PTSA CO-PRESIDENTS’ MESSAGE
   Carla Chiotti & Terrie Cobb

Although the nation and world are still in turmoil, our education at Richland High School is proceeding with the excellence we are accustomed to. Teachers are teaching, students are learning, and PTSA is continuing with its activities. In this message, we will give you an update on a few items from last year and a preview of a couple of this year’s projects.

Last year Richland High School PTSA changed its tax-exempt status through the Internal Revenue Service. We are now a 501(c)3 organization. This designation allows donations to our organization to be tax deductible. We are now able to participate in the Albertson’s Community Partners Program. Please refer to the accompanying article in this newsletter which explains the program fully. If you would like additional information or would like a card sent to you, please contact D’ette Atkins at 628-0882 or DPAtkins30@aol.com.

This year we hope to have informational programs preceding each PTSA monthly board meeting. The October program was on career exploration and planning for education beyond high school. “How to Pay for Post-Secondary Education” is the topic of the November 20th meeting. In the January meeting, Principal Steve Neill will discuss results of standardized assessments and student learning goals in the “State of the School” presentation. All presentations will begin at 7:00 PM and will last about an hour. Please come! We welcome your ideas for informational program topics for the spring meetings. Please contact any one of the board members with your comments.

This fall our PTSA unit is participating in the PTA Reflections arts contest. Entries in the categories of visual arts, photography, music and literature are due on November 1st. Richland High School winners will compete in the city-wide contest, with those winners moving forward to compete in the Washington State PTA Reflections contest. We wish the best of luck to all our talented entrants.

Last, we would like to thank all of you who have become members of the PTSA. Our membership stands at over 370 members at this time. Your membership makes this newsletter possible, along with all of our PTSA activities. We couldn’t do it without you. Thank you!

Carla Chiotti  946-7217  cchiotti@owt.com
Terrie Cobb  946-0622  protac@owt.com
THE PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE
STEVE NEILL

In light of the September 11th tragedy, we are compelled to revisit what is near and dear to us in our lives. Just as the nation is pulling together and moving on, we must do the same. We will prevail and patience will be a virtue. Life at Richland High School seems to be getting back to normal. Our staff has done a tremendous job of making this time in history a “teaching moment.”

Graduation 2002 has been set for Saturday, June 8th, at 7:00 PM. The senior class decided on the time by casting ballots on October 8th & 9th. We are excited for the seniors but realize there is much work to be done prior to this date.

The Richland High Staff and Steering Committee have approved six goals for the Learning Improvement Plan. The goals are as follows:
1. Math: 25% improvement in WASL scores by the year 2004.
2. Reading: 25% improvement in WASL scores by the year 2004.
3. Culminating Project/Senior Project. This will be required by all seniors in the state of Washington by the year 2008.
5. School to Work Plan which will give students an opportunity to understand careers.
6. Communicating effectively with parents.

These on-going goals will be continuous and better prepare students for the future.

Richland High School WASL Scores continue to be well above the state average. Listed below is the percentage of students that met the standard.

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If your student is a junior and hasn’t received their WASL scores, they may pick them up in the counseling office.

As a staff we have initiated strategies such as lowering class sizes in freshmen and sophomore English classes, enhanced the Math curriculum with the adoption of the PAS-ME program that offers students an extended hours tutorial program. See the article in this newsletter for specifics on the PAS-ME program.

Finally, the weather is always a factor as we head into the winter months. I encourage you to have your students dress warmly and drive safely. In case of inclement weather, please listen to local radio stations for school delays or closures.

Early Release Schedule Change

The early release day schedules have worked nicely but we need to make one small change to accommodate Running Start and Tri-Tech students. Beginning with the early release day scheduled for November 8th & 9th the schedule will be: Day 1 - periods 0, 1, 2, 5, 6. Day 2 - periods 0, 3, 4.
ATTENDANCE OFFICE NOTE
Carrie Conley
Attendance Secretary
942-2527

The Attendance Office seems to be running smoother as the school year progresses. I appreciate all the phone calls and notes excusing your child the day of or the next school day. When this information is entered, the teachers are able to see when a student is ill or has an appointment.

Please call and excuse your child at any time. The voice mail message phone is on 24 hours a day. Leave the student’s name, the day and/or periods of absences, and a phone number so you can be reached if we need to contact you.

All notes are kept and filed. A phone number where you can be reached is always helpful. Sometimes call and verify signatures if you have any question on the absence.

SANDSTORM AWARD STORY
Amy Trang - Co-Editor, Sandstorm

The Sandstorm has again blown through the awards for high school publications, bringing home three top honors. The newspaper is a finalist for the Pacemaker Award, given by the National Scholastic Press Association. The Pacemaker Award is the highest honor for a high school publication. The competition was judged by a panel from the Boston Globe. From 215 All-American entries, only 40 were named as finalists. The Sandstorm was one of three from the Pacific Northwest.

This honor came in addition to the Sandstorm’s selection as All American for the fourth consecutive year. Six papers from the 2000-2001 school year were entered in the competition. Three consecutive papers from the beginning of the year as well as three consecutive papers from second semester were sent to the judges. “Congratulations on an informative and professional publication!” said the judge who reviewed the paper.

Recognition as a Pacemaker Finalist will be made in Boston Nov. 10. Sandstorm staffers, as well as three editors from the 2000-2001 staff, will travel to Boston for the award.

The third award the Sandstorm earned is the George Gallup Award from the Quill and Scroll Society, an international honor society for high school journalists. Sandstorm collected 945 of 1,000 possible points. The paper also achieved the International First Place Award with Superior Achievement.

PTSA MEMBERSHIP UPDATE
Heather Cleary
Laurie Williamson

As of October 15th, 375 parents, staff and students have joined the Richland High School PTSA. We are hoping to break the 400 member mark, so if you haven’t taken a moment to join, please do so right away. The last opportunity to join will be at conferences on November 7th and 8th.

For each membership, you will receive a PTSA membership card and a 2 for 1 card with savings offers from Bluewood, Dairy Queen, Starbucks, Samurai Sam’s, the Coffee Bean, Cinnabon, Taco Bell, Domino’s Pizza, Carl’s Jr. and Rollarena. Your student can drop your membership off in the RHS office, or you can mail it to RHS PTSA, 930 Long Ave. Richland, WA. 99352. We will mail your membership and 2 for 1 cards to you, or you can pick them up during conferences.

Each membership we sell is critical to keeping the Richland High School PTSA up and running. Our membership drive is one of the few ways the PTSA raises money. The primary use of the membership dollars is to fund this newsletter coming to your home each month keeping communications open between the school and each student’s home.

We appreciate all those who made the effort to join our PTSA and we thank you for continuing to support Richland High School PTSA.
Mary Kaye Hergert, Career Specialist; John Richardson, RHS Counselor; and Kathy Kautzky, RHS Counselor, spoke at the information meeting preceding the October 16th PTSA board meeting. The topic was “Beyond High School”. Ms. Hergert began by quoting statistics from the Higher Education Coordination Board. Only 21% of students who begin post-secondary education programs complete their program. The two most common reasons for this failure are: 1) students are not prepared for the educational rigors of the program and, 2) students lack an educational plan. The RHS Career Pathways and School to Work Programs are designed to help remedy these problems. Beginning in the 9th grade, students are encouraged to explore possible careers of interest and match their choice to appropriate post-secondary training before their senior year.

The counselors presented several hints for students interested in attending 4-year colleges. Preparation for college begins in 9th grade. Colleges and scholarships look at grades for the first three years of high school to determine admission. School activities, volunteer work, awards, and core classes are also important, especially if applying for scholarships and competitive schools or programs. The SAT should be taken in the spring of the junior year, so it can be retaken if necessary. Some colleges now offer alternative admission through interview and portfolio for students who are not accepted during the regular admission process.

Ms. Hergert publishes a monthly newsletter for RHS students listing volunteer opportunities, openings for part-time employment, college visitations at RHS, and other college and scholarship news. She also runs the Career Center and organizes workshops on how to find career information, complete college applications, and do scholarship searches.

Copies of the handouts from the meeting, including a year-to-year guide for student career exploration and planning, are available at the Counseling Center.

OTHER IMPORTANT DATES

9th Grade
- Parent night in Library 6:30 PM
- 11/14 - Drug & Alcohol information
- 12/19 - Career Exploration
- Iowa Test of Educational Development 4/22-5/10

10th Grade
- Washington Assessment Student Learning (WASL) 4/22 - 5/10
- Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) 11/3, 12/1, 1/26, 3/16, 5/4 and 6/1
- ACT 12/8, 2/9, 4/6 and 6/8

11th Grade
- ACT 12/8, 2/9, 4/6 and 6/8
- SAT 11/3, 12/1, 1/26, 3/16, 5/4 and 6/1
- “Every 15 minutes” assembly for seniors and their parents - RHS Auditorium - 10:00 AM November 14th.

Every 15 Minutes is a two-day program designed to target high school seniors. Richland Police Officers meet with the students and discuss topics related to drinking, driving, and the responsibilities of making mature decisions when lives are at stake. November 13th, students will be “whited-out” every 15 minutes to signify that someone dies every 15 minutes in the United States due to an alcohol related accident. The students, who were “whited-out”, will then spend that night at a local motel and will not have contact with friends or family as if they had died. The next day, November 14th, these seniors will put on an assembly at 10:00 am for their follow seniors and any parents that wish to attend.

NEED HELP WITH ODD JOBS?

Richland High School Wind Ensemble is in need of odd jobs to earn money. Yard work, house work, window washing, ironing, etc. are just a few of those “put off until tomorrow” jobs they can do for you. In turn, your payment will help them go to Nashville in April, 2002, for the National Music Educators National Conference. The ensemble was chosen from 150 application recordings from around the nation to perform at this event. Way to go Wind Ensemble! If you would like to help please call Job Hotline at 946-8944. CALL TODAY!
NOVEMBER PTSA PROGRAM
Carla Chiotti

“How to Pay for Post Secondary Education” will be the topic of the November PTSA program. It will be presented at 7:00 PM on November 20th in the RHS Library. Diverse sources of funding will be discussed, including scholarships, federal loans, pre-paid tuition programs, and tax-free savings plans.

The speakers will be: Mary Kaye Hergert, RHS Career Specialist, speaking on resources available at RHS; Margaret Novy, an expert on Federal Financial Aid Programs; Denise Fry, Educational Representative for the Washington State pre-paid tuition program (GET program); and Katayun Razagh-Zadeh of Salomon Smith Barney speaking on 529 College Savings Plans. After their presentations, the speakers will be available to answer questions. The program will last about one hour.

Richland School District News
Steve Aagaard

Facilities Upgrades
A number of important facilities upgrades have been completed in recent months. The District has spent $1.3 million of Capital Projects money to replace a number of roofs at Richland High, Hanford High, Hanford Middle, Lewis & Clark, Marcus Whitman and Sacajawea. Over $500,000 has been spent to upgrade the HVAC systems at Jefferson, Tapteal and Badger Mountain Elementary Schools. The District is currently reviewing the need to improve the electrical systems and increase electrical capacity at a number of buildings.

Impact of Vitrification Plant
The Department of Energy’s new vitrification plant is expected to impact the community and the District. Peak employment (and enrollment) years will be 2003 to 2005 when direct project employment will stay above 4,000. It will drop sharply after that, getting down to 200 in the year 2011. An increase of 500 students is forecast for the District this year due to the new plant, although very few have shown up so far. The District will closely monitor the situation. Any large enrollment increases will be handled by installing portables.

PAS-ME PROGRAM
Jacque Ward - Coordinator

Attention Parents! PAS-ME (Practice After School for Math Enhancement) is a new program implemented this year to help all Richland High School students in mathematics. The purpose of the program is to give students at all levels extra help with their math assignments. Tutoring is available for all students, those who are having difficulty in class, those studying for an upcoming test, or those just wanting to complete their class assignments with friends around. Drop by after school or when you complete your sports practice. It is a great way to get your homework finished.

Although it is a voluntary program, teachers will refer some students to the program. In this case, you will be notified that your student is struggling and would benefit from attending. We ask your support in making sure your student attends. The success of the program depends on the cooperation of the parents, teachers, and students.

Tutoring is available Monday through Thursday from 3:00 PM till 8:30 PM in room 404. A math teacher on staff at Richland High School will be there to answer your questions. As a math staff, we are excited about the program and the opportunity it gives our students for success. Since beginning on September 10, 2001, 345 students have been included in PAS-ME tutoring. We encourage you to make your student a part of our new program at Richland High School. If you have any questions, contact Dave True, Renee DeBuigne, or your student’s math teacher.
HIV/AIDS PARENT PREVIEW
Mary Kincaid - School Nurse

Parents Preview Program for the HIV/AIDS Education Program for grades 9th - 12th will take place on Thursday, November 15, 2001 at Chief Joseph Middle School. The video presentation for grades 9-12 will begin at 7:00 PM. Student HIV/AIDS programs will take place at various times throughout the school year in each building. State law mandates student instruction for grades 5-12. Parents may excuse their students for the instruction but the parents must first preview the education program. RHS parents may call Mary Kincaid, School Nurse, at 942-2500, for more information.

Drug & Alcohol Awareness
Vicki Piippo

This article appeared in DRIVEN magazine, Fall 1998, by Scott Swartzwelder, Ph.D.

BRAIN 101
Not long ago, most people believed that the brain was virtually finished developing soon after birth, and that there was little change until aging occurred. However, the newest research shows that the brain continues to develop throughout childhood and adolescence until approximately age 20.

The developing brain is different from the adult brain in its ability to change in response to experience. For example, the young brain appears to be "built to learn". This uniqueness of the adolescent brain creates great opportunities.

However, there's a darker side. For 15 years, my laboratory group at the Duke University and Durham Veterans Administration Medical Centers has been examining the effects of alcohol on the brain. Our published research shows that the brain responds to alcohol differently during adolescence than during adulthood. In some ways alcohol is more powerful, while in other ways it is less powerful. These differences spell bad news when it comes to teen drinking and driving.

In experiments studying brain circuits in rats, we compared the effects of alcohol on the function of a brain chemical that is critical for mental function. Alcohol impaired the sensitivity of the brain to this chemical much more in adolescents than in adults. In the adolescent brain, this activity was impaired by the equivalent of about one drink. When it comes to learning, adolescent animals were impaired by much lower doses of alcohol than adults.

Our studies on people also produced striking results. Because of the 21 minimum drinking age law, we studied people ages 21-29. Alcohol impaired learning much more in 21-24 year-olds than in those just a few years older at 25-29. During young adulthood, alcohol is a very potent drug, and it interferes with memory formation. The effects might be even more striking in teens.

But the more we learned, the more interesting the findings became. Again, using animal models, we found that high doses of alcohol were much less sedative in adolescents than in adults. Adolescents were less likely to be put to sleep by alcohol and when they did go to sleep, they slept for much less time. Thus, alcohol may make adolescents less sleepy than adults.

But this does not mean that it's safer for teens to drink and drive than for adults. The opposite probably is true. The adolescent may be able to drink more than an adult before becoming sleepy enough to stop, but meanwhile she is further impairing mental functions important for safe driving. Just because you can get behind the wheel doesn't mean you should. The brain functions that control sleepiness aren't the same ones that control judgement and decision making. A teen may stay awake enough to drive after drinking, but still make very bad decisions about how to drive or whether to drive in the first place.

Our teens need to know what the scientific research clearly suggests: that adolescents have exactly the wrong pattern of sensitivities to alcohol. It's not enough to tell young people "don't drink because we say so," and they won't accept scare tactics that aren't based on established facts. But a conversation about how unique their brains are could be lifesaving - for themselves and everyone else on our roads.

For more information about this subject, check out MADD's website and you can download these videos: Underage Drinking Video PSAs; Government Survey Shows Action Needed on Underage Drinking; Zero Tolerance & Young Drivers.
COMMUNITY PARTNERS CARDS
D’ette Atkins

Albertson’s extended its community support in 1997 by creating and implementing the Community Partners Card Program - a simple and innovative fund-raising program. This card represents a true partnership between Albertson’s, the community, and youth-oriented, non-profit organizations (schools pre-12, churches and organizations directly benefiting youth). As supporters of qualifying non-profit organizations buy groceries, they also help their organizations. At the end of each fiscal quarter, the supporters’ purchases are totaled, the percentage is calculated, and Albertson’s forwards the earned contribution to the organization, up to a maximum of $1,800 per calendar quarter. When members of participating organizations, or friends and family, stop at their neighborhood Albertson’s to pick up dinner, rent a movie or fill a prescription, they’re helping to strengthen youth programs in their community.

To obtain an Albertson’s Community Partner program card or if you need an extra card for yourself or relatives or if you have a question regarding the program, please contact D’ette Atkins at 628-0882.

Richland High School PTSA Membership form
Return to:
Richland High School PTSA
930 Long Ave.
Richland, WA 99352
(clip and return this portion)

Please PRINT all the information required and check ONE or MORE boxes below:

NAME(S) __________________________________________________________________________
ADDRESS __________________________________________________________________________
E-MAIL ADDRESS (Optional) __________________________________________________________
HOME PHONE ________________________________________

☐ $11 One parent or staff membership. I have included my check to PTSA for $11.
☐ $20 Couple membership (2 discount cards). I have included my check to PTSA for $20.
☐ $8 Student membership. I have included my check to PTSA for $8.

PARENTS-Please check one or more of the boxes below if you have any interest in volunteer opportunities.

☐ Staff Appreciation  ☐ ASB Elections  ☐ Senior Party
☐ Hospitality/Food Donation  ☐ Legislation  ☐ Reflections
☐ Newsletter Assembly
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