

Parsons College News

Volume 13 No. 4 July 2023

Fifty years ago our beloved Parsons closed! People asked if we are going to celebrate Parsons one last time and the answer is YES! The Parsons College Alumni Association (PCAA) is putting together a fantasatic weekend for our alumni! Here is the information you have been waiting for!

Hotels

The first thing you want to do is get your hotel room at one of the following Fairfield hotels:

The AmericInn by Wyndham in Fairfiled ** Super 8 by Wyndham Fairfield ** AirBnB has several locations

Rukmapura Park Hotel & Chalet VRBO has homes for rent nearby.

The PCAA reserved a block of rooms at the hotels with astericks (**), so make sure you ask for that price!

What is planned? Friday, October 6, 2023

Registration Fairfield Arts & Convention Center Memory book distribution Noon-3:00pm

4:00-5:00pm Displays & Book Signing: My Four Years at Parsons College:

The Life and Times of Johnny Blackstock PC'64.

The Piera (PC yearbooks) will be available for purchase.

Social Hour 5:00-6:00pm Reception 6:00pm Ice breakers 7:00pm

Grand premier of the film "Parsons" Parsons History & Documentary 8:00pm

(to be shown in the Stephen Sondheim Theater of the Performing Arts).

Questions & Answers 9:30pm

Saturday October 7, 2023

Registration Fairfield Arts and Convention Center 9:00am

Convocation: Reverend Joseph Phipps, Pastor, Fairfield Presbyterian 10:00am

Welcome to Fairfield-Connie Boyer, Mayor of Fairfield, IA 10:15am

Tom Brooks from MIU 10:20am

Barhydt Organ Recital-Dee Sandquist 10:30am

Welcome: Nancy Wirtanen, PCAA President 10:40am

Parsons College Alma Mater 10:50am

Brunch: Fairfield Arts and Convention Center 11:30am

Tour: Carnegie Historical Museum 1:00pm

Film: "Parsons College"; Fairfield Arts and Convention Center 2:30pm

Forum: athletics, faculty, alumni, fraternities, sororities, 3:30pm

and clubs.

Tour of MIU (optional)

Social hour Fairfield Arts and Convention Center 5:00-6:00pm

6:30pm Dinner

Social Hour - Fairfield Arts and Convention Center 8:00pm

Sunday October 8, 2023-Free Time- time for you to meet up with friends, wander and rediscover Fairfield.



Parsons College Golden Jubilee Reunion October 6-8, 2023

In this issue... Reunion Info..... 1 Meet your PCAA Board...2 Do You Remember..... 3 The Life Years..... 4/5 Alumni Write Parsons Mergers.....7 In Memoriam8 Memory Book Order form .9 Reunion Registration.. 10/11 Spirit Wear order12

Parsons College Alumni Board

PCAA Board Interview John Blackstock

Each month I interview a PCAA Board member. This month John Blackstock PC'64 agreed to the interview.

- **Q:** What years did you attend Parsons?
- **A:** 1960-1964
- **Q:** What were 3 things that you loved about Parsons and why?
 - The beautiful meticulously maintained 200-acre campus.The informal relationships and accessibility to professors and
 - 2- The informal relationships and accessibility to professors and tutors.
 - 3- The pride of our small college Wildcats sports teams putting together nationally ranked NAIA sports programs in football, basketball and baseball.
- **Q:** Who was your favorite professor and why?
- Head and shoulders above all, for me... Dr. Louise Roberts. She taught Humanities and made her subjects come alive.

 Dr. Roberts also connected with each and everyone of her students and made you feel important. Years later after graduation, I was walking down 7th Avenue in NYC and this lady neatly dressed in a tailored suit, says, "hello, John." It was Dr. Louise Roberts!!
- **Q:** Where did you live while you were at Parsons?
- A: Alll over!! LoL!! The Leggett Hotel... Phi Sig House... Gobble's Apartments on the Square... Bates Motel Trailer Court... The Quads... Walton Lake Cabin... 601 North 3rd Street.
- **Q:** What is your hometown (where you lived when you came to Parsons)?
- A: Pittsburgh, PA (West View)
- What career(s) did you have after graduation?
- A: Journalism (Boston Herald-Traveler reporter)... Communications (JCPenney NYO Meet ings & Convention Coordinator)... Retail Management (The Limited Inc/Lerner New York Regional Sales Manager)
- Where do you live now?
- **A:** West Bradenton, FL
- **Q:** Why did you decide to join the Board?
- It was a No-Brainer!! In a million years I could never thank Parsons College enough for allowing me the opportunity to pursue a world class education... meet and develop treasured lifelong friendships... and, for encouraging me to follow my dreams. The time and money I've given back through board and foundation activities is but a mere pittance of my immense gratitude.
- **Q:** Please feel free to share a memory or thoughts on Parsons.
- A: In the fall of 1960, after having been rejected admission by just about every college in Pennsylvania, and in a desperation search, I found a school that accepted "marginal students." That was Parsons College. Dr. Millard G. Roberts was the genius who believed marginal students should also have the opportunity for a college education, and I was accepted.

John Blackstock continued on next page...



John Blackstock continued...

In the fall of 1964, after having attended 12 trimesters, serving as Editor-in-Chief of the college newspaper, I graduated with a B.A. degree and went on to a satisfying career... There were so, so many others who shared successful life changing experiences at Parsons College.

I was happy to have teamed with Dave Neff and the late John Braidwood to have formed the Parsons College Wall of Honor which allowed us the opportunity to share and recognize 100 of those individual career success stories. Truth be told, you could wallpaper the city of Fairfield with Parsons student/alumni success stories. Thank you, Parsons!!!

Editor's Note: John has been one of our most active alumni. He was the publisher of the enews for years; worked on the Wall of Honor, and has worked dilligently to keep the Parsons spirit alive. Thank you John!

Do You Remember?





Did you know....

... the Parsons Motto is "Est Modus In Rebus" and it means there is a limit in things/every thing in proportion. It is a quote from Aristotle (and also attributed to the Roman poet, Horace).

...several years back an alumnus in Colorado came upon a quantity of Parsons yearbooks. He brought them to Fairfield for a reunion. After sorting them and ensuring that the Carnegie Historical Museum and Fairfield School district had copies for their libraries, they ended up in Dave Neffs garage. We were recieving requests through the enews to find certain yearbooks. I offered to take on a distribution plan to open availability to our alumni. We offered more recent books for \$50 plus shipping and earlier ones for 20 or 30. We were able to move a few books but not many. Ed Longenecker plans to bring the yearbooks to the reunion and the board approved a free will donation for the books of their choice (you give what you feel is fair).

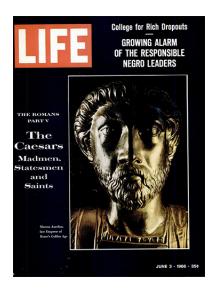
Important information in this issue:

The Life Years: 1966-68

David Williams PC'71 writes...

This will be a unique perspective on the 1966-1968 years at Parsons. My current livelihood was dependent not only on my education there but beginning as a child of 11, when in 1956 we arrived in Fairfield.

I think Parsons had an enrollment of under 300 students at the time, but not sure. My dad, Dr. Robert Williams, was hired from his high school position in Des Moines, to teach accounting at Parsons. I began Parsons as a freshman IN 1962-63, left for the army in 1963 and returned as a sophomore in 1966. Parsons had grown exponentially in both enrollment and physical plant. Dad had been elevated to vice president for business and finance and mom, who graduated Parsons on the same day as I graduated high school, was serving as dean of women, after the exit of Dr. Roberts.



Because of the Life Magazine article my old Army buddies were calling me with requests to come to my great "party school", and we were in the process of losing accreditation, even though the "exploratory" group sent by the NCA had recommended "continued accreditation". Carl Kreisler and dad flew to Chicago to plead the Parsons' case in front of Judge Julius Hoffman and were successful in winning re-accreditation.

My dad's efforts changed to fundraising activities all over the east coast, gathering huge donations from insurance companies and other industries that supported the "idea" of Parsons College. Jack Carlson, a local contractor was hired to team up with dad's financial plan to scale back the oversized physical plant and re-expand it as enrollment began to grow once more. We rarely saw dad in the years following as he was constantly recruiting, traveling, and fundraising until his death in the fall of 1970.

Parsons ultimate failure came when financing couldn't match expenses. Not enough money coming in even though enrollment was steadily increasing. Dad's popularity among faculty and staff had waned considerably as he had cut everyone's salary (including his own) to save expenses.

In my "never to be humble opinion" Parsons could have been saved by better involvement of the local business community and elevating someone to continue fundraising activities after 1970. My opinion was shared in 1970 by Parson's board of directors "Whereas, it is the sincere conviction that no individual has been more responsible for the survival of Parsons College as Bob Williams."

Helen Strauss Palmquist PC'67 writes...



In the "Life" article there was a photo with a large group of Parsons students all wearing sweatshirts for other colleges. Students were told that if they went back to their dorm rooms and put on a sweatshirt from another college, they could get their photo in "Life" Magazine. The photo was published in the magazine and the caption was "Flunk Out U." The article said all these students flunked out of other schools and Parsons accepted them. A nicer way of saying it was that Parsons gave students a second chance but I don't believe a majority of students came to Parsons from other schools. There were many of us who came in as freshman.

Continues on next page

Helen Strauss Palmquist Continued...

My mother was so mad about the article that she phoned the author to tell him how inaccurate it was. His only response was, "it was a tough article to write." All "Life" cared about was selling magazines, sensationalism.

I always have to defend Parsons. I received an excellent education . I worked hard and graduated Cum laude.

Larry Eleo PC'67 writes...

I I attended Parsons in 1966-67. I first heard about the school from a recruiter at my high school. I took a train out for a visit and decided to attend. I liked the personal attention PhD., Master Instructors, and tutoring if needed. I liked the trimester system, I think. I was in the dorms until I pledged Delta Sigma Phi. I really enjoyed my experience. I got a job with the Parcell family and drove the Ice Cream truck they owned on campus.

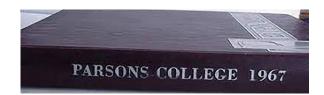
I remember the Delta Sig house was coed with girls on the other side and a common TV room separating the two. We were very protective of the girls I remember the harmless panty raids that happened from time to time.

The education was great and I remember when I first went out there none of my family or friends heard of it. Then the Life article came out and everyone wanted to know what it was like to be at the PLAYBOY top ten party school. Sweatshirts said Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Parsons, US Army.

I received a great education and it was a great experience. When the accreditation problem started, I had to make a decision. I wanted to be a teacher and I could not take the chance of certification problems, so I transferred back home and graduated from Akron U. The trimester enabled me to start as a Junior and finished in three years. I credit Parsons with my wonderful start in education.







Do you have "then and now" photos you would like to share? Deadline for the September issue is August 10, 2023! *Please* send them to PC News editor

Alumni Write

Chuck Togias writes...

I had an NCAA basketball Scholarship to Parson College in 1966 and played one semester before being drafted and serving in Vietnam. I was there a short period of time but it was great!!

Charles Fleischer PC'66 writes what Parsons meant to him...

Fulfillment: I was provided with an extremely rich education. I really did not fully appreciate this treasure until several later. The breadth and depth of information was colossal. I was taught how to think things through. And how to go on beyond the given information and draw my own conclusions from the information. My Modern European History class Final Exam is an example. The exam was only one question: "I have talked about World War II being a war of Grand Strategy. Give me six instances where I was wrong and why".

Foundation for future development: It was years later that I realized how rich and education I had received. The wealth of information I had received prepared me for a series of additional post graduate opportunities. The series of Humanities and Philosophy courses prepared me with a deeper understanding as I studied Medieval European History at Loyola University of Chicago. This and the series of History classes I took gave me a firm foundation when I studied Global Strategic Studies at The U.S. Army War College.

I am so thankful that I attended Parsons College between 1661 and graduated in 1966. It provided me with a fabulous and rock-solid foundation for a wonderful life. My professors gave me the tools to interrelate different disciplines and develop a greater understanding of the world than just focusing my view through only one subject area.

Roger Hughes PC'71 writes....

I graduated in 1971. During my senior year I had the pleasure of driving Dr. Roberts around Iowa and elsewhere to give speeches. He always had several topics and simply adjusted his remarks to fit his audience. I frequently chose a vantage point behind him to better see the audience and their reactions. He always had everyone's undivided attention.

At times he surprised me. Once on a return trip from Chicago we stopped for gas. Dr. Bob, as he was known, visited a fruit stand and returned with a bag of grapes. As we drove away he offered to share the grapes. I declined. He continued to eat. Several times he offered the grapes extolling their deliciousness. I continued to politely decline. Eventually he put the grapes on the seat between us and settled into a nap. Some time later I started to think about the grapes and stuck my hand in the bag to snare a few grapes. Dr. Bob woke up with a start, grabbed my hand and said, "Those are my grapes!" and yanked the bag closer to his side before returning to his nap.

The last time I saw him he was with his wife Louise on Williams Street in downtown New York. We had a brief chat. I recall he asked me if I could employ his son who had graduated college and looking for a job in finance.

After graduation I was employed as Assistant to the Dean of Students. Later upon returning from the Army I was again employed as an Admissions Recruiter. On the urging of my father to find a "real job" I went to work in the reinsurance business for thirty-five years. I retired as Senior Vice President and Director of Constitution Reinsurances Corporation.

My wife is quite ill so I will not be attending the Reunion.

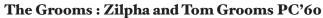
Parsons Mergers

Rae and Jim Hale

I always said I was there during the rise and fall of Parsons College. I was a Freshman at Parsons in 1958. I think our class was about 200 students and as I remember our class nearly doubled the population of Parsons that year and the student body doubled every year thereafter with there being several thousand students when we graduated in 1962.

My husband and I were part of the Parsons mergers - Jim Hale (PKA) and I (AXD) were married in August 1962 – a marriage that sadly ended in divorce 48 yrs. later. As a freshman, I was a charter member of Alpha Xi Delta Gamma Rho Chapter.

In 1966 we returned to Fairfield and Jim was a precepter in the Science department at Parsons working with Dr. King. What a great time that was – the faculty was very close and we had lots of fun. Parsons was a great school for me and many, many others. I will always cherish the memories of my time there.



I met my husband, Tom Grooms, the first day of arrival at Parsons in 1956.



We married in August 1960, moved to Williamsburg, VA, where Tom graduated in '63 from William and Mary Law School. I taught English at the high school and conducted tours of Colonial Williamsburg as a costumed hostess. Tom worked part time for the National Park Service which included Yorktown and Jamestown as a traffic officer on the Colonial Parkway.

We raised 3 children, have 7 grandkids, and have lived in East Moline, IL since 1966. Tom worked for Deere & Co for 35 years; I taught at local high school for 16 years.

Tom is also honored in the Fairfield Convention Center as an outstanding alumnus.

How to submit articles to the PC News

Please email articles for the PC News to Pam Skinner PC'70, Editor parsonscollege70@gmail.com

Send articles, photos, information, etc. You do not have to format or worry about the condition of the photo. I will do that. Photos should be in jpg, jpeg, or png format (NOT pdf)

Please do not post on FB or email to anyone else. Thank you!

How to receive the PC News

The PC news is emailed to you. If you are not receiving it, send Nancy Wirtanen your email:

nwirtanen@yahoo.com

I also post it on Facebook under the FEATURED TAB and the FILES TAB

In Memoriam

Stephan (Guy) Fedan PC'69 Billy Jordan PC'68

Margaret Martin PC'60

Susan Elizabeth Muntz PC'73 Dan Squires PC'61

December 22

May 19, 2023

May 26, 2023

January 2, 2023

Tau Kappa Epsilon

Delta Zeta and involved with

the College newspaper

Phi Sigma Epsilon



We need your submissions for future issues of the PC News!

Thank you for submitting articles, photos, and information!! You make the news, so keep the information coming. Please email all submissions to Pam Roberts Skinner PC'70, PC News Editor.

What can you send?

- Memories/thoughts: you don't have to format the information, I will do that!
- Photos: don't worry about the condition, in most cases I can fix issues. Please do **not** send photos as pdfs (that format is for documents). Send photos as jpg, .jpeg, or .png.
- Please email Pam Skinner, PC News Editor, with your thoughts, questions, ideas, comments.
- I am looking for original material that has not been published elsewhere (i.e, Facebook). Go through your photo albums, scrapbooks, yearbooks, etc. for your Parsons photos!

Purpose of the Parsons Alumni Association

The object of this association shall be to maintain a connection of Friendship among the alumni of Parsons College by providing a network of communication among Parsons College alumni and to foster a spirit of unity among its members.

The objects for which the corporation is formed are: To promote and further the welfare and interest of the members of this Corporation; to stimulate and to broaden thought and to crystallize sentiment; to bring together intellectual life and the points of view of the members; to encourage, promote, and support an Alumni Association designed to coordinate communication and stimulate interest in reunion affairs; in which they may hold meetings.

The board was established in 2007.

Facebook

Parsons College Alumni Association Board

Nancy Wirtanen PC'74, President Dave Neff PC'69, Treasurer John Blackstock PC'64 Bill Burger PC'60 Robert Fox PC'66 Ray Ham PC'73 Larry Litwin PC'66 Ed Longanecker PC'68 George Reed PC'61

Pamela Roberts Skinner PC'70, PC News Editor

Publication Info

The Parsons College News is published every other month. To submit articles please email: Pamela Roberts Skinner PC'70, Editor

Deadline for the September issue is August 10th



Parsons College News Submission



Parsons College Website

Parsons College Memory Books...from Nancy Wirtanen

We were so good at remembering things that we tend to take this achievement for granted. If someone asks you for your cell phone number or what you ate for breakfast, you could probably answer immediately, and the ease with which you do so can make it hard to see what a remarkable phenomenon this is. In the course of your life, you have stored a huge amount of material in your brain—a vast number of experiences with families and friends. Given this enormous number of stored memories, how do we retrieve the information we do so effortlessly? When we are trying to recall particular details of our own lives, or to construct historical narratives describing broader cultural changes, we must all confront the gaps and distortions inherent in recapturing the past.

Over the past months, I have dedicated a great deal of personal time in making this last reunion happen and to provide all of you with the most up—to—date information available concerning your fellow classmates. To those of you who are unable to attend the reunion but request a book, we hope you will enjoy it.

There are people who, despite my best efforts, remain lost. If you have any information on any of them please, forward it to Nancy Wirtanen at nwirtanen@yahoo.com.

Memory Books will be distributed at the Reunion. If you want a copy but are not attending the reunion, please include postage. We need to know how many memory books to order, so please place your order now; we may not have enough extras for sale at the reunion

Nancy Schwartz Wirten has created several Memory books. You may order all or just the one(s) that is pertinent to your time at Parsons. Please complete the form and return to Nancy at the address below. **Questions? Contact Nancy at** nwirtanen@yaboo.com

Available Memory Books:

Item	Price	Shipping If needed	Totals
1940-1959	\$10.00	\$5.00	\$
1960–1966 (146 Pages)	\$15.00	\$5.00	\$
1967–1969 (143 Pages)	\$15.00	\$5.00	\$
1970–1973 (131 Pages)	\$15.00	\$5.00	\$

Total Enclosed \$ _____

We are planning on handing them out at the reunion. If you are **NOT** coming, please include the shipping in your price. Contact Nancy if shipping outside the US for a price.

Send your check made payable to the PCAA and the order form to Nancy Wirtanen - 7 W. Villa Rita Dr., Phoenix, AZ 85023 by Aug. 31, 2023.

Parsons College Reunion Registration

PLEASE read! IMPORTANT information about the registration

Please complete the registration form (next page)!

Hotels - you are responsible for making hotel reservations, some options are listed below. You can get to the website by clicking on the link. We have a special price at the AmericInn and Super 8, please mention PC when booking:

The AmericInn by Wyndham in Fairfiled Super 8 by Wyndham, Fairfield Rukmapura Park Hotel and Chalet, Fairfield VRBO has homes for rent nearby.

Mount Pleasant is 28 minutes away, Batavia is 17 minutes away and Ottumwa is 30 minutes away. In case you wait too long!

We tried to keep the costs down; since we are no longer a college with financial backing, all prices include a \$10.00 charge to cover the cost of the facility rental, audio video equipment, and other expenses related to the cost of putting on the event. Donations are always welcome to help defray the cost of the weekend and they are tax deductible by making your donation *payable to Carnegie Historical Museum Foundation*. All donations will go to the Parsons College Alumni Association. Donations may be sent in the same envelope as your registration.

Please return the registration form on the next page, even if you can't join us so we have your updated contact information to:

Parsons College Alumni Association Attn: Joe Hartman 2778 Deer Valley Dr NW Swisher, IA 52338

Meal options (those meals in red you will need to make your selection and put it on the registration form):

Friday night Appetizers -

Bacon Wrapped Asparagus Fig & Goat Cheese Bites (Truffle Honey, Herb Crackers) Chicken Yakitori, (Grilled Marinated Chicken Skewers)

Brunch - Choice 1

Seasonal Quiche (Mushroom, asparagus, leek) Quiche, roasted onions & potatoes

Dinner - Choice 1

Butternut Squash Ravioli (Brown butter sage sauce) Seasonal Vegetables Fall House Salad Fall Apple Crisp

Brunch - Choice 2

Belgian Waffle (Bourbon Maple Syrup) Seasonal Fruit Salad

Dinner Choice 2

Chicken Piccata (Lemon Butter Sauce, Capers, Fresh Parsley) Linguine Fall House Salad Fall Apple Crisp

Please check the option you wish to have for Brunch and for Dinner on Saturday. Thank you!



Parsons College Alumni Golden Jubilee Reunion October 6–8, 2023 Registration Form

Please return the form and check payable to PCAA to: PCAA,, 2778 Deer Valley Dr NW, Swisher, IA 52338 by August 1, 2023. Thank you

First Name	M	Iaiden Name	L:	ast Name	2
Address	Ci	ity	Stat	te	Zip
Phone: ()	en	nail:	@		
Number AttendingPlease com	plete the followin	ng for each gues	t so we know how to	prepare y	our nametag:
Guest #1 Name					Guest #1 Year
First Name	Maiden Nan	me	Last Name		
Guest #2 Name					Guest #2 Year
First Name	Maiden Nan	22.0	Lact Mama		
Activities you wish to attend:			Last Name		
Activities you wish to attend: Since we are no longer a college with financial audio video equipment, and other expenses rela Friday, October 6, 2023 Professors	backing all prices in tted to the cost of put	nclude a \$10.00 fa tting on the event.	cilities rental,	# Atte	ending <u>Totals</u>
Since we are no longer a college with financial audio video equipment, and other expenses rela	backing all prices in ated to the cost of pur and Staff Recep	aclude a \$10.00 fa tting on the event.	cilities rental,		\$
Since we are no longer a college with financial audio video equipment, and other expenses relatives. Friday, October 6, 2023 Professors	backing all prices in ated to the cost of pure and Staff Reception 1	nclude a \$10.00 fa tting on the event. ption O Option 2	scilities rental, \$40/per person		\$
Since we are no longer a college with financial audio video equipment, and other expenses rela Friday, October 6, 2023 Professors Saturday, October 7, 2023 Brunch	backing all prices in ated to the cost of pure and Staff Reception 1	nclude a \$10.00 fa tting on the event. ption O Option 2	\$40/per person \$50.00/per perso		\$ <u>\$</u>
Since we are no longer a college with financial audio video equipment, and other expenses relatively, October 6, 2023 Professors Saturday, October 7, 2023 Brunch Saturday, October 7, 2023 Dinner	backing all prices in atted to the cost of pure and Staff Recept Option 1 Option 1 October 1 Closed: Please miation (PCAA)	nclude a \$10.00 fa tting on the event. ption Option 2 Option 2 make check pa	\$40/per person \$50.00/per person \$60/per person yable to	on	\$ <u>\$</u>

deduction a separate check needs to be made payable to: Carnegie Historical Museum Foundation (it will go to the PCAA) include with your registration check. Thank you



Parsons College Spirit Wear



Dave Neff has arranged with a vendor to have PC spirit wear available for purchase online. You can purchase your items online in 3 easy steps:

- Scan the QR code above or go online to <u>https://parsonscollege.itemorder.com/shop/sale/</u>
 This is **not** an order form it is an explanation of what is available; you must **order from the website!**
- 2. Choose your items and add them to your cart
- 3. Securely checkout with your credit card

Because we are a small school, they will process this in the following way:

- 1. The **order** periods will be the **1st thru the 15th of EACH** month starting in April and ending September 15, 2023
 - The **shipping** will be approximately two weeks after the 15th of EACH month starting in April and ending in September.
- 2. So please allow **two weeks** for production after the 15th of the month. If the item you order becomes unavailable, we will do our best to get a similar brand.

A portion of each item purchased will go to the Parsons College Alumni Association.



Please note this is not an order form. Please place your order at this website:

https://parsonscollege.itemorder.com/shop/sale/

Thank you

Questions about the order? Doug DeKock 614.673.6779 swimsports@mahaska.org