



# WPHS Alumni News

Volume I, Number 3

West Philadelphia High School Alumni Association

August 2011

## More Than 500 Grads Show Up To Say 'Farewell' to Old School

More than 500 grads accepted the Alumni Association's call to pay a nostalgic farewell visit to the now "old" school, on June 26, for the

### Mary Dean Named WPHS Principal

Mary S. Dean has been named as the new principal of West Philadelphia High School. She took office on July 1.

Mrs. Dean came to West Philadelphia from Mastbaum Vocational Technical High school, where her outstanding record resulted in her receiving the 2011 Lindback Award for Distinguished Principal Leadership.

Mrs. Dean is a qualified, committed educator and life-long learner with more than 25 years in education. At Mastbaum, Mrs. Dean enacted a series of systemic changes that provided a strong foundation for continual improvements in student achievement and

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### May 7 Photo Call Attracts Hundreds

The May 7 "photo call" was for 10 o'clock at the 48th Street Entrance.

Well before 10, the alumni were coming in large numbers. So, the site was moved to the Walnut Street Entrance, but the alumni kept coming.

So, Pollock Field was opened, and the alumni gathered onto the Stands on the west side of the field. By the time the photographer was ready, several hundred people had arrived to be part of what can only be described as wallowing in nostalgia.

Mini reunions were taking place everywhere, and more than once was heard "I haven't seen you since. . . ." And, of course, the acceptable little fib, "You haven't changed a bit."

"School Closing Event," the first of the Association's Centenary Year's programs.

In September, students will attend the new building at 49th and Chestnut Streets.

The theme for the day—which will also be the theme for all the events—was "Still the Best."

The oldest alum to attend the festivities was 94-year-old Wilma Freedman Ackerman, of the Class of June 1934 who became the belle of the ball when her presence was acknowledged. Scores of alumni left their seats in the East Auditorium to photograph her and to be photographed with her.

It was that kind of "reunion."

From 2 to 3pm, alumni walked the halls and re-lived their school days;

See **JUNE**, page 4

## Centennial Courtyard in New School To Memorialize Family, Friends, Class

A Centennial Garden at the new West Philadelphia High School, at 49th and Chestnut Streets, will enable alumni to memorialize family, friends, and their classes.

A Courtyard is being set aside on the grounds of the School for special bricks ("Pavers") which can be engraved. Measuring 4 inches by 8 inches by 2 1/4 inches, the bricks will carry up to three lines of copy. Each message will be applied by state-of-the-art laser technology which will ensure that it will be permanent.

Each line can take 20 characters (including spaces and punctuation).

A selection of six "clipart" is available, in which case the maximum characters per line will be 12.

The art that is available is on the order form.

The "pavers" cost \$40 each, with or without artwork.

Part of the proceeds from their sale will go the Alumni As-

## WestFest Picnic August 7 To Aid Member Recruitment

The fourth annual WestFest Picnic in support of the Alumni Association's Membership Drive, is scheduled for Sunday August 7, at

### ATTENTION

#### Beware of a Scam!

It has come to the attention of the Alumni Association that there is a bogus site collecting \$10 membership dues.

Please note that the Alumni Association does not, as yet, collect dues online, and we do not offer a \$10 membership. Our membership levels are \$200 for a lifetime and \$20 for an annual.

You can only become a paid member of the Alumni Association by completing our official membership form (see page 3). Don't be a victim of this bogus site!

the North George's Hill pavilion, in Fairmount Park.

Festivities will kick-off at noon and will end at 6pm.

All alumni of the School and their families are invited.

Class signs will be posted, to make finding classmates easier.

In addition to having a good time with friends and other alumni, there will be entertainment by a DJ.

There is no charge, but the Association hopes to recruit more members. A one-year membership is \$20; a Lifetime membership is \$200. (See, also, and use the Membership Form, on page 3.)

Alumni should bring their own food, or the necessary equipment to make their food on-site. If the past WestFests are any example—last year almost 600 people showed up—families will share their specialities with others.

The Association will have T-shirts and other items on sale.

### Bowling for Scholarship Nets \$1500 for 2 Awards

The Alumni Association's third annual Bowling for Scholarships night, April 29, proved so popular that it raised enough money to increase the award to \$750 to two top students in the recent graduating class.

Joviah Watson and Troy Wiggans were presented with their checks on June 26, at the Association's "Farewell to West Philly" party.

The evening's festivities combine bowling with partying, with the \$30 fee covering the costs of the bowling ball and shoes as well as all food and drink and entertainment by a DJ.

The members of the Bowling Night committee were: Chairman Michael Brown, and Norman Brown, Andrew Johnson, Paula McKinney-Rainey, Diane McKinney-Whetstone, Cheryl Smith, Jeanette Taylor, and Dr Dee Williams.

sociation's Scholarship Fund.

"As the School is about to enter its second century in a new building," said Alumni president Paula McKinney-Rainey, "this Garden should be not only a memorial to our outstanding past but also an inspiration for the students of tomorrow."

This is an ideal opportunity to also remember the teachers who made such an impact on the lives of their students. So far, three such teachers will be memorialized—Dr. Charles J. Dryfuse, music teacher; and English teachers Mary E. Gross and Cecil O. Richardson. Richardson also led the school's Jazz Band in the late 1930s and early 1940s.

Copies of the necessary forms may be had by downloading from the Association's web-site: [www.wphsaa.org](http://www.wphsaa.org). A separate form is needed for each paver ordered. Payment, made out to WPHSAA, must accompany each order.

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## WPHS Alumni News

is a published by

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### From the President...

Welcome to the third issue of the **WPHS Alumni News**. As we kicked off the Centennial Year with monumental events: May 7th Alumni Photo of 400 in the bleachers at the Athletic Field, and June 26th, School Closing Reception, the word has spread that the WPHS Alumni Association is alive and active, building on a proud tradition from its chartering in 1952.

This June, we again awarded all the proceeds from our Bowling for Scholarships held in April to graduating seniors: our young lady was the Salutatorian, graduating 2nd in the class; our young man finished 7th. You will read more about them in this issue.

We trust you will also enjoy the detailed articles about the aforementioned events and we are thrilled to introduce a new feature: Meet Our Alumni. The inaugural alumni selected is Ed Hipp, Founder and President of Ed Hipp Meats. We invite readers to suggest future alumni whose stories will provide inspiration and remind us of the depth and breadth of our WPHS alumni.

Speaking of alumni, the new state-of-the-art home for WPHS at 49th & Chestnut Streets, was designed by noted local architect and WPHS alumnus Emanuel Kelly. The new school will open in September as a Promise Academy with a new leader at its helm, Ms Mary Dean. She was the principal of Mastbaum High School during tremendous student achievement; we are excited about her track record, energy and vision for this next era of WPHS.

Plan to join other alumni on Sunday, August 7, 2011, at the 4th Annual WestFest Membership.

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## New Principal's Promise

Although she had not technically taken over as Principal of West Philadelphia High School, Mary Dean was present at the June 26 "farewell to West Philly" event sponsored by the Alumni Association.

She was introduced to the more than 500 alumni who were present, and was called upon to say a few words.

Here is her message:

*My name is Mary Sandra Dean, and it is my honor and pleasure to join you, the West Philadelphia High School Alumni as you begin your centennial celebration. I am here today to assure you that the legacy of West Philadelphia High School will remain strong and will be an integral part of everything we do at West Philadelphia Promise Academy High School.*

*The Promise Academy turnaround model will only enhance West Philadelphia High School legacy and ensure that it remains the outstanding institution and pillar of the community it has always been.*

*As society changes and neighborhoods transform, it is critical that we not forget the past, but honor it as a part of who we are. In a message I recently received from one of my teachers it stated: "The Power of Education—even in the midst of our worst struggles, our forefathers knew that part of our advancement and growth began with a sound education."*

*The promise vision states children come first, and all children, when provided the opportunity to receive a high-quality education in a safe and nurturing learning environment, will achieve at high levels.*

*Parents are their children's first and most important teachers and a school's most valuable education partner.*

*It takes the engagement of the entire community to ensure the success of each child and the success of its public schools. The West Philadelphia High School Alumni is part of that community. We look forward to your continued commitment.*

*Our mission in the Promise Academy is aimed at reinvigorating the academic program, providing students and teachers with additional, targeted resources, and extending the school day and year for more time to learn.*

*What is a Promise?*

*A promise means to make a commitment.*

*A promise is a declaration to do something in the future.*

*A promise sets the groundwork for hope.*

*We are the Promise Academy at West Philadelphia High School.*

*Thank you.*

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*Meet Our Alumni...*

### Ed Hipp

When Ed Hipp left West Philadelphia High School in 1962, where he was a member of the track team, little did he realize that 35 years *Drive on North George's Hill Pavilion in Fairmount Park from 12 Noon - 6:00 PM. Bring your family, food and look out for your class-year markers to greet old friends and make new ones.*

*To all of you, we and our students need you to become a part of the community of support that we were privileged to have when we were students at WPHS. They are our legacy, and we will always be graduates of West Philadelphia High School!*

*Paula McKinney-Rainey*

later he would be heading his own company that produces 18 beef and turkey food products that sell in more than 500 food stores in a 100-mile radius of Philadelphia.

In the process, he originated beef sausages and turkey bacon products in the city—the latter including pepper turkey bacon, a product unique to Ed Hipp.

For those who attended last year's WestFest, those delicious sausages were Ed Hipp's.

After West Philly, Ed took classes at Lincoln Prep and Community College.

Ed got his start in the food business, in 1964, when he was hired as a meat cutter at the Shienman

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## Reunions Set

Classes of 1961 and 1962 – Joint Reunion, October 22, 2011. Dinner-Dance. Enterprise Center, 45th and Market Streets. Contact: Barbara Daniel Cox, 215.843.2027.

June 1966 – 45th Anniversary Reunion. October 7 & 8, 2011, Airport Ramada. Contact Wanda Medley, 215.747.4711; Tina Jordan, 215.548.0466; Jerome Johnson, jeromejohnson@aol.com

June 1971 – 40th Anniversary reunion, August 6, 2011, Galdo's. Contact Jeffrey Montague 609.346.1710 or Kenneth Lesesne 267.496.5783

June 1976 – 35th Anniversary Reunion, October 8, 2011, Concordville Inn, Concordville, PA. Contact Rob Hayes: 443.935.2358

June 1987 – All Alumni Cookout/BBQ, August 27, Cobbs Creek Park. Contact 215.840.2379

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### Request

Please send us your stories—of your activities, of your class's activities and reunions, of our alumni and their activities. We want this to be your publication. Send to the editor at [akprou@aol.com](mailto:akprou@aol.com).

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Provisions Company, which produced Kosher-style products. That influence has never left Hipp, and all his products, today, are "Kosher-style," an indication of quality and care in preparation.

Eager to learn more, Ed was assigned to the kitchen, and learned sausage making.

To further his knowledge, while still at Shienman he took a three-week course in sausage making at Ohio State. Also, while working at the production of the products, Ed also began selling the products, door-to-door. Which, led him to take marketing classes at Temple University Business School.

See **HIPP**, page 3

## HIPP, from page 2

By now, about 26 years old, he realized that he was a "good jobber," and elevated his selling to neighborhood stores.

He then tried operating a store, in West Philadelphia, but he admits it "didn't do too well."

He worked for a while with a meat producer as a sausage stuffer, and then moved on to another company selling pork products.

In 1975, he returned to the Shienman company. A year later, he formed his own company, with offices in West Philadelphia, but his products were produced at the Shienman facility, and he was on his way. When that relationship ended in 1990, when the Shienman company closed down, one-quarter of their production was Ed Hipp's products. By then, his company had expanded, and he had moved to Olney, where he now has a sales staff of 11.

Their products sell in most of the ACME family of stores—ACME, Giant, SuperFoods, Radner's—as well as 500 Mom 'n Pop stores.

Among other distinctions, his is the only company producing a Canadian Bacon-style product from turkey meat.

To what does he owe his success? He answers with one word: "Quality." After a moment's thought, he adds, "Reliability." Tall and affable, he exudes "personality," which also plays a large part in his success.

## 1966 Class Has Scholarship Program For West Philadelphia's Students

No better example of how the alumni of West Philadelphia High School can help the students at the school is that of the remarkable Class of 1966.

Ever since its first Reunion, in 1976, together with grants from private foundations, the class had been awarding scholarships to outstanding students, every five years.

The students were selected by a committee that included the School's principals and vice-prin-

cipals, among others.

In 2009, the program was changed to scholarship workshops from which the scholarship recipients were selected. The School notified students to apply for the workshops and selected 20 to attend and compete for five scholarships.

The workshops consists of three sections: Self Evaluation—students access their interest, strengths and weaknesses as they relate to their career goals; Career Preparation—seeking out information on their career interests, such as a full explanation of the career, the working environment, the expected pay levels and future opportunities by region, and the education required before and after entering selected occupation; Education Preparation—seeking information on what

## DEAN, from page 1

school climate.

At the core of these changes was an emphasis on distributive leadership, quality instructional strategies and the combination of accountability with high expectations for staff and students.

Mrs. Dean was recognized for improving student attendance and school climate in both 2008 and 2009. During the past school year, the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Bureau of Career and Technical Education selected Mastbaum, under Mrs. Dean's leadership, as the only school in Philadelphia and one of only ten across Pennsylvania CTE schools to be part of a case study in recognition of her "Promising Practices" for improved student performance.

In addition, Mrs. Dean currently

has the role of mentor principal, where she supports and shares strategies with a principal mentee in the hopes that her strategies and practices will assist other principals and schools with making steady academic gains.

She earned her undergraduate degree from Howard University, a Masters Degree in Education from Temple University, and received a "Letter of Eligibility" for her Superintendent's Certificate from Arcadia University.

## Centenary Schedule

The present schedule of events for the Centenary Year includes:

- November 14 – Turkey Bowl (versus Overbrook High School), at Pollock Field, 48th and Spruce Streets
- November 25 – Open House and tours at New School
- June 23, 2011 – Centennial Dance at New School
- June 24 – Gala Celebration at New School

is then expected of post-secondary education to meet their career goals, setting goals, understanding college credits, grades and exams, majors, GPAs, temptations and, finally, financial management.

The students receive ample lunches, flash drives to retain their records, and \$50 grants during the workshops, as an incentive. The final scholarship recipients are selected from the workshops.

Winners in the Class of 2011 (the last to be graduated from the "old" building) are: Maria Hammonds, \$2500; Briana Lane, \$2500; Troy Wiggans, \$1500; Mateen Amin-Giggings, \$1000; and Nikira Davenport, \$1000. Twelve other students received Book Grants of \$100 and \$50 for their participation during the workshop.

## WEST PHILADELPHIA HIGH SCHOOL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

### Membership Form

Yes, I wish to join the West Philadelphia High School Alumni Association

☐ I wish to join for Life. I enclose my one-time payment of \$200

☐ I wish to join on an Annual basis. I enclose my first payment of \$\_\_\_\_\_

I understand that the dues "year" is from September to August.

☐ I was graduated within the past three years, and I wish to join at the special \$5 rate

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_  
First Maiden Last

Address \_\_\_\_\_

(ZIP Code) \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Make check or Money Order payable to:

West Philadelphia High School Alumni Association

Mail form and dues to:  
WPHS Alumni Association,  
P.O. Box 7906  
Philadelphia, PA 19101

Please note that the Alumni Association is now a 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization

## **JUNE, from page 1**

were entertained by the "Destiny" band, two of whose members are alumni, Brian Betha and Andrew Johnson, both from the Class of 1971; and ate hot and cold food catered by another alumnus, George Brown, Class of 1961.

At 3 o'clock, the grads filled the East Aud for a short program, which began with the Presentation of the Colors by the School's Air Force ROTC, the first and oldest Junior ROTC in Philadelphia schools. It was established in 1975. The occasion marked the retirement of Colonel James Cotton, who has headed the group and has taught at West Philly for 17 years.

Centennial Year Awards were presented to two alumni. Association Recording Secretary Ann Nettles presented the Award to Audrey Johnson Thornton, Class of June 1942, who was cited as "An individual who has significantly contributed in educating the community regarding the history of African-American women and fostering knowledge of the importance of organ donations." Corresponding Secretary Cheryl Smith presented the Award to Oswald "Ozzie" Wright, Class of 1968, and a former principal of the school, who was cited "For his exceptional community service that is still transforming the lives of West Philadelphia youth."

Two outstanding graduates of the Class of 2011 were presented with

this year's Scholarship Book Awards, by Alumni Association vice-president Michael Brown. Receiving checks for \$750 were Joviah Watson, who was Class Salutatorian and will be going to Drexel University to major in Communications with the ultimate intent of going to law school; and Troy Wiggans, who was seventh in the class of 242, who will be attending Delaware State University, to pursue a course in Criminal Justice with the intention of entering the field of law enforcement, following the footsteps of a grandfather and an uncle. The money for the Awards came from the Annual Bowling night (see page one for story).

The old grads also had the opportunity to be the first to meet the new principal of the School, Mary S. Dean, who took up her official duties on July 1. In her brief remarks, Mrs. Dean assured the alumni "that the legacy of West Philadelphia High school will remain strong and be an integral part of everything we do" at the School." (See story on page one.)

Association President Paula McKinney-Rainey, acknowledging the enthusiastic turnout as evidence of "the spirit of West Philly," recounted the background of the resurrected Alumni Association, in 2007, as a needed reaction to the events taking place in the school at the time. She assured the audience

## **Students Learn About Entrepreneurship**



On June 30, 11 ninth-grade West Philadelphia High School students were given an opportunity to learn about Entrepreneurship and to expose them to resources and new possibilities that will produce tangible outcomes in their lives, as part of a program established by the Nu-Juice Foundation. They spent the day with a visit to the Law Firm of Zarwin, Baum, whose founder Norman Zarwin gave the youngsters a tour of the offices. After a visit to City Hall where they heard a brief talk about Government from Derrick Green, general counsel to Councilwoman Marian Tasco, they had lunch at the Pyramid Club, hosted by Eric Ward (Class of 1971), president of Nu-Juice Foundation, and heard a talk by Chad Lassiter, Fox29 news commentator and professor at the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Social Work.

that the Association will continue to take an active part in the activities in the school and acknowledged the Association's "accountability to those who are following us."

Jeanette Taylor spoke briefly about the Centennial Garden project, a designated area on the grounds of the new school designed to commemorate individuals and classes. (See page one for

story).

With a rousing rendition of the School Song, the brief program ended, but the alumni lingered on for almost an hour, unwilling to leave.

The day's program was planned by Diane McKinney-Whetstone and Dr. Delores W. Williams, who head the Centennial Year Committee. Dr. Williams was Mistress of Ceremonies.

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**Address Correction Requested**