

**North Cross School  
Parents' Association Meeting Minutes  
March 16, 2017**

**Attendance:** Laura Arnold, Donna Batzel, Tonya Benson, Allison Bloomfield, Molly Bunrs, Susan Card, Julie Carey, Elise DeMoss, Kirsten Erwin, Cheryl Glose, Ashley Harlow, Maggie Lenkowski, Deena Lugar, Victoria McDade, Ellen McGimsey, Linda Morgan, Kate Parker, Marlo Pearson, Karen Pruitt, Gay Pollock, Kristina Sommer, Heather Taylor, Angela Thomas, Fiona Tower, Susan Wenk.

**Welcome:** Susan Card called the meeting to order at 12:05 p.m.

**President's Report:** Susan Card – Our big focus is on The Big Flea. This is a school and community event. Many people come to The Big Flea and support our school by purchasing items for their families. It's a big savings on clothes, shoes, books, toys, furniture, etc. The PA receives half of the proceeds; we made over \$15,000 last year. The PA needs you to volunteer and bring friends to volunteer! By volunteering you meet a lot of parents from all divisions in the school. The kids come to help and interact with the parent volunteers. I want to encourage everyone to talk to those parents in their childrens' classes who normally don't have an opportunity to volunteer for the school due to work schedules. In the next 10 days there are time slots that hopefully those parents can come and work an hour or two to help the school. There will be times during the weekend and in the evenings. Signs and posters will be going up around town and we will be advertising in the paper. There will be free child care after school for NCS parents who volunteer. The biggest benefit is being part of the NCS community and supporting our school. Zach and Elise have come up with a new system for the flow of traffic and for the checkout area. We have a lot more items this year. We need help this Saturday for moving furniture. Wednesday is the cutoff for picking up at homes and bringing items to the CAC. The gym will open Monday at 8:00 a.m. at drop off. Please sign up for time periods to work during this week. Working Saturday, April 1<sup>st</sup> is critical. We have looked at the math and figured how many people are needed at specific jobs; we will need 144 volunteers. Our faculty and staff do a great job helping out which cuts the number to 100. We will need checkers and baggers to get folks thru the line quickly and people to help move furniture/purchases. I am hoping everyone will participate and support Elise in all her hard work.

**Treasurer's Report:** Linda Morgan – Our current balance is \$711.35. We paid a \$250.00 deposit for the Jefferson Center for the prom; \$800.00 for the hockey game ticket sales; \$2,185.00 to Southern Concessions for Symposium and the faculty/staff luncheon; \$103.75 to Aztec for tables used at Symposium (we split the cost with the school); \$400.00 for DJ deposit for Prom; \$874.00 for the Middle School Shakespeare performance. We are expecting a Kroger check soon and will have Big Flea proceeds to deposit.

**Ellis Hall:** Fiona Tower- The winter term is over, and the spring trimester has begun. Spring, as usual, will be a very busy time in the Lower School. There will be special programs, field trips,

the fifth and sixth grade 'battle', and of course, a lot of teaching in the final eleven weeks. Here are several items of note:

- The stomach bug and flu hit the Lower School a bit hard this winter, but the teachers handled everything well. For any teachers who had to remain at home when they had the flu, the substitute teachers kept the curriculum moving forward. North Cross School, and the Lower School in particular, has a deep 'bench' of experienced substitute teachers.
- The fourth grade participated in the annual NAEP test for the Nation's Report Card on March 2<sup>nd</sup>. This is the second time in recent years that the fourth grade has participated. The test only took two hours and everything went well. The NAEP volunteers commented on the courtesy of the students afterward, telling us that it was notable.
- The student teachers from Liberty University continue to do well, assisting our teachers in Kindergarten, second, third, and fifth grade. Andrew Miller will have a student teacher to assist him with choral music beginning after the Spring Break.
- The Lower School completed another fire drill on the 16<sup>th</sup> of February and will conduct another in March. The drills were unannounced yet the building emptied in under 80 seconds. Five drills have been run so far, and they are still scheduled monthly until the end of the school year. In addition, a shelter-in-place drill and two lockdown drills have also been run.

### **Eaton Hall: Kristin Erwin**

On February 22, Victor Lamas met with the sixth-grade students to discuss plans for the Mock Battle that will be taking place in May. The current sixth-grade students did not have a chance to take part in a Mock Battle last year, so Mr. Lamas wanted to include them in this year's event. The level of enthusiasm is quite high.

Our 8<sup>th</sup>-grade students attended Symposium in the Upper School on Friday, February 24. This is always a wonderful event for the 8<sup>th</sup>-graders as they get to experience the range of Symposium speakers with the Upper School students for the first time.

Although he is not a current Middle School student, I would like to recognize the work of Charlie Lemon who completed his Eagle Scout Project on campus just before spring break began. I served as Charlie's site coordinator and watched his project come to fruition during several group workdays. Charlie's Eagle Scout Project focused on renovating the Matthew Brown Peace Park that stands on the edge of Cook Field at the intersection of our trail system. This park was originally designed as an outdoor gathering/educational site in memory of Matthew Brown, North Cross Class of 1997, and in recent years, it had started to become overgrown and in need of attention. For his project, Charlie removed the previous benches and replaced them with attractive new ones; leveled, spray-washed, and treated the stage platform; purchased a new sign; and cleaned the entire park area of undergrowth. Having worked with

Matthew Brown when he was a student in the Upper School, I am proud of Charlie's work to make this park into an attractive gathering place for future students, parents, and groups.

On March 24, we will host our second Middle School dance of the year. For our fall dance, we moved the venue to Lemon Dining Hall, which allowed the students more room to dance and to enjoy time with friends. This venue was strongly preferred by the students, and we plan to continue using it for future dances. This morning in advisory, the students voted on the theme of the dance, and this announcement will go out later in the day.

During the first two weeks of April, we have two field trips on our calendar:

On April 5, Robin Garrett, James Brown, and I will be taking the eighth-grade students to watch a production of *Romeo and Juliet* at the American Shakespeare Theater in Staunton, VA. For the last several years, Mrs. Garrett and I have tried to plan this trip but could not organize a time when an appropriate play was being performed. I am delighted that the company is performing a play this spring that our students read as part of their eighth-grade curriculum. I wish to offer my heartfelt appreciation to the Parents' Association for helping to fund this event.

On April 11, we will be taking a group of students to release our Trout-in-the-Classroom brook trout in the creek at Roaring Run. This trip is always both educational and exciting as the students who spent time throughout the fall and winter caring for the trout and the trout tank equipment have the opportunity to release the fish into the idyllic stream at Roaring Run. There are also tables set up to study the micro-invertebrates taken from the creek during the day-- as well as an opportunity to tour the historic iron furnace that stands in this park.

We are currently planning for three other field trips in April and May, and we are in the process of securing dates this week. The sixth-grade students will be traveling to Appomattox to tour the museum and battle field, and the 7<sup>th</sup>-grade students will be traveling to the D-Day Memorial in Bedford. Lindsey Meyer is also looking for a date to take the art students to the Taubman Museum. We already have a date secured (May 3) for the 7<sup>th</sup>-grade Watershed Study trip at the Catawba-VA Tech Sustainability Center.

Our spring Community Service trip is scheduled for April 26, and Mr. Hash has been contacting a number of service organizations in advance of this trip.

Thanks so much for all of your help and support!!

Ed

**Willis Hall:** Gay Pollock-

Recognizing faculty at Academic Awards assembly: These are most of the things Willis Hall faculty helped make happen in the winter term alone – Symposium, the ski club – including chaperoning the trips, the winter play Henry V, coaching basketball, coaching swimming, supporting the chess team, chaperoning students to Model UN in Philadelphia and Boston, planning a 2018 Global Studies trip to France, chaperoning 4 students to China last week, Pi Day, SAT tutoring, band and choral concerts and chaperoning all-district band and choir opportunities, the SCA winter dance, a Chinese new year celebration, off-campus field trips, and

we are missing a number of students today because two faculty members are in NYC with the yearbook and newspaper staffs.

**Coding:** Division Directors, Mrs. Deborah Jessie, Mr. Zack DeMoss, and Mrs. Amy Bagliani have met to discuss the idea and need to implement a coding aspect into the curriculum. The skill-set of coding (and computer science in general) is critical to a 21<sup>st</sup> century education, and we have begun plans to incorporate this into LS and MS curriculum to more fully support computer science initiatives/classes in the Upper School. Time will be devoted at the next faculty professional development session as well as time at our faculty professional development meetings at the end of the year to determine exact plans for this initiative.

**Internship Update:** There are six summer internships already set up and another four to six “in the works” that seem likely to be realized. Mr. Malcolm Douglas continues to make contacts and work on this important initiative.

We will also offer a new course with an adjunct faculty member, Mr. Joe Sweeney. This will be a one-term Caribbean History and Ecology course taught in the winter. It will culminate with a spring break trip to St. John, USVI. Additional fee for this course will be approximately \$3000. More information can be found at: [www.nationalparksexperience.org](http://www.nationalparksexperience.org).

**Community:** Kristina Sommer – The Faculty/Staff Appreciation Lunch held on Friday, February 17th was attended by all the faculty and staff! We had some parents and grandparents help watch the lower school children and Lindsey McKinnon graciously came and stayed for the entire lower school lunches.

The faculty and staff had a 2-hour professional development seminar that afternoon and the PA provided snacks and drinks during the break.

The third and final Faculty/Staff Appreciation Lunch will be held on Thursday, April 13th. The Lower School will be providing fruit/fruit trays and desserts along with tea and water. We will again need parents to help watch the lower school kids starting at 10:30 am. Next year Deborah Jessee has promised the Lower School children will get out at noon on those faculty days so there won't be a need for volunteers for their lunch period.

**SYMPOSIUM:** The following Friday, February 24th, the annual Symposium was held. A huge thank you goes out to all of you who showed up to help set up AND clean up the gymnasium for the luncheon. Mr. Kier was very appreciative of our hard work in making the Symposium a success!

Susan noted that there was an overabundance of food leftover from Symposium. It was brought to the Middle School dance that evening but we still had leftovers. The next morning Pam Moskal took 4 huge trays of sandwiches and vegetable trays to the Ronald McDonald House. It did not go to waste and was given to a great cause.

**Development:** - Cheryl Glose – A mailing is going out right now in Development. We have some envelopes still to stuff and need help to finish that. You can take the paperwork home to

stuff envelopes and have them back to development the next day. We need to have it done by Monday.

Elise: Big Flea – We had price captains last year for each section. These people are responsible for section organization and pricing. We will send you volunteers – it will not be all on you. We want you to make sure your area looks good and prices are done. The goal is to be organized and sorted by Tuesday, and priced by Thursday. I need captains for the purses/shoes section and are for stationary/office supplies. Shoes are organized by size and students have helped a lot in the past by binding the shoe pairs. Purses are just hung up on a pole. Molly Burns volunteered for shoes; Laura Arnold volunteered for stationary. Volunteers are also needed to pick up boxes. Call your local ABC store and ask to save boxes; they will tell you when to pick them up. We hope to use one of the courts to store the boxes. We are also in need of pant hangers and large bags. We are trying to get away from pinning pants to wire hangers. I have called many places to look for large bags and have had no luck so far; will try calling some other places. Emails will be sent out soon to class reps regarding sign-ups for volunteer times. Division Assistants can assist with the emails to classes but remember you can also go to the NCS online site under your class to send emails also.

If anyone has pick-up trucks for the 25<sup>th</sup> – we need help that day backing trucks to the shed to load items and then unload at the CAC. I am worried with the baseball and lacrosse teams being away that we may not have many volunteers that day. We will be working this Saturday from 8:00 to 1:00. We will reach out to the football team for help. Susan Card remarked that there will be announcements in the Upper School also. Coach Lawrence has been to the Upper School already to talk about the need for volunteers. Varsity movers will be there Saturday, April 1st to help move big ticket items. Thanks to Deena and her husband for all the help they have given. The sign-up genius shows the dates and hours. The hours are flexible so that if something comes up during your slotted time, don't worry. Please sign in when entering the gym for your shift so we can have an accurate account of hours worked. If you do not want to use the sign-up genius, you can call/email me to sign up. There was a discussion about the number of hours PA members should commit to volunteering over the next 10 days. It was decided a minimum of 6 hours should be required for the board members to volunteer. There was a raising of hands to agree to this decision; everyone agreed.

### **Admissions:**

**Re-enrollment** - We feel positive about our 2017-18 enrollment and we want to thank PA for its continued help with our re-enrollment efforts. 289 students out of 450 are re-enrolled for 2017-18. So, 161 students have yet to enroll. Grade reps, please encourage your grades to re-enroll.

**Admission Activity** - We are starting to see our admission inquiry activity increase, and people who have inquired are now filling out applications for admission. This Saturday, we have 14 students who have applied and are going through our testing process, and 9 more who have applied and will be tested on April 8th, so our acceptances will increase and families are anxious to know if their child will be accepted and able to enroll for 2017-18.

**Release of Waiting List** - On April 17th, we will be releasing people from our waiting list and will offer them acceptance. This will mean that a current student who has not been re-enrolled may lose their spot. Please encourage people who have not yet done so to re-enroll soon. We

will put out a notice from admission, but a heads up from PA and its grade representatives would be helpful.

**Downtown Dorm** - You will soon hear details (on Friday in Crossties) about North Cross' agreement with Wilson International LLC to provide dormitory rooms for 24 students beginning in the 2017-18 school year. The residences will be in the newly renovated Boxley Building downtown on Jefferson Street, a project of Hist:Re Partners LLC. Having a boarding presence has been part of our strategic plan and will enhance North Cross' image and attract both regional and international students who desire the educational experience we provide and the value colleges and universities see in a North Cross diploma. It will not expand the international program or number of international students at North Cross (our goal is to have 6 students in each grade from 9th - 12th), but will standardize the residential life experiences they will have as North Cross students.

**Students being tutored** - It was suggested that we follow up with students being tutored in our learning center and we have. Thank you for that suggestion.

Again, thank you for your support in re-enrollment and for the kind things you have been saying to others about our school to encourage them to apply. People who visit mention how you have spoken so positively about your North Cross experience. Please share what we have reported.

If you have any suggestions or questions, please share them with us.

David Lake

**Education**: Angela Thomas – **Deborah Jessee: Assistant Head of School for Academics** –

- Continuing classroom visits and faculty observations and evaluations.
- Continuing work with division directors on scheduling, curriculum and staffing needs for fall of 2017.
- Finalizing divisional IT needs and opportunities for fall 2017.
- Working with division directors, IT and Leigh Ann Hamlin to finalize April's faculty/staff professional development session. Topics will include coding and digital citizenship.

**Boosters**: Marlo Pearson – Boosters are planning on participating with The Big Flea. Scott, our President is active in getting teams to participate.

**FOTA**: Ellen McGimsey- Thanks to the PA for money donated from the ice hockey game night. Rebecca Sharkey is hoping to use that money for a new camera or sports lens. This can be used for the yearbook committee and her digital photography class.

I approached Sallie Lake last year about putting together an art show. This show will be titled "Behind Closed Doors". The art is from private collections in our NCS community. It will be a very different and interesting show. There will be sculptures, digital art, pen and ink drawings, etc. This show will be very eclectic. Early next week a push page will be going out to let you

know about the event. We have asked people what their piece means to them - why is it sentimental or a favorite. We will have these write-ups with the artwork. This is a really good opportunity for the students to see some different art.

**CrossWalk:** This summer we are offering tutoring in reading and math with Dawn Hollandsworth. This is a great program for anyone who might benefit from structure and routine during the summer.

Susan also mentioned the school as super summer programs that go thru most of the summer. Stephen Belderer organizes the camps. Kids can choose between many different camps such as art, band, sports, etc. These camps can be a great way to meet other students for those entering NCS for the first time in the fall.

**New Business:** Susan Card-

Susan Wenk: Helen Schmedtje is involved with the blood drive this year in the CAC. The SCA will be helping Helen all next Friday. She has done this for the Upper School for the last 2-3 years. Our students go over to give blood and any parents are welcome. We will be handing out flyers tomorrow morning at 7:30 and again next week as a reminder. Helen has put up posters with details/info with the exact times. The Virginia Blood Service donates to Carillion and Lewis Gale, so it stays local. We have collected 30-40 pints of blood in past years. Students have to be 16 to give blood and need a parents' signature for anyone under 18.

A reminder that May 5<sup>th</sup> is Red/White Day.

Laura Arnold: The Upper School senior class raises money each year for a senior gift to give to the school. We have raised \$3,200 so far. We have decided to host a date night/movie night for the Lower School. The Upper School students will be handing out flyers and will bill it as a night for parents to get out and have dinner – the high school students will take care of the kids for 2 ½ hours. We will let the Lower School reps know and will send out information later. The date is set for Friday, April 28<sup>th</sup>.

**Old Business:** There was an online vote in March, the day before spring break, approving funds to be given to the Middle School for the 8<sup>th</sup> grade class to attend the Shakespearean play in Staunton. The vote passed with 21 board members able to respond! Thank you for your help in getting that approved – the funds needed to be dispersed right away.

The minutes from the March 16<sup>th</sup> meeting were approved. The next meeting will be April 13, 2017. Please remember the April meeting will begin at 11:30 due to the 1:00 school dismissal for that day. Meeting adjourned at 1:03 p.m.