



# PIONEER WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION OF WESTERN RESERVE ACADEMY

Volume 18 Issue 3

Newsletter

Spring 2013

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## UPCOMING PWA EVENTS

May 11  
A Toast to Spring  
Pierce House

May 20-23  
Exam Week Coffee  
WRap

August 11  
Back to School BBQ  
Hockey Pond

### Greetings from the PWA President

Dear Friends,

The pioneer spirit is alive and well within the Pioneer Women's Association! Over the past year, you have lived up to our name in extraordinary ways. Each of you, in your own unique way, made the Reserve experience more engaging, meaningful, fun, and memorable for those we support, especially students. Your contributions mattered greatly, and the entire Reserve community thanks you!



You respected the past, while exploring new frontiers. In stretching yourselves, you expanded the limits of what we could accomplish together. Student, parent, and alumni participation in PWA-sponsored activities soared. The entire community raved about the thoughtfully planned parties, dances, feeds, concessions, allocations, dialogues, newsletters, and the inaugural book club and WRA Faculty & Staff Appreciation Breakfast.

Our pioneering heritage will take us into the future, as we showcase the 32nd and *final* Antiques Festival of Western Reserve Academy this Labor Day. The Antiques Festival has truly been a "labor of love" – a unifying event that calls for support from every corner of the Reserve community. Please join us, as we come together to celebrate the Festival's grand finale, and trail blaze new paths to our future. We welcome incoming President Mary Sprunt and the team who will lead us forward.

WRA contributes to our success, and we are grateful for the support of the WRA Board of Trustees, and the entire WRA Faculty and Staff, especially Head of School Chris Burner, Fran McHugh, Kate Mueller, Margaret Cunningham, Justin Zimmerman, John Tortelli, Cherie Thomas, Nancy McClaine, Mike Morris, Herb Haller, Holly McDonough, Tom Vince, Alan Doe, Anne Sheppard, Jeff Neill, Lisa Sabol, Greta Rothman, Nancy Hovan, Lois Howell, Eva FitzGerald, Tom Moore, Val Ritzert, Scott Sonders and colleagues. A very special thank you goes to Tracy Schooner, our communications guru and honorary Pioneer Woman.

We are grateful to President Tom Sovich and the pioneering men of the Dads Club for their commitment to working together to fulfill our respective missions. PWA is delighted to accept the Dads Club's invitation to co-host the Family Party, a highlight of Parents' Weekend in October. Partnering with the Dads to serve the Reserve community, while preserving the independence of our distinct organizations, is full of exciting possibilities.

Finally, a heart full of thanks goes to you, dear friends and fellow Pioneer Women near and far, for all you have given of your time, talents, and treasures. It has been a privilege to serve with you. You embody the enduring legacy of the Pioneer Women's Association: Love and loyalty to Western Reserve Academy, a remarkable family of families.

With deep respect, gratitude, and affection, Karin

Karin Stifler, PWA President  
*(Nate '09, Colin '10 & Ryan '15)*



## *From the Desk of Head of School Christopher D. Burner '80*

April 2013

Dear Pioneer Women's Association,



There are many reminders that spring is here. Two particularly memorable reminders for me are the seniors asking about "senior privileges" for the remainder of the school year and the Pioneer Women hosting the spring party for parents at Pierce House. Of course, there are many other memorable events such as concerts, senior recitals, opportunities to return outdoors for athletic events, the "moving up" ceremony for students in the Chapel and, of course, Senior Celebration and graduation.

The Pioneer Women's Association is involved in and supports many of the important events at Western Reserve Academy. For many years, the Pioneer Women have opened the school year with the Antiques Festival. As I indicated in an earlier letter, this will be the final Antiques Festival. I look forward to a successful and enjoyable Antiques Festival and, I know, the Pioneer Women will find other areas for their talents and deep interest in the school and support of the students.

This has been an enjoyable and rewarding school year. The senior class has demonstrated great unity, leadership and spirit. I look forward to a successful spring and graduation, particularly for the seniors and their parents. I also anticipate continued growth and development of all the students.

Alison and I look forward to joining you at Pierce House for the Toast to Spring. Best wishes to you and your families for a successful and enjoyable spring. I hope to see you on campus.

Sincerely,

Christopher D. Burner  
Head of School

## "Green and White" Ties to Tradition *Marching Forward but Looking Back*



Leaves are budding and gardens are waking so that must mean the academic year has made its final turn toward the finish line and graduation can't be too far off. But if you think young men and women have enjoyed commencement exercises at WRA since the prep academy began in 1826, you are wrong!

In the early years of Western Reserve College and Academy, the high school graduates were simply expected to matriculate to the College or some other institute of secondary education, without ceremony. It wasn't until 1883, when Western Reserve College moved to Cleveland (now Case Western Reserve University) leaving Western Reserve Academy in the current Hudson location, that Principal Newton B. Hobart introduced the first commencement ceremony mirroring the early graduations of the college. Ceremonies were in the Chapel and included musical and oratorical participation by most of the students.

WRA archivist and historian Tom Vince and I were giddy with delight when we stumbled upon the tiny program from the first commencement exercises. At only about 2" x 5" it is packed with details of the student readings and performances. We were surprised to learn the first and many subsequent commencements were on Wednesday evenings at 7 p.m. and, always, in the Chapel.

The first graduation photo on record dates from 1922 when WRA was under the watch of principal Homer O. Sluss (Class of 1891). The 13 boys and seven girls look like an early rendering of our graduates today—blazers, ties, white pants and boutonnieres for the boys and white dresses and flowers for the girls. While hemlines and hairstyles have run the gamut in the 92 years since, these basic traditions of clothing and flowers have held fast.

*Bagpipes, a procession, diplomas, book signing and cigars*—sounds like the graduations of the most recent 31 years. Beginning with his first year as Headmaster Dr. Henry E. (Skip) Flanagan Jr. shook up the graduation traditions by adding some of his own. Appalled that family participation in the Chapel was limited due to the number of seats (each graduate was only allowed to invite four guests!), Skip moved the ceremony outside to the lawn in front of the Chapel, with virtually unlimited seating, where it could be a "family & friends" celebration. (Luckily, there have been only two graduations since that were moved to the auditorium or the gymnasium due to inclement weather.)

Reminiscing about Skip's earliest WRA graduations, Skip's wife Britt reflects that, "*Moving outside made the graduation evolve into a young alumni event. Because so many recent alumni had dear friends who were graduating, they knew that they could be there for this event if it was outside. What a spectacular experience for faculty and administrators to see so many successful*

*graduates return for this ceremony! In a sense, it was a mini-reunion for the recent college alumni. Additionally, this became an event for the town and older alumni, who would bring their kids in anticipation of applying to the school. The school-town relationship was enhanced and it was always delightful to see people from town.*"

In his effort to emphasize the rich traditions at WRA, Skip studied the archives and revised the graduation invitation and diploma styles to copy those from the 19th century. While you might wonder about the unique appearance of our invitation (now a combination invitation and announcement), rest assured that its basic design is deeply connected to the past. In Skip's words, this was one of his numerous efforts to "*herald the historic strength of the school.*"

In respect to the bagpipes, Britt adds that, "*Skip had always been a fan of the unique and haunting sounds of the bagpipe and felt they added a unique elevation to ceremonial events so he added them to the graduation procession.*" Bagpipes still lead the Head of School and an impressive assembly of dignitaries, faculty and seniors on a grand procession from the library to the Chapel. Upon reaching the commencement audience in front of the Chapel, the seniors and alumni set up in a striking gauntlet through which all the others pass on their way to the stage.

*Continued on Page 4*

## "Ties to Tradition" continued

In 2000, Skip introduced yet another graduation tradition . . . signing out in the "big book." According to Fran McHugh, Assistant to the Head of School, the 'book signing' was a tradition begun by Skip as a way to do something new at the start of the millennium. "Skip bought the beautiful book and we had Larry Gabler (our go-to person for this art) calligraph the WRA seal, the name of the school and sections for each class. Each graduating senior signs their name and hometown in the book after receiving their diploma."



Graduation concludes, as it has for the 31 years of outdoor ceremonies, when the graduates and other alumni circle the flagpole for a stirring rendition of the school's alma mater and a smoke! Yes, that's right, most graduates light up a big fat cigar, just as WRA graduates have done for an immeasurable number of years. "Circling the flagpole and singing the alma mater for graduates and any alumni at the event makes the 'smoke' tradition a more pervasively enjoyed event," according to Britt. But she adds that cigar smoking was probably a part of the ceremony for years, and definitely not attributable to Skip who is sickened by the smell!

The stogies still appear from boxes and out of breast pockets as if on cue. The smoke rises each year as if to clinch the deal . . . the newest class of graduates is poised to lift off!

*By Nancy Forhan (Chris '08, Annie '10,  
Allison '12 & Sarah '15)*



**Pioneer Women**  
Western Reserve Academy  
115 College Street  
Hudson, Ohio 44236

## A Special Message for Our "Graduating" Pioneer Women

Congratulations, your student is graduating! The next few weeks will brim with excitement as you participate in Western Reserve Academy's unforgettable graduation traditions. Cherish every moment.

Your student isn't the only one starting a new life chapter—you are too. Please remember that our friendship doesn't end here. As an alumni parent, you will always be welcomed home to Reserve and the Pioneer Women's Association.

A very special thank you goes to certain Pioneer Women who selflessly devoted themselves to PWA and WRA these past years. You have been important leaders within PWA, and have left your mark on this close-knit community:

Neena Bains, Kellie Brown, Jennifer Cartellone, Joan Clark, Barbara Fausnight, Jackie Fisher, Susan Gaspar, Marsha McGill, Cherri Miller, Kim Sottler-Norton, Betty Qadri, Kathy Schiciano, Michelle Schultz, Ana Silva, Pat Spitzer.

*"There are no goodbyes for us.  
Wherever you are, you will always  
be in my heart."*

~ Mahatma Gandhi

Congratulations, and thank you  
from our hearts to yours,

Your Friends  
and Fellow Pioneer Women

## PWA Mom's Network Gathering



The PWA Mom's Network held their third gathering of the year at historic Seymour House. Two of the "finer things in life" were brought to life by guest speakers Kathy Johnson and Angela Gotthardt. Kathy helped us to appreciate art, not only for its beauty but as a collection or investment item. She helped us to understand what original pieces look like and possible ways to detect reproductions. Angela delved into the world of fine teas and showcased different types of teas as well as proper brewing techniques. After the presentations, everyone was able to sample several different types of teas paired with some sweets. There were plenty of friendly conversations as we sat in the beautiful rooms at Seymour. Thanks to all who attended, it was especially nice to see some new faces! We will have one last gathering of the year with the details to be announced soon. Please come and bring a friend who might not be familiar with our programs.



L to R: Kathy Johnson & Angela Gotthardt



By Brenda Depew (Nathaniel '08, Emily '10, Caroline '12 & Jonathan '14) & Carol Morgan (Evan '15 & Gracie '16)

Photos courtesy of Karin Stifler



L to R: Shelley Sedlacek, Laura Gasbarro, Ellen Malson, Angela Gotthardt & Linda Gaines



L to R: Brenda Depew & Carol Morgan

The 2013 Prom Committee is working diligently to put together a memorable prom experience packed with good food, great friends and a lot of fun. This year's prom will be held at the *House of Blues* located in the historic downtown Woolworth building in the East Fourth Street district of Cleveland. The event will begin with a variety of hors d'oeuvres and 'mocktails', followed by a stylish dinner buffet. The after-dinner entertainment was hand-picked by the students and will be performed by DJ mash-up artist *Five and a Dime*. After hours of dancing and socializing the students will exit *House of Blues*, walk across the unique and stylish East Fourth Street, and enter the *Corner Alley* for After Prom. While at the *Corner Alley*, the students will have access to 16 lanes of upscale bowling, billiards, foosball, karaoke a photo booth and much more. A custom breakfast buffet along with snacks will be provided at the *Corner Alley*. The students will depart downtown Cleveland at 2 a.m. arriving back at WRA between 2:30 and 3 a.m., taking with them a custom *House of Blues/WRA 2013 Prom* T-shirt and many wonderful memories as they make their way home.

By Kellie Brown (Audrey '13)

CCIS Update: The January and February meetings fed off of each other nicely and reinforced some of the same parenting points that can help us better interact with our children. The January meeting, held at Laurel School, topic and speaker were:

### *Managing Risk: Talking with Your Teenager About Alcohol, Drugs and Sex*

Lisa Damour, Ph.D. consulting Psychologist and Director for the Research on Girls

Here are a few guidelines for talking with your teenager:

- **Know your teenager** – trust in your knowledge of your child.
- **Approach these conversations from the standpoint of adoring, respecting, and trusting your teenager** – Teens may think, “if you already think that I’ll do that then I might as well do it.” Come from a love and trust viewpoint.
- **Know that you are competing with a wide variety of other sources of information** – friends, Internet, videos etc. . . Draw the distinction because there is a huge gap between interest and actually doing it.
- **Always emphasize the actual risk of drinking, drugs and sex – not the risks of getting caught** – My concern is your safety and the others with you.
  - ◇ Drinking: You get sick, judgment gets comprised, the alcohol content in different drinks.
  - ◇ Drugs: It’s not legal – if they have some, it is often from sketchy sources (what’s in it?) drug conviction is a felony.
  - ◇ Sex: STD, pregnancy, broken heart.
- **State your beliefs** – Admit your own fears when you’re at the table.
- **Strategize with your teen about how they will manage invitations to drink, do drugs, have sex.** Give them the OK that it’s OK not to engage in this when they say “this is crazy, right?” Yes it is, but do not vilify the kids (your own kids or their friends) because it will shut them down. Tell your kids to call you if they are uncomfortable, no questions asked. Tell them to make you the bad guy and that they can say that they must be home by a certain time.
- **Think in advance about how you want to handle questions about your past behavior**
- **Expect to conclude these conversations feeling unsure that you have accomplished anything** – They may not say anything but they listen – trust in them.
- **Other information regarding these guidelines can be found at [drlisadamour.com](http://drlisadamour.com)**

Amy Speidel, CCDI was the speaker at the February meeting held at Ruffing Montessori. Her talk focused on:

- **Self Regulation (meaning managing our own thoughts, feelings, and actions)** and how this is the cornerstone of a successful life. When you are stressed you cannot achieve the higher brain state necessary to problem solve. Thus you need a **STAR!**
- **STAR – Stop, Take a Breath, and Relax**

By Margaret Haller (Kurt '15)

## A Conversation with Wanda Boesch



Wanda Boesch brought her energy, experience and enthusiasm to WRA in August 2012 after teaching in her native Honduras and in Dallas, Texas. At WRA she teaches physics, serves as Chair of the Science Department, and lives with her daughter, Jimena, in Cartwright Dorm. She carved time out one recent morning to sit down with PWA and tell us about what drew her to physics, to teaching and to WRA.

### *How did you choose physics?*

I grew up in Honduras, where my dad was an engineer for Dole Foods, and my mom was an accountant. I went to Dickinson College, and wasn't sure what I wanted to major in. At first I took political science, and I thought, "OK, not for me!" Then, I took economics—same thing! I liked the math but the subject didn't inspire me. Sophomore year, you had to take science, and I had always been good at physics, so I took that. It was so engaging, so interesting! I knew, "this is what I'll major in. This is what I want."

My dad was happy, but my mom was like, 'What are you going to do with that?' (*Laughs*).

### *How did you get into teaching?*

After college, I went back to Honduras and they hired me right away to work at Dole. I loved my job in the operations department—I worked in the pineapple division, doing analyses, using mathematics, meeting all kinds of people. It was a good experience. Then they had me

move down to southern Honduras to start a cantaloupe project. There, I met my future husband and fell in love. Then, they wanted me to transfer to another country, and I said, "Nope, I'm staying here." After I got married, I started teaching at a new international bilingual school. I gave it a try. That was in 2001. The first day I started teaching, I knew: "Yep, this is it. This is what I want to do with the rest of my life."

### *What drew you to it so much?*

The interactions you have with the students. The way they get inspired makes you feel good about yourself. I like interacting with the kids, and that I can motivate them. The students make your day, honestly.

### *Why did you choose WRA?*

Last year, I was teaching in Dallas, where I also got my master's degree. I was looking, and I had a series of interviews all over the country. Just before I came here I had an interview in New York, one in Nashville, and two in Dallas. Just as I stepped out of the car here, I got that inner gut feeling: I thought, this place has good juju! I got a good vibe, you might say. I knew WRA would be one of the places I would consider seriously. Then, after meeting the people from the Science Department, it really made me want to come here. I got to meet some of the kids, too, and thought that they were really cool kids.

### *In Dallas, you taught at a day school. How is a boarding school different?*

In a private day school, the day ends at 5 to 5:30 p.m. You go home and have your personal life, at home. Here, you're here all the time, and I really like it. For me, as

a widow and single mom, it really works. Kids can go to my apartment, and I can be available to help them at hours that I couldn't do at other schools. Kids come at 10 p.m. sometimes, and I like that I can provide that help to them.

### *You already have a reputation as a great explainer of tough concepts. How do you know how to explain things?*

I try to explain to kids in a way that they can relate to. They experience physics every single day, but they don't know that they are experiencing physics. For example, circular motion: When you're in a car and you go around a curve, why do you think your body does this? (*Leans to one side*). Your body is going in a straight line and wants to keep going in a straight line, but the car is turning, so what do you think your body is going to do?

### *There's a lot of math in physics; how do you get to that?*

I really like to get into the deeper meaning, the calculations and math, and I like to do that once it's related to something they have felt before. For example, to explain a force body diagram, I might talk about why you get that really weird feeling when you're going up and down in an elevator. The kids are like, "Ohhh, now I get it!"

Sometimes books overcomplicate it. I feel they need to get the core of it first, before they get the deeper ideas. I go for the simple idea and then work my way in. I'm not a big fan of memorizing. I like to tell the kids, "Equations, you can get them anywhere. But if you don't know how to use them, that's not useful."

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## A Conversation with Wanda Boesch continued

*How does your daughter, Jimena, (age 9) like living in Ohio and at WRA?*

She misses my parents, who are in Dallas, but she loves living on campus! We live in Cartwright with 14 senior girls. She's an only kid and she feels like she has 14 big sisters. I love it, too. I asked her if she wanted to move to a faculty house, and she said, "No, can we just stay here?"

*Many people consider that science is all about facts, but you've mentioned that you like to spike students' imagination. Do science and creativity go together?*

Oh, YES, they do! Kids need to be creative in all classes. In science and engineering you have to do work, but you can also be really creative.

I really like kids being creative in the way they solve problems. I love it when a kid does a non-normal way of solving a problem, but uses good concepts to do it.

*Any other examples?*

Sure! For example, my ECHO module now is engineering, and the kids are building a piece of furniture that's strong enough to sit on, out of cardboard. I give each of them a bunch of cardboard and

one roll of duct tape—and I tell them, "It's really best if you don't use the duct tape." They need to know about support, stress fractures, math, scale drawings—all kinds of things. But it's really creative, and they come up with all kinds of nifty stuff.

We have the 2.5 hour module, and they're like, "It's over? Already? Mrs. Boesch, can you come in on Friday so we can work more?" And I come in from 6 to 8 in the evening and they work more. We're going to display the furniture in Wilson.

*Does science integrate well with other subjects?*

Art works so well with science and math. You can incorporate science into all course areas. For a camp this summer Mr. DiBiase asked me if I could incorporate science related to the Civil War, and I said, "Heck yeah! I can do that!"

*Do you have any advice if a student is struggling with a difficult physics problem?*

Well, first, have you even read the question? Have you at least tried to do it? How long have you tried? Try all the concepts you know. Draw pictures! Make graphs! Try different ways to get at the answer.

And if you can't get it, it's fine. I like to say we're not born knowing everything. Those obstacles teach you stuff. E-mail your teacher, or ask the question next day in class. If you didn't get it, it's usually what's bothering everyone.

*Do you think it's important to encourage women in science?*

Oh, YES, I do! For some reason some girls have this stereotypical idea, thinking that we only do English and history. I say, "What? No!" Girls have so much to offer, and lots of girls are really good at science. At my previous school, I was teaching engineering, and when I started teaching the class it had no girls, just 15 boys. I thought, "OK, I'm going to make this interesting." Next year, I had three girls. By the time I left, half the class was girls.

*Is there anything you'd like to tell parents?*

I'd like to tell WRA parents that they should be proud of their kids. These are awesome kids, extremely motivated kids. They care about academics. They are very respectful kids, and that comes from the home. I think parents are doing a great job raising them.

By Elizabeth Culotta (Peter '15)

## Seeking Gently Used Reserve Wear

Are your students growing? Please consider donating your current or former student's out-grown kilts, blazers (especially Reserve Green), blouses, ties, sweaters, khakis, white graduation slacks, or spirit wear to our annual Used Kilt & Blazer Sale. The sale is once a year, at registration in August, but donations may be dropped off all year round with Eva at the Metcalf Bookstore during normal hours. All proceeds go towards enriching student life at WRA. Please contact Jeannine Mylott (330.995.8778) or Kara Ellis Skora (330.673.3965) for more information. Thank you for keeping this option in mind throughout the year!

By Kara Skora (Gabe '15) &  
Jeannine Mylott (Patrick '15 & Joseph '15)

## THE PWA ANTIQUES FESTIVAL: 32 YEARS OF TRADITION

The Western Reserve Academy Antiques Festival was born in 1981 when a group of Pioneer Women, led by Rosemary Burner, tried a new kind of fundraiser. They brought premier antique dealers and the public to WRA's campus for a major, one-day outdoor show on Labor Day. Their idea was a stunning success!

Dealers and the public paid to come, and the festival became PWA's biggest fundraiser. Over the years, the festival has brought in more than \$1 million to support PWA's mission. The Pioneer Women bought tickets, too, but most of all we gave incredibly generously of our time. Each festival was supported by hundreds of volunteers, who spent thousands of hours making food, staffing the gate as the festival opened, preparing breakfast, selling antiques and popcorn—you name it, we did it! We made memories, too, working together, shopping, socializing, and proudly showing off WRA's beautiful campus to the public. The cooperative spirit showcased the very best of our community.

As the years flowed by, times changed and the festival changed with it. Dealer numbers have fluctuated as the Internet influences how people buy and sell antiques. More than 400 students and faculty are now on campus on Labor Day. And, the Northeast Ohio weather keeps a question mark by any outdoor activity, even a key fundraiser. The challenges to profitability keep multiplying.

While the 2013 festival will be our last, we'll always remember the legacy of past Antiques Festivals on the campus of WRA. In 2011, we celebrated our 30th Anniversary with the Brick Row Ball, honoring our founders and our success. This year's final Antiques Festival will be a true celebration of this unique WRA event. All past and present festival hands are welcome to contribute! Contact Mindy Covington ([mindy.covington.m3zq@statefarm.com](mailto:mindy.covington.m3zq@statefarm.com)) or Wendy Barnett ([wendy@nsgl.com](mailto:wendy@nsgl.com)) if you can lend your time and talent this year.

Thirty-two years ago, the founders of the Antique Festival boldly tried something new. That pioneering attitude will continue to inspire PWA as we explore new opportunities to support all WRA students.

By Nancy Forhan (Chris '08, Annie '10, Allison '12 & Sarah '15) & Elizabeth Culotta (Peter '15)



### ANTIQUES FESTIVAL: CALLING ALL HANDS FOR WORK AND FUN!

The PWA is preparing now for our largest fundraiser, the Antique Festival, when premier antique dealers and the public convene on campus for our famous, one-day Labor Day show. This will be the final year for the Festival, and we plan to celebrate **and** honor our 32-year-long tradition in a big way! We need planners, marketers, accountants, and just plain willing hands, and most of the work can be done in accommodation with work schedules. On Festival Day, our membership comes together to make this major community event a success—and we have fun doing it! Please send an e-mail to Wendy Barnett at [wendy@nsgl.com](mailto:wendy@nsgl.com) or Mindy Covington at [mindy.covington.m3zq@statefarm.com](mailto:mindy.covington.m3zq@statefarm.com) to let them know if you can help. If you're already signed up, THANK YOU! Please save the date of our first meeting: **Thursday, May 9, 7:30 p.m. at Seymour House** (park on the old tennis courts across the street). Don't miss this opportunity to be part of this unique event, and let's make this final Festival one to remember!

By Mindy Covington (Kristina '11 & Alexandria '15)

## Be "In the Know" Gear up for year end!

The school year is almost over. Important dates for the end of school year are posted on the WRA website. Here's a quick guide to help you through the chaotic last few weeks:

### Exams

Exams run from Monday, May 20, through Thursday, May 23. The exam schedule is posted on [wra.net](http://wra.net). Advisors will also be posting a schedule for extra review sessions. We contacted Dean of Academics Michael Morris to ask about the rumor that there might not be a History exam this year. He told us that the faculty has been engaged in a year-long discussion about 21st century learning techniques and non-traditional assessments. The History Department is running a pilot program and will conduct alternate assessments (these will vary by grade) which will be a departure from the traditional two-hour exam. While exams are not going away any time soon, the school administration believes it is important to explore alternative assessments.

### Commencement

Commencement will be held on the Chapel Lawn at 1:30 p.m. on Sunday, May 26, followed by a reception for parents, students, faculty and guests in the lobby of the Murdough Athletic Center. While formal invitations are not issued to freshmen, sophomores or juniors, everyone is welcome to attend the event. Many current students, alumni and other guests attend along with the graduates' families and friends.

### Next year's schedule

Plan ahead. You can find important dates for next year (spring break, exams, etc.) at:

[https://www.wra.net/uploaded/documents/portal/all/2013-2014\\_importantdates\\_012113.pdf](https://www.wra.net/uploaded/documents/portal/all/2013-2014_importantdates_012113.pdf)

By Anu Ramakrishnan (Neel '16)

### Volunteer for the Exam Week Coffee House

During exam week, May 20-23, we set up an array of breakfast treats and beverages in the WRAp, the student lounge in Seymour Hall. We're looking for volunteers for the Exam Week Coffee House. Shifts are 7 to 9 a.m. and 9 to 11 a.m. This is an easy volunteer job and a great way to interact with the students! Sign up to volunteer online on Eventbrite at:

<http://2013springexams1.eventbrite.com/> or <http://2013springexams2.eventbrite.com/>

By Kathleen Heydorn (Mika '15) &  
Jackie Paparella (Maria '16)

### EXAM SURVIVAL KITS COMING SOON!

Give a box of treats to a special student. Have an Exam Survival Kit delivered to your child to help encourage and give them the extra boost in order to get through those long study sessions. Each kit contains gourmet cookies, popcorn, pretzels, sun chips, granola bars, an apple, and fun surprises! Kits will be delivered on Monday, May 20, 2013. Please e-mail your orders to Jill Harrington at [jhmac6@gmail.com](mailto:jhmac6@gmail.com) or call her at 330.656.4387 to place an order. All orders are due by Wednesday, May 15. You may pay the \$35 for each kit through the Campus Store, using your student's account number.

By Jill McLaughlin (Andrew '15)



Pioneer Women's Association & Dads Club  
of Western Reserve Academy  
Request the pleasure of your company at

# A TOAST TO SPRING

**Saturday, May 11**

**5:30 to 7:30 p.m.**

Pierce House - 223 College Street - Hudson, Ohio

Please respond to accept at  
[pioneerwomen@wra.net](mailto:pioneerwomen@wra.net) by Monday, May 6  
Cocktail Attire

The Pioneer Women's Association and Dads Club are holding their annual A Toast To Spring party at Pierce House, the home of Head of School Christopher D. Burner '80 and Alison Burner, on Saturday, May 11, 2013 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Thank you once again to the Burners for graciously opening their lovely home as the venue for this event. Join us as we take this wonderful opportunity to welcome the parents of the incoming class, reconnect with current parents, and visit with various members of WRA's faculty and staff, all while enjoying delicious appetizers and a glass of wine.

*By Jennifer Cartellone (Rebecca '13) and  
Barb Cassell (Ian '10 & Pat '15)*

## *Save-the-Date*

The Parents' Back-to-School Barbecue will take place on Sunday, August 11, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Hockey Pond. This annual old-fashioned barbeque is sponsored by PWA and Dads Club of Western Reserve Academy. Mark your calendar and start the school year with this festive occasion!

## Allocations

This spring the PWA approved funding for GameSalad, which is a programming tool used to develop computer games for various devices such as iPads and iPhones. The proposal came from history teacher and technology coordinator Matt Gerber. He intends to implement GameSalad in an Information Technology course. Applying GameSalad will allow WRA students to create Google and Apple apps to be played on mobile devices, tablets and HTML compliant devices. It also supports the current movement in education for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math). The PWA is excited to offer students cutting edge technology in computer science at the high school level.

Continuing its support in technology advancement, the PWA also approved funding for the purchase

of eight Samsung Android Tablets to be used in the Science Department. While multiple applications are anticipated, the principal use of the tablets will be for labs across all science subject areas. This purchase is to be shared with Dads' Club.

In other business, the PWA also agreed to extend its funding for a campus visit by notable Steinbeck scholar Professor Robert DeMott of Ohio University. Originally, funding was approved last fall for Professor DeMott's visit to campus, but due to scheduling conflicts, he was not able to visit campus this spring. If funding is not used in the current academic year, it is forfeited. However, in this particular instance, the PWA reconsidered and agreed to carryover the funding for a visit by Professor DeMott for next fall.

*By Cindy Curtin (Lauren '11 & Michael '14)*

## PWA Committee Updates

### Parent Dialogues

The Pioneer Women's Association and the Dads Club sponsor the Parent Dialogue series held throughout the school year. On Feb. 9, the Pioneer Women hosted its fourth Parent Dialogue of the 2012-13 school year. This dialogue was very well attended, with more than 30 parents gathering in the Ong Library. The dialogue focused on *Saturday Academy, One Year Later*. The panel included Head of School Chris Burner, Assistant Head of School Kate Mueller, and faculty members Michael Bonomo, Sherry Chlysta, Joe DiBiase, Alan Doe and Michael Morris. *Saturday Academy* has enabled students to explore topics that they could not explore during the Monday through Friday curriculum and enhances student profiles and transcripts.

On April 27, the fifth and final Parent Dialogue was held at Wilson Hall. This dialogue focused on *Student Health and Well-Being*. A varied and dynamic panel included a welcome by Kate Mueller. Dean of Student Life Justin Zimmerman discussed dorm procedures and policies, security and alcohol and drug policy. Director of Technology Bill Walsh discussed Internet use and cyber safety. Dan Gibbons, head athletic trainer & strength and conditioning coordinator, talked about emergency treatment and rehabilitation treatment. Director of Food Services Val Ritzert discussed efforts to source food locally as well as provide a myriad of healthy and delicious meal options. English teacher Matt Peterson spoke about his involvement with the CARE team. Director of Security Joe Bernabei discussed the school's 24-hour security as well as steps that have been taken to improve lock down procedures, tornado and fire drills and WRA's mass notification system. Director of Health Services Cathie Buffet spoke about disease prevention and early intervention, safety planning and recent emergency response guidelines. To view the webcast of these programs, visit the Parent Portal and click the link for Parent Dialogues.

~ Marsha McGill (Collin '13), Rosie Wenstrup (Matthew '15) & Camille Kuri (Sammy '14 & Peter '16)

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## PWA Committee Updates continued

### Community of Concern

Community of Concern (CoC) is a national parent initiative with a goal of “together keeping youth alcohol & drug free.” Western Reserve Academy announced the Ohio launch of CoC in October 2010, joined by 14 other schools in the Northeast Ohio region. Hudson Community First has spearheaded the recent efforts for the Hudson City Schools, Seton School, Hudson Montessori School and Western Reserve Academy. CoC provides a booklet, written by the founding parents and experts, to act as a catalyst for communication between parents and their children. It is an educational tool about brain development, the negative effects of substance abuse, signs and symptoms, and legal consequences. It includes the Substance Abuse Policy of WRA. These booklets are available in Dean of Student Life Justin Zimmerman’s office.

Recently, CoC held an event at the Hudson Middle School titled *Hidden in Plain Sight*, a traveling exhibit provided by the Copley and Bath Police Departments in an effort to partner with parents to prevent substance abuse. Nearly 200 people attended, including several WRA parents and WRA dorm faculty. CoC will consider purchasing more booklets for Justin’s office and bringing in a speaker for Parents Weekend 2013. Currently, we are endeavoring to get a designated representative in the Dads Club to co-chair for next year.

~ Barbara Van Blarcum (*Miles ‘14*)

### PWA Concessions

Concessions has been a presence at WRA’s top sporting events this year. For the most part, sales have been strong and we have shown a profit. However, this is an untapped resource. We have some great ideas for next year and hope that with the support of parents and students, we can make Concessions a major cash generator for Reserve students. Thank you to everyone who stood in the “wagon” or behind the counter in the MAC and helped keep the crowds fed and happy. We need your help! Please come out and help with the Concessions stand through mid-May. E-mail [DRand@HBChemical.com](mailto:DRand@HBChemical.com) if you can lend a hand!

~ Danial Rand (*Austin ‘15*)

### A Spirited Approach

The PWA Spirit Committee is behind the scenes at a number of school events. The committee identifies parents of upper classmen who volunteer as team moms and act as liaisons between the coach and other team members’ parents as well as coordinate team feeds. The PWA supplies paper products and utensils for team feeds in the MAC. The committee purchases spirit items such as pompoms, megaphones, thunder sticks and foam fingers that are distributed to the students to show their spirit for their classmates. They work with the Morgan leaders and student government to coordinate the distribution of the spirit items. T-shirts for the Ellsworth jazz festival which will be held in May will also be provided. Go WRA!

~ Joan Clark (*Emily ‘11, Molly ‘13, Samuel ‘13*) &  
Deb Nelsen (*Rylee ‘14*)

### Dorm Feeds: A little slice of home!

The dorm feeds are planned once a month in the evening after study hours. The students get different snacks each month including cookies, Dairy Queen ice cream, bagels or pizza. They really look forward to the dorm feeds. It’s so much fun to bring the snacks in and hear one of the students shout “Dorm Feed!” Everyone runs downstairs with happy faces, ready to eat. They are always very appreciative and respectful to the moms—and never short of many thanks!

~ Renee Campana (*Alex ‘14*), Elizabeth Winson (*Emily ‘15*) and Melinda Alali (*Noor ‘14 & Zein ‘15*)

# Thank You for a Wonderful Year!

## 2012-13 Executive Board Slate

President	Karin Stifler
Vice President/President Elect	Mary Walker Sprunt
2nd Vice President	Jennifer Cartellone
3rd Vice President	Barb Cassell
Treasurer	Bonnie Carter
Assistant Treasurer	Kathy Kramer
Recording Secretary	Susan Andersson
Corresponding Secretary	Nancy Forhan
Past President/Advisor	Carolyn Bialosky

## 2012-13 General Board Slate

Allocations	Cindy Curtin		
Alumni Parent	Anne Cutchin	Chris Hulse	Roberta Suwondo
Antiques Festival	Mindy Covington	Kris Fellows	Ana Silva
Blazer/Kilt Sale	Jeannine Mylott	Kara Skora	
CCIS	Jackie Osborne-Fisher	Margaret Haller	Mary Walker Sprunt
Celebration Cakes	Ginny Bitler	Jill McLaughlin	
Community of Concern	Nicole McCormick	Susan Murray	Barbara Van Blarcum
Concessions	Danial Rand		
Dorm Feeds	Melinda Alali	Renee Campana	Liz Winson
Exam Week Coffee House	Kathleen Heydorn	Jackie Paparella	
Hospitality/Events	Kathy Johnson	Julie Stacy	
Merchandise	Wendy Barnett		
Mom's Network	Brenda Depew	Carol Morgan	
Newsletter	Elizabeth Culotta	Anu Ramakrishnan	Polly Wise
Parent Dialogue	Camille Kuri	Marsha McGill	Rosie Wenstrup
Spirit	Joan Clark	Deb Nelsen	
Student Activities	Mary Kay Chlebina	Laura Ennis-Lehner	

## Special Committee

Teacher/ Staff Appreciation	Shelley Sutton	Carrie Wagstaff
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### From the Editors

It is hard to believe that another school year is winding down. We look back on 2012-13 with fond memories and look forward to 2013-14 with anticipation. Your newsletter team has enjoyed bringing the highlights of this past year to you and we sincerely hope that you have enjoyed the news of the WRA campus. We look forward to sharing the events of the upcoming school year with each of you. Best wishes for a safe and happy summer!

*By Elizabeth Culotta (Peter '15),  
Anu Ramakrishnan (Neel '16) &  
Polly Wise (Adam '09 & Maggie '14)*

# Please WELCOME PWA's Next Year's Leadership Team

## 2013-14 Executive Board Slate

President	Mary Walker Sprunt
Vice President/President Elect	Barb Cassell
2nd Vice President	Chris Hulsey
3rd Vice President	Susan Murray
Treasurer	Kathy Kramer
Assistant Treasurer	Bonnie Carter
Recording Secretary	Polly Bloom
Communications Director	Anu Ramakrishnan
Past President/Advisor	Karin Stifler

## 2013-14 General Board Slate

Allocations	Cindy Curtin	Robin Wilson	
Alumni Parent	Marsha McGill	Cherri Miller	Ana Silva
Antiques Festival	Wendy Barnett	Mindy Covington	
Appreciation	Shelley Sutton	Carrie Wagstaff	
Blazer/Kilt Sale	Karen Meehan	Holly Ostrom	
CCIS	Terri Cremer	Margaret Haller	
Celebration Cakes	Patty King	Karen Meehan	Annette Weber
Community of Concern	Barbara Van Blarcum		
Concessions	Mary Kay Chlebina	Danial Rand	Lisa Redlich
Dorm Feeds	Melinda Alali		
Exam Week Coffee	Kathleen Heydorn	Jackie Paparella	
Hospitality/Events	Kathy Johnson	Jeannine Mylott	
Merchandise	Lora Zimmerman		
Mom's Network	Suzanne Lund	Mary Sullivan	
Newsletter	Elizabeth Culotta	Polly Wise	
Parent Dialogue	Camille Kuri	Rosie Wenstrup	
Senior Activities	Susan Andersson	Carolyn Bialosky	Bonnie Carter
	Cindy Curtin	Kris Fellows	Deb Nelsen
	Polly Wise		
Spirit	Nina Clayman	Deb Nelsen	Mary Randazzo
Student Activities	Kristen Karzai	Liz King	Megan Valentine

## Special Committees

Fundraising	Nancy Twigg	
Historian	Brenda Depew	Nancy Forhan