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John J. Wright Alumni Association Newsletter

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Remember Your Pledges!!

The Wright Direction

A legacy of excellence

WHAT AN EXCITING YEAR!!!!

This year has been phenomenal to say the least. We identified our destination, charted our path and achieved our goals!

Your support and participation in the Alumni events have been appreciated. Because of you, we, once again, were able to award scholarships and stipends to deserving recipients. The John J. Wright Alumni Association has taken the task of preserving our legacy seriously and what better way to do that than to help our community. Your continued donations and pledges help us to help others in their quest for higher education.

Although the temperatures were off the charts, you still supported the Alumni Picnic and a good time was had by all. In this time of “pocketbook clinching” you still supported the Alumni Banquet and for that we say THANK YOU.



In keeping with our theme, we witnessed a moment in history that many thought they would never see...the election of our first African-American President! There were record numbers registered at polls across the county, state and the country. Again, your support coupled with a tenacious spirit has solidified 2008 as a year that the record books cannot deny.

www.jjwalumni.org

We are looking forward to 2009 and more achievements to come!

From the President's Desk

As another year rapidly winds down, we are thankful for the blessings. This year's theme, *A Legacy of Excellence*, reflects how I feel when I think of my high school alma mater. The influence my teachers, principal and classmates had on my formative years is evident in the values I have held throughout my adult life. I am grateful to each of these individuals for having had the opportunity to touch their shoulders. These administrators allowed me to stand on their shoulders but I also learned by rubbing shoulders with my classmates. Most of us who came through John J. Wright can recall a teacher or teachers who influenced our lives. Whatever measure of success we have achieved; we owe a part of who we are to our beginnings at John J. Wright.

The Alumni Association held two major activities this year. Thank you for your participation and support. In July, we enjoyed our annual Friends and Family Picnic at the John J. Wright Parksite. Activities of the day included an 'Old Timers' basketball game between John J. Wright and Walker Grant. Given the condition of the players and sweltering temperature, it was largely a verbal competition. It was a profitable day for our raffle winners! The third Saturday in July has been designated as our

annual day. Please save the date on your calendar.

Our 15th Annual Scholarship Banquet and Dance was an occasion to honor our commitment, renew acquaintances and reminisce about our shared history. Banquets are often the first time classmates have seen each other since leaving JJW. The classes of 1948, 1958 and 1968 were honored and celebrated anniversary milestones. The class of 1968 was the last graduating class of John J Wright Consolidated School. Ms. Shelby J. Robinson '68, Assistant Commissioner for the Virginia Employment Commission, was our speaker for the occasion. Ms. Robinson is a graduate of Mary Washington College, University of Mary Washington. She shared treasured high school experiences, influence of teachers, employment experiences and her recent involvement in state government. She truly exemplifies our theme.

The banquet was also an opportunity to feature our legacies, scholarship and stipend recipients. Alfrantz Lolagne and Stephanie Kinard, were MCs for the event. In addition to delectable food and fellowship, an important aspect of the banquet is raising funds for our scholarship program. We are grateful to members and supporters who generously donate and pledge so that we can

continue providing assistance to eligible high school graduates and post graduate students.

Renovations to the John J. Wright Educational and Cultural Center are almost complete. Some finishing touches remain but we are looking forward to an Open House in the near future. The facility opened at the beginning of the school year for students in preschool special needs programs, high school and middle school alternative education programs, Parent Resource Center and offices for Chartwells Food Service.

Space in the library has been designated for the John J. Wright Museum. We will be working with the Spotsylvania Sunday School Union to make this a reality.

If the John J. Wright Alumni Association is to grow and prosper, it must have the support and participation of members especially from those who claim an association to John J. Wright School. If we don't preserve what we have, it will be forgotten and lost.

We can't depend on "Somebody" to do what "Everybody" should do. In the end, "Nobody" will do the work and we'll wonder what happened. We look forward to hearing from you!

Constance Braxton '58

****MEMBERSHIP REMINDER****

The membership period follows the calendar year. Dues for 2009 will soon be due. Please renew your membership or become a new member; the annual cost is only \$25.

****2009 SAVE THE DATES****

Board Meetings:

12:00pm at Bethlehem Baptist Church on:

- January 3, 2009
- March 7, 2009
- May 2, 2009
- July 4, 2009
- September 5, 2009
- November 7, 2009

A general meeting is held in October on the day of the banquet.

Picnic: July 18, 2009
John J. Wright Parksite

Banquet: October 10, 2009 Classes of 1949 and 1959 will be honored. Classmates are asked to include the Family and Friends Picnic and the Banquet in reunion plans.

****AN OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE****

Carolyn Lewis Chew '67, Secretary of the Spotsylvania Sunday School Union, is chairperson of the John J. Wright Museum project. As noted, the John J. Wright Educational and Cultural Center has designated space to memorialize Mr. Wright and his legacy. We are in need of artifacts and photographs, in particular the tar paper building, from the John J. Wright School era- from the training school years through 1968. In addition, if you have expertise in working with artifacts and archiving materials, please let us know if you are able to assist in developing this important project.

WEBSITE

We are delighted to have our website www.jjwalumni.org. Our thanks to Ed Davis and the committee for making this happen. Future plans are to post announcements and information concerning alumni activities. *Of note, we are in need of a Webmaster.* Please contact Karen Woodward for more information @ klwmmw@aol.com.