

**Lake Forest High School APT Minutes**  
**November 2, 2011**  
East Campus Room 113

**Members Present:** Linda Ganshirt, Jean Clewlow, Michele Medzigian, Barb Kesman, Jan Richman, Julie Stevenson, Lisa Garrity, Colleen Laughlin, Sheila Cavalaris, Mary Beth Theodore, Amy Keaton, Sheri Passalino, Cathy Dohnalek, Mary Kay Jaekel, Sue Wagener, Susie Athenson, Julie Eckert, , Leeni Ellis, Kathleen Hanson, Amy Tswarhas, Lorraine Freedman, Midge Nelson, Tracy Matthews Hill

**Members Absent:** Laurie Doherty, Julia Fiske Parker, Lisa Troller, Marianne Stride, Julie Thauer, Leann Asma, Leslie Habjan, Ruth Muscarello, Andrea Perino, Susan McMahon, Erin Foley, Mary Flagstad,

**President, Linda Ganshirt** thanked Kathleen Hanson and Erin Foley for doing such a magnificent job in planning and chairing Be True to Your School. The goal of the event was to bring people together and Linda stated that they did an excellent job of accomplishing that goal. She announced the event with speaker Wendy Mogul tonight and said that 500 people are expected to attend. There are still tickets available at the door. Also, this week is “Street Smarts: Parents Teens and the Law”. Linda shared that this year a young woman who was involved in an incident is coming to share her story. The directories are finished and Leann and Leslie are downstairs compiling the mailing as we speak. They will be going out in today’s mail. Linda thanked the board for all of their hard work in making things run smoothly.

**Dr. Harry Griffith**, commented on the success of last night’s orchestra concert and also last week’s choral concert with the middle schools. He also shared the excitement of the success of some of the athletic teams. He then gave a presentation on the district’s academic and fiscal goals. Last year LFHS had the highest average ACT score ever with a 26.8. He talked about the two day PSAE testing and how scores fall off the second day because the kids do not think it counts for them. Some of the things that are challenging the district financially are: the reduction of impact fees from new construction, lower interest earnings, delayed payments from the state of Illinois, the 5 year contract with the teacher’s union with an automatic 5.52% increase per year in salaries, CPI increase 2.2%. Some of the things that were done to respond: the board did a good job in using fund balances (currently operating below the normal fund balance reserve level of 10%), cash flow remains strong, reduced administrative staff by 26%, support staff by 15%, teachers by 8%, (since 2008 there has been a decrease of 37 positions. The class size average which used to be 19 is now 21), renegotiation of contracts, found new sources of revenue eg. cell towers, SEDOL, Little Scouts and Citadel Theatre. Harry stated that part of the reduction of staff came from an aggressive early retirement program. The TIF is closing out in 2013 which will bring new revenue to the district. The new teacher contract being negotiated should help. Other than the teachers, every other salary in the district has been frozen. Harry explained that this year for the first time in three years the goal is no deficit spending so fund balances can be restored. A question was asked about the outlook for the future and discussed that there is some hope the CPI is doing better but there are some threats. Home values are going down which makes tax rates go up to make up the difference and capture the same dollars. There is a piece of legislation out there

called the Franks Bill that says in devaluation times there will not be an increase in the tax rate. Harry stated that he does not think it will pass but if it did, it would be a huge problem. If it were to pass it would devastate municipalities and schools. One of the other threats is North Chicago which is in extreme financial difficulty. \$16 million dollars of their budget is military impact aid and there is a fear that it will be taken away by the Super Committee. One of the solutions would be the dissolution of the district which would be subdivided and absorbed by the neighboring districts. If it happens it will take three or four years to take affect. Harry was asked about the teacher contract negotiations and stated that he could not give specific information at this time. He discussed the process in general terms. He explained that the teachers have declared an impasse which is a step leading up to a strike. Prior to that, they will be doing informational picketing in front of the school. Once mediation has concluded on Monday night, for the first time ever the public will be able to view the two proposals. Harry is optimistic that a resolution will be reached.

**Faculty Liaison, Kerry Littel** reminded the board that parent teacher conferences are coming up next week. The Student Council is going to be hosting a winter dance on Saturday, February 25<sup>th</sup>, It will be a “turn about” and will be held in the student commons. More information will be available soon. The volunteer program in the library is going well. Each day 150-200 students use the media center during the lunch hours and around 800 each day. The parents are helping accommodate the need for help during those busy times. Teen Read week is this week and next week there is a visiting author. Kerry stated that she had a wonderful time attending “Be True to Your School” for the first time.

**Senior Center, Marla Schachtel** quoted Mark Twain, “Age is an issue of mind over matter and if you don’t mind, it doesn’t matter.” It is a great way to think about positive aging. Marla informed us that people can join the Senior Center at age 50. She wanted us to know what a great resource it is for residence of Lake Forest and Lake Bluff and for people with aging parents. The center offers a full time senior advocate to help with transitions. There is also a medical lending closet with medical equipment that can be borrowed. There is a massage therapist, a podiatrist and manicure and pedicure all at very reasonable rates. They are doing a series on life transitions and there is one coming up on Tuesday, November 15, from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at City Hall entitled “How to Have Those Difficult Conversations with Your Parents”. Marla passed out the news brief which goes to every household but it can also be found on the city’s website. Socializing and avoiding isolation are the keys to positive aging and good health. There are free activities and outings and transportation is offered both to the center and to assist in members daily life.

**Grants, Sue Wagener** invited two of the grant recipients from last year to speak. Last year the APT awarded \$7100 in grants. Approximately \$1000 went to students and the rest to faculty. She welcomed Ben Davidson from the Theatre Department and Carolyn Bielski from the Art Department. **Carolyn Bielski received** a grant last spring for a day of screen printing. They brought in a speaker, Jay Ryan who is well known for his art and has received numerous accolades for his work combining his love of rock music and screen printing. Also local artist Janet Henderson came in and taught five different classes the process of screen printing. She showed us a presentation pictures from the day and also some examples of the student work that came out of the day. She shared the work of Bowen Wells who loved this so much that he is now working for the music department creating their posters. For the Ellie Burns Scholarship foundation he created the posters with his own time and money. Students got a

clear idea of how a talent and passion can be turned into a career. Carolyn thanked the APT for the opportunity. **Ben Davidson** received a grant last year that we provided jointly with the foundation for a large screen/projector for the RMA. This year he received a grant from the APT for a lap top to use for all of the power points, presentation and other technologies in the theatre. He stated that they use it almost every day in the auditorium. He thanked the APT. Sue also explained another grant that was given at the request of the Environmental Club that we provide more opportunities for recycling in the cafeteria so they worked together with a manufacturer to create a recycle container that would attach to the existing trash bins. A grant was also provided to LEAD to provide the DVD's that are presented in all freshman health classes.

**Library Parent Volunteer Program, Ana Kapoor** explained that she and Barb LaFasto headed up the effort to create a parent volunteer program in the library. The program began in September and currently has over 20 regular volunteers signed up for shifts during the lunch periods (4, 5 and 6). The volunteers help at the circulation desk, checking books in and out, collecting fines, answering questions and helping the students. As part of the program each volunteer participated in a one hour training session with Head Librarian, Kerry Littell. There are so many volunteers that each person is assigned a shift every other week. Ana stated that the students have been wonderful to work with.

**CROYA, Todd Nahigian** declared that this is a big month coming up for CROYA. Tonight is the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Donut Bowl football game with the Lake Forest Police Department followed by dinner. The retreat is coming up and as of now there is a wait list for girls but there are a few spaces open for boys. CROYA will as usual be helping with the town tree lighting ceremony the Friday after Thanksgiving. The Poinsettias sale has begun and orders are being taken through November 16<sup>th</sup>. There is a link for the order form on the calendar page on the website. Also, the students will be helping out with the Holiday Boutique for the Hospital which is being held at the Rec Center and CROYA is going to host and staff a hospitality area and also the Artisan Guild Holiday Boutique that is being held at the Rec Center. Both are rental opportunities that will go toward fund raising efforts. Also Todd also announced that they will be hiring a new staff member and the job description will be posted this month before Thanksgiving. He was asked about a rock group of freshman girls and said they are called GEM and they are having a CD launch party he believes on 11/11/11 and said they are incredible. They had a write up in Forest and Bluff.

**Kerry Littell** reminded everyone that Senior Commemoratives are due on November 14<sup>th</sup>. The form is on the school website. Also there is a link for people to send in general photos for use in the year book.

**Be True to Your School, Kathleen Hanson** thanked everyone for their support of the event. It was a great night with over 260 people attending. She thought the "scout" theme worked very well and especially the Booster fashion show with the students. Boosters sold over \$3000 worth of merchandise that night. A lot of help came from the staff. Thank you to Brad (Balonick) and Ben (Davidson) for helping with the lighting this year. The ticket price of \$75.00 pretty much covered expenses plus a small budget from the APT. The event raised over \$60,000 so approximately \$20,000 will go to the fund for completing the wireless and the rest will be split among the class treasuries. Linda Ganshirt stated that the goal was to

bring the community together and promote being a scout and that was definitely accomplished as well as raising a substantial amount of money for the class treasuries and the wireless project. Kathleen described some of the auction items for those who did not attend and discussed how popular the senior parking spots have been. She thanked the board for donating to the APT wine auction.

**Hospitality**, Linda Ganshirt gave a report on their behalf. The APT is bringing in dinner from Salerno's for the teachers next week during conferences. Our December board meeting will be a Holiday Brunch at Julie Thauer's home and invitation will be sent. Please respond so that the hospitality committee can plan the food. It is a late start that day so we will start at 9:30 or 9:45 so people can come straight after the kids leave for school.

**Parent Awareness. Susie Athenson** stated that this is a big week due to the Wendy Mogul presentation tonight in the RMA. Over 500 tickets have been sold but there will still be some available at the door. Also, this weekend is LEAD's fundraiser which is a 5k walk at Elawa farms on Sunday, November 6<sup>th</sup>. Registration begins at 9:00 a.m. and pre-registration is available on the LEAD website. **Streets Smarts Parents Teens and the Law** is next Wednesday, November 9<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. in the RMA. It is a panel discussion and this year we are fortunate to have a twenty year old woman who was involved in a drunk driving accident. Susie stated that she gave a presentation to the 8<sup>th</sup> grade classes and the students were mesmerized and her experience seemed to have a large impact on them. Chris Stride will also be part of the panel again. Teachers may offer extra credit for attending but it is up to each individual teacher.

**Jean Clewlow, Vice President** updated the board on the recent Liaison Committee Meeting on October 17th. Dr. Griffith gave an overview of what is going on with the high school and discussed future goals. The next meeting will be held on January 23, 2012. Jean explained that the APT will be manning a desk at Parent/Teacher Conferences from 12 noon to 8:00 p.m. She has sent an email to parents on volunteer data base who signed up saying they would help in general, hopefully she will get a good response, but if not, she will let the board know and ask for more volunteers.

**Treasurer, Jan Richman** stated that she emailed everyone the financials for October. She asked that we be aware that under Be True to Your School it looks like we have a huge amount of revenue but that is because we have not paid all of the expenses yet. Eventually that number will be brought back to \$3000 which is the amount that we budget for the event. Also, she received the Compilation Report from our accountants which was put together in order to file the tax returns which are done and going in the mail. If anyone would like to look at the report, Jan has copies. Jan reminded everyone to let her know if they need anything or have any questions.

**Recording Secretary, Michele Medzigian** asked for an approval of the October minutes. A motion was made and seconded. The minutes were approved.

**Grants, Sue Wagener** announced that we also granted money at the request of Janene Kessler, Band Director to help fund the North Shore Concert Band which is a group of North Shore adults and they are coming to play with our students in a concert tomorrow night. One of the members and the director of the band is Dr. Mallory Thompsom who is also the Director

of Bands for Northwestern University. She will be holding a clinic with our students and then directing several of the pieces tomorrow night. The unique thing about the North Shore Concert Band is that they are 100 adults from a variety of professions who volunteer as musicians.

**Foundation, Denise Bunning** announced that a mailing from the Foundation is going out to the entire community. She thanked the board for their support of the Foundation.

Meeting adjourned 10:45 a.m.