of the benefit will be Mardi Gras Mambo. There has been some talk about this being a “Green benefit”. The committee is planning for the process to be green, emphasizing “Reuse, restore, Recycle”, but the benefit itself will be a Mardi Gras party. At the next meeting PTA meeting the committee will talk about class gifts. The general idea is that we are focusing less on creating stuff and ways that people can give at a lower dollar amount.

Cultural Enrichment—Cheryl Kasner reported that AC Rock will be performing at Pleasant Ridge on October 22nd at 12:15 and 1:15 p.m. Parents are welcome to attend.

Environmental—Jen Roberts reported that the reusable snack cups we funded last month are presently being printed. They will be distributed to the students on the 24th. She also announced that the Green team will be trying to help Dr. Jones in the garden. Dr. Jones has planned a few weekend garden days throughout the year for tasks that need more adult supervision. The first one will be from 8:30-10:30 a.m. tomorrow morning. All of the kids are welcome. 2-3 extra adults would also be helpful. Watch for announcements of more weekend garden days throughout the year.

Parent Education—Kristin Borth reported for Miriam Biales that the Parents in Partnership seminar will be November 15th from 8:30 a.m. -12:30 p.m. at Attea. Dr. Jeri Morris will be returning as the keynote speaker. She is talking about “Creating and Maintaining Old -fashioned Goodness for you Family and Friends”. There will then be three breakout session for the rest of the morning.

Grant Presentation—Ellen Girard presented the grant proposals that were submitted for fall PTA grant funding. 16 applications were received from Lyon and PR. All the grants were considered by the administrators, PTA executive committee, and a representative

parent group prior to the PTA vote. They were rated according to the number of students impacted, their relevance to the District strategic plan, their innovation, whether it was a pilot program for broader implementation, and educator and parent priority. Grants recommended for funding : 1) **Reading/ Math /Writing Support Grants:** Books for Independent reading for the Pleasant Ridge library \$1500, Biography Audio books for 3rd grade curriculum \$466, The art of Writing by Lucy Calkins (Writer's Workshop curriculum that is used at Lyon expanded to PR) 6 sets for all of 5th grade, 20 copies of *The Mango Shaped Space* requested as a 4th grade realistic fiction class wide reading title 2) **Technology Grants:** Redcat Lightspeed Microphone requested by TREE \$1140; Stage lighting for Stage at Pleasant Ridge \$3500; iPod Nano and docking station for Art room at Lyon \$350; iPod accessories/ powerdocks for Lyon Music program \$440; **Student Program Grants:** Garden grant \$470; Fitness equipment for Lyon \$752; footnotes Musical rug for Pleasant Ridge (Lyon has used one successfully) \$445; and Bongos for music room at Pleasant Ridge \$110.

Ellen stated that PTA had \$10,000 to give for grants, and we originally had \$22,000 of grants were applied for, including the \$14,000 for the stage lighting. The recommended grants total \$9808.00 PTA is reviewing the grants earlier this year so that teachers can present their grants to GEF for further funding and so that the teachers purchase and use their equipment earlier in the year. A motion was made to approve the grants as presented and it was approved.

Principals' Report—Kevin Dorken reported that Lyon school is talking about the elections in a way that the students can understand it. They will be doing a brief campaign to decide on what type of special dress up day they should have. There will be a primary election for each grade individually. Then there will be a final election for all the students between the primary winners. Mr. Dorken also reminded us that there are parent teacher conferences scheduled for Thursday and Friday. There will be Pumpkinfest decorating going on at the same time so please be understanding and then return for Pumpkinfest.

Dr. Matt Rich stated that Pleasant Ridge is working on energy management. The children are learning to close doors when they leave the classroom. He also told parent that the lights will be down for early morning band and after school activities to save energy. Pleasant Ridge is also please to have full fledged recycling. PTA is funding the program at present, but the district will be picking this up in November. He also noted that the Planet Protector club will be making a public service

announcement with Mrs. Hoye on the environment in the next few weeks.

Unfinished Business/New Business

Skool Aid—Chicago Public School Partnership—Cathy O’Shaughnessy told us about our new partnership with a Chicago Public School. This program called *School Aid* was started by a couple of moms in the Henking/Hoffman cluster. It matches a District 34 cluster with a Chicago Public School in need. Deb McMahon and Cathy met with the principal of Stockton Elementary last week. This is a K-8 school on the Northwest side of Chicago. It is very financially challenged. About 80% of the families live below the poverty line. 20 families that attend the school live in a homeless shelter, and many more live in section 8 housing. Deb and Cathy delivered the school supplies that we collected at the end of last year. The school was delighted to have them because they are frequently short on paper and other supplies. Cathy proposed that their first initiative for the PTA be to collect gently used outerwear. The kids at the school need everything: gloves, coats, boots, and scarves in decent condition. The drive should be beginning in the next couple of weeks. Look for information in the newsletter. The kids are K-8 so all size kids’ and adult coats would be welcome. Cathy also noted that some of the families just had a fire in their section 8 housing units. We will also be trying to get some things for those families. In the future we will be trying to have pen pals between our kids and the kids at Stockton Elementary, and maybe a joint dance unit, and shared book reading. Over time we will be looking for other opportunities to collaborate. Kristen Borth passed around a sign-up sheet that people could help with this project.

Telethon for Youth Services—**Susan Steel Ishida** told us about Youth Services of Glenview and Northbrook. It is a social service agency that receives contracts from the state and DCFS for prevention and intervention for the mental health of kids. Last year it helped 3500 kids with 30 programs. The biggest program is the study buddies homework assistance program. They are presently working out of a double wide trailer at 3100 West Lake Avenue. They are building a new larger facility that they hope every child in Glenview and Northbrook will use. The project will cost 5.5 million. They have raised \$4.5 million so far. GBS and District 34 have decided to help raise the rest of the money. GBS is trying to raise \$100,000 through the “South Dreams Big” telethon on Nov 7-8. They have already scheduled 24 hours of show for the telethon. District 34 is encouraging the kids to watch the telethon. Attea and Springman are doing a partnership

to raise money. Susan was encouraging Pleasant Ridge and Lyon to do a “dream Jar.” Lyon School already has a jar and has been challenged to match the 400 quarters that will be put in the jar today. Dr. Jones will be receiving 100 1 dollar bills for Pleasant Ridge on Monday. Pleasant Ridge has been challenged to match that. Susan encouraged each school to develop a theme that our kids would understand. We also need a parent volunteer to help Dr. Jones organize the drive for Pleasant Ridge and a teacher to help Heather McEllistrem at Lyon. The drive will last until November 4th. The kids could then present their “Dream Jars” on the telethon broadcast. She also encouraged us to consider a contribution directly from the PTA.

Announcements

October 24—Pumpkinfest 4:00—8:00 p.m.

November 8—GEF Benefit

November 15—Parents in Partnership workshops at Attea 8:30-12:30

November 18—Next PTA meeting 7:00 p.m. at Lyon School

February 28, 2009—PTA Benefit at Sunset Ridge Country Club

Adjournment—Kristen Borth adjourned the meeting at 11:25 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Robin Hinrichs, PTA secretary