



The Paul Laurence Dunbar Alumni Awards Luncheon A Scholarship Fundraiser Event

M. Cecile Mitchell
Class of 1960

Come join us! The Dunbar Alumni Federation (DAF) proudly hosts its First Annual Paul Laurence Dunbar Alumni Awards Luncheon, to take place on Saturday, June 28, 2014. Held at The Bolling Club, Bolling Air Force Base, Washington DC, this event is our way of celebrating the birthday of our namesake, Paul Laurence Dunbar, while honoring our alumni for their tireless efforts to maintain the legacy of our Alma Mater, to strive for excellence in all that we do.

This is an ALL CLASSES event – alumni and students from all three Dunbar High Schools, First and O Streets, New Jersey Avenue, and the “New” Dunbar. Now is your opportunity to show your support for the Awardees. Reconnect with Classmates. The Luncheon will feature a prominent national personality as Master of Ceremonies. The Dunbar Poets, who are aspir-



ing artists from our current student body, will perform excerpts of the poems of Paul Laurence Dunbar. There will be souvenirs, commemorative items and much more.

Now is the time to make your reservation. Your class may win a Class Participation Award! Support

the Scholarship Fund. Complete the Reservation Form online at www.dunbaralumnifederation.org, complete and mail the Reservation Form found in the brochure, or visit the DAF office to complete the form. Tickets for the Alumni Awards Luncheon are \$60 per person. No reservations will be accepted after June 14, 2014. Act now! Don't miss this event. For more information, visit our website, www.dunbaralumnifederation.org, call us on 202.724.4194, or stop by the DAF office, Room 114, Dunbar High School. ■

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1960's Bettie Brooks Cole, '61
Mary B. Fields, '65

1970's Jacqueline Schuler, '71

1980's Nannette Curry, '83

1990's Derrick Stevenson, '94

2000's Unfilled

2010's Unfilled

Black History Month Focus on Dunbar

By Carrie Thornhill and Ron Crockett,
'61 and '52

Allison Stewart and her book *First Class* are just the best. As a follow up to the introduction of her book during the dedication ceremonies for the New Dunbar last summer and a fall visit to Henry Johnson's 5th period class, Allison graciously agreed to come back and speak about *First Class* to Dunbar students and faculty for Black History Month. With leadership from Principal Jackson, and guidance from History Teacher, Henry Johnson and Social Studies Teacher, Shadayna Taylor, it was a privilege for us to work with DHS and DAF officials to design and carryout an exciting time of sharing and thinking about Dunbar's history and legacy for the whole school.

In preparation for the February events, a free copy of *First Class: The Legacy of Dunbar, America's First Black Public High School*, given to all faculty and staff to read in advance, was underwritten by a deep discount from Alison Stewart and compliments of DAF. Copies for students remain available in the Media Center.

The day began with a very engaging 40-50 minute book overview and question and answer period with Alison in the Theatre for all 9th, 10th, and 12 graders during the 1st, 2nd and 4th periods respectively. Accompanied by their teachers, the students were attentive and asked great questions. As they left the Theatre, each student was handed a post card with the cover page of the book letting them know where to purchase the book if interested. (11th graders were exhausted after

taking 5 hours of SAT exams and thus missed the experience. A video of Alison's presentation taken by Marvin Jones of Chowan Discovery Group will be shown at a later time)

The students were then escorted to view the Living Legends Project Posters in the Food Court followed by an overview and mini-walk thru of the Dr. Lawrence E. Graves Museum of Dunbar History in room 110. Principal Stephen Jackson, James Pittman, class of '51, Ron Crockett, class of '52, his wife Brenda, Yvonne Baskerville, class of 1953, Blanche Smith, class of '69, and Asha Stephens, niece of Austine Fowler, class of 1953 led the viewing and mini-walk-thru. A special shout out goes to Yvonne Baskerville for her research and writing of a script for tours of the Museum.

Reflection discussions took place in classrooms and hallways throughout the buildings over a period of several days. Don't be surprised to hear students saying: I plan to have a paver with my name on it at Dunbar someday. ■



We Are Legacy

By Pho Palmer
Class of 1985

For reasons unknown, my Mother told me early on that I would attend Paul Laurence Dunbar High School. The significance of attending Dunbar High was never shared with me. My neighborhood school was Cardoza Senior High, and quite frankly, I was looking forward to attending. My Mother had me trek uptown to Rabaut Junior High School instead of attending Lincoln and now, she was doing it again. My morning consisted of me taking two buses to get to Rabaut, so I had to get up early to get there on time. I really did not like taking the bus to school while my friends all walked to school together. It took me awhile to get it because I always thought my Mother wanted to keep me away from my friends. She never voiced any concerns with my circle of compadres as most were from the neighborhood and she knew their Mothers. I later realized that my Mother was not keeping me from my friends. Rather, she wanted to keep me focused on getting a good education from the best institutions that D.C. Public Schools offered in the 1980's.

My recollection is terrible and I don't remember why this meeting was called but I had to go to Dunbar High to meet with the principal. My Mother instructed me to don my Sunday's best and head to a neighbor's house. Instead of my Mother taking me to meet with the principal, my neighbor escorted me. Mrs. Carmichael was a widow, with great pride and poise. Every detail about her was always intentional; never a hair out of place. I learned that Mrs.

Carmichael was taking me to the school. As we made our way to her car, she repeatedly warned me not to embarrass her. I kept my mouth shut. One word from her regarding any bad behavior meant trouble. You see, kids in my neighborhood were ratted out by adults all the time and one word from Mrs. Carmichael was worst than getting the switch. She was a powerful lady. As we approached the New Jersey Avenue door, Mrs. Carmichael warned me again, "Do not embarrass me," and reminded me to only speak when I am being addressed. For the most part, I sat outside an office as Mrs. Carmichael spoke with a woman. It was not the principal. They talked, laughed, hugged and looked at me a lot. Mrs. Carmichael emerged from the office, instructed me to stand up as the woman fixed my collar. It was a very awkward moment. Did the decision regarding my attending Dunbar High rest with this woman? Did the powerful Mrs. Carmichael get me into Dunbar High? Absolutely. Mrs. Carmichael willed her might and got me in. I began 10th grade at Dunbar High September 1982.

My experience was that of a typical, slacker teenager. My grades were not stellar. I did what was required to graduate high school. The work was not hard. I could have been an honor roll student but I chose to shrink back. My chemistry teacher thought otherwise. Miss Holcolm got on my last nerve. She constantly pushed me and told me what I can do and what I can be and all I wanted her to do was shut up and leave me alone. One afternoon, my Chemistry teacher and my English teacher pulled me into a



Anna J. Cooper

closet and cursed me out. They both gave me "the speech" of what I can be and what I can do and all I wanted them to do was shut up and leave me alone. To this day I don't know what sparked that conversation. What did they see that I did not? Miss Holcolm was always yelling at me about being my best. But the one thing my Chemistry teacher, my English teacher, my Mother and Mrs. Carmichael failed to tell me is that I was attending a legacy school. No one told me about the rich history of Dunbar High. It is not something that was a part of the student orientation or scribbled on the concrete slabs. How did I matriculate through this institution for three years and not know about Dunbar's history? Had I known, would the history lesson of how Dunbar High came to be have pushed

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me to be better, do better, scratch, hunger for more from teachers, and work hard to leave my mark? I think so. Had someone told me about the resolve of William Syphax and his fight for the first black high school in these United States of America; the steadfast and incomparable Anna Julia Cooper; and the gospel of good grooming according to Julia Evangeline Brooks, something needed today among young ladies, it would have made a difference. The roster of graduates would have dwarfed all of my thoughts of fading, shrinking or being ordinary. It seems that everyone knew something but no one told me. What a huge mistake and one that should never happen again.

It is good to be in the presence of the earlier classes. They speak of Dunbar High with such pride and tenacity. Many of whom recall the "The Castle" as a place of scholarship and preparation for the world beyond The Castle walls. Dunbar High did not just train great citizens, Dunbar High created stellar leaders. But then there are other alumni that speak of Dunbar High with disdain. Regardless of your time or experience at Dunbar, we are legacy. All of our experiences have been varied but one thing is for sure, we are all a part of the rich history of America's first



William Syphax

Black public high school. The hard work of Dunbar's founders should never be forgotten, hidden, whispered or assumed. From the eldest graduate to the new students applying to Dunbar, we all must commit to restore thy radiant star to a premiere institution of higher achievement. But how will we get this done? The work will not be easy and it will not happen overnight but it is important to get started now.

The first thing that we all can do is secure a copy of Alison Stewart's book, *First Class: The Legacy of Dunbar, America's First Black Public High School*. It is a must read. Get your copy today.

Read it again and again, and then tell the youth around you about how Dunbar High came to be. Please join the Dunbar Alumni Federation and then send membership information to your classmates. Please contact Principal Stephen Jackson and ask him how you can help. D.C. Public Schools require that you get a background check to volunteer at Dunbar High so please take the time to complete this process to begin your volunteer service. If you are politically inclined, you are needed to testify before D.C. Council during the budget hearings. Dunbar High still needs resources. The building is beautiful but programs need to be strengthened and sustained. Join classmates at the first Awards Luncheon June 28, 2014. Caste off all ill will or bad feelings you have about Dunbar High or your classmates because you are needed. Grow past your disdain and help rebuild our legacy school please.

Dunbar High stands today on the backs of the most courageous advocates and more are needed. Will you please stand shoulder-to-shoulder with me and other fellow classmates to honor the memory and struggles of the brave men and women who sacrificed so much to get us here today? Because you are truly needed my Dunbar family. ■

Please join us as we celebrate the first...

Paul Laurence Dunbar Annual Alumni Awards Luncheon

where we, along with fellow Dunbar grads recognize our classmates for their dedication to maintaining the true meaning and spirit of Dunbar. Proceeds go to the Dunbar Alumni Federation in support the aspiring students of our great school.

Saturday, June 28th • Noon – 4:00 p.m.

The Bolling Club • Bolling Air Force Base • Washington, DC 20032

DAF Happenings Over the Last Few Months

By Carrie Thornhill,

Officers, executive board members and members of DAF are involved in a number of activities to advance the mission of the organization. Below is but a short list of activities engaged in over the past few months.

- As we establish a viable presence and access to DAF by all alumni, DAF opened and began operations of the Dunbar Alumni Office in room 114 located in the main office of the new Dunbar High School. Space, technology, furnishings, supplies are all compliments of Principal Jackson. The Office is covered by volunteers five days a week from 10 am to 4:00 pm, particularly 1969 Class member Blanche Smith who comes (everyother Monday, Wednesday-Friday), 1961 Class member Carrie Thornhill, (Monday -Friday); Brenda Crockett (Thursdays); and Class member 1953 Yvonne Baskerville (Fridays). Other alumni, male or female are invited to join the Office coverage Team. The phone number is 202.724.4194. We use the school's fax number 202.671.3303

The office volunteers handle requests for information, the sale of souvenirs, requests for tours of the building and museum from alumni. The DAF is a clearinghouse for information on Class Reunions and Events. The DAF coordinates inquiries to the school staff and the vetting of alumni volunteers. DAF office services are available to all individual alumni and classes.

- DAF seeks to elevate the visibil-

ity of the alumni federation and communicate more effectively beginning with, a new and improved web presence. This effort was initiated and led by Derrick Stevenson, Class of 1994 and assisted by Calvin Smith, Class of 1970. Go to www.dunbaralumnifederation.org to become a member of the federation access DAF scholarship information, tour the great Lawrence E. Graves Museum of Dunbar History, see pictures from the 2012 Triennial, learn more about the DAF officers, sign up for the 1st Annual Paul Laurence Dunbar Awards Luncheon and shop for souvenirs and commemorative items at the Red and Black Shop. Use Paypal, to pay your membership dues, make contributions to the scholarship fund, annual appeal, Endowment or Museum right on line! Link with the DAF FACEBOOK Page designed and managed by Nannette Curry of the Class of 1983.

- As we seek to learn more about how to do DAF's work better and smarter, the Fundraising & Membership Committee hosted guest speaker Frank Jones, President of the Calvin Coolidge Alumni Association who shared lessons about membership building and fundraising from their 28 year history and Herb Tillery, Executive Director of the College Success Foundation presented best practices in preparing students for successful college entry, experience and completion.
- One goal of the DAF is to raise \$50,000 or more in 2014. The Fundraising & Membership Committee applied on January 23, 2014

for DAF acceptance into the 2014 or 2015 Combined Federal Campaign. Acceptance in the CFC will permit federal employees to designate annual contributions to DAF. Approval is pending. DAF anticipates applying to the United Way. Additionally, when the DC City Fund for nonprofits process begins DAF will apply. Mayor Gray with approval from the City Council established this fund to support operations and capacity building of nonprofits that perform direct services for city residents in the areas of arts, education, environment, jobs, et al.

- In support of Dunbar's STEM academy, Blanche Smith and I participated in the ceremony when the American Society of Mechanical Engineers presented a check in the amount of \$5000. The purpose of the donation was to support Dunbar's Robotics Club and participation in the 2014 First Robotics Competition. Funds are managed and disbursed by DAF on behalf of the academy.
- At the request of Lois Hopson, President of the Class of 1952, Chairman Pittman, Vice Chair Ronald Crockett, Secretary Blanche Smith and Carrie Thornhill, Treasurer visited Alice Grant Spraggins, Dunbar Class of 1925 at her home on Sunday, December 15, 2013.

Ms. Spraggins name had been omitted from the list for the August opening Dedication of the new Dunbar building. Arrangements were made by her daughter for a brief visit and presentation

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Alumni Leave Legacy of Generous Giving

By **Carrie Thornhill**
DAF Treasurer

First, alumni Dr. Lawrence Graves, Class of 1941 keeps on giving to Dunbar. We have previously reported on the unprecedented generosity of Dr. Graves to Dunbar, who passed away in 2011 and in whose honor the Museum of Dunbar History is named.

On Saturday, November 16, 2013, Chairman Pittman notified executive board members that the Court approved the release of two \$10,000 Endowments in the Name of Dr. Lawrence & Julia Graves for the Dunbar Alumni Federation from the Estate of Dr. Graves. This notification came after Chairman Pittman and Elmer Brooks, Fundraising Co-Chair attended meetings with the attorney



to sign an agreement for acceptance of these funds for deposit in the DAF Investment Account and the award scholarships from the accrued interest.

Chair Pittman submitted for deposit by the treasurer on December 5, 2014 two checks each in the amount of \$11,254.94, totaling \$22,508.88 which was promptly deposited. On February 22, 2014, the agent for the DAF Endowment Fund was invited to the DAF board meeting

for his periodic report to the membership on the status of the Endowment Fund. At that time DAF presented a check in the amount of \$25,000 (the \$22,508.88 included in the amount) for deposit in the Endowment Fund for investment purposes. In light of Dr. Graves' wishes and the availability of the initial accrued interest, two deserving Dunbar students will receive a \$1000 scholarship in the names of Julia and Lawrence Graves on June 6, 2014 at the Senior Scholarship Awards Ceremony.

Second, on April 22, 2014, Attorney Bradley Thomas and Robert (Bobby) Felder met with Principal Stephen Jackson and presented to him a check in the amount of

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Happenings, from Page 5.

of her Living Legend Medallion. We had a wonderful time with this 104 year old Centenarian! Visits are being planned for two other centenarians.

- Ronald and Brenda Crockett, Blanche Smith and Carrie Thornhill participated in the dinner presentation by Alison Stewart at the Montgomery Women's Democratic Club on January 16.
- Austine Fowler, Class of 1953, Chairman Pittman and Carrie Thornhill enthusiastically joined in with key Academic and leadership team members and parents in a strategic planning session February 21 and 22nd as they planned for a new level of school improvement. A new vision, mission, new initiatives and

new civic infrastructure is being planned for and will be vetted and rolled out throughout the school community.

- Though not held monthly any more, DAF representatives continue to participate in the School Improvement Team meetings related to the completion of the building. Planners and builders continue to be exceptionally responsive to school staffs identification of problem areas within the building. Planning for the opening of the new Stadium and Athletic Field has commenced. Dates are set for two days of ceremonies (August 21 and 22nd) which will roll right into one of the biggest football games of the year on August 23rd. All are invited!

- In addition to continuous scholarship, DAF has also provided funding to support student and faculty development including preparation for the DC CAS high stakes testing, faculty appreciation, Girls Track & Field, Ski Team and JROTC so far this year. DAF also assisted in readiness activities for scholarship awards and graduation ceremonies.

I hate to close on a sad note, but DAF represented and supported the school family in grieving and April 24, 2014 at the going home services for Mr. Claude Nadir, the vibrant and brilliant Director of the STEM Academy. We knew him, admired him and recognized his extraordinary gifts and value to Dunbar. He will be sorely missed. ■

Legacy, from Page 6.

\$5,000 from the Estate of Constance Stevens, alumna from the Class of 1943. Principal Jackson brought these two wonderful gentlemen to the DAF office and they turned the check over to me for DAF. We are told that Ms. Stevenson longed for the day when she would have a scholarship in her name supporting the college education of Dunbar students. DAF is happy to comply with her wish and the 1st scholarship of \$1000 will be made in her name at the June 6, 2014 Scholarship Awards program.

These two alumni show us how to leave a personal legacy of generous giving to the continuing success of Dunbar and its students. We look forward to more. ■

Have you joined the Federation yet?

Your tax deductible membership dues will help some young person get a little closer to achieving their dream.

It's easier than ever, join online at...

dunbaralumnifederation.com

or send in your form or give us a call...

202-724-4194

Important Calendar of Events

May 23rd @ 8:00 pm	Senior Prom, J.W. Marriott Hotel (invitational)
May 31st @ 6:00 pm	Class of 1955 hosts its "Get Together" @ Arena Stage for the Smokey Joe's Cafe Play.
June 6th @ 3:00 pm	Senior Scholarship Awards Ceremony, The Dunbar Armory
June 7th @ 4:00 – 9:00 pm	Class of 1959 hosts its 55th Reunion Celebration @Signature Club Regent Park, Bowie, MD
June 11th @ 10:00 am	Graduation, Cramton Auditorium (invitational)
June 22nd @ 3:00 – 8:00 pm	Joint Reunion Picnic of the classes of 1968 and 1969
June 28th @ 12:00 Noon	Paul Laurence Dunbar Annual Alumni Awards Luncheon at Bolling Club
July 11 @ 6:00 – 9:00 pm	Class of 1989 hosts its 25th Reunion – Meet & Greet, Tour of Building & Museum, Dunbar
July 25th @ 4:00 p.m.	Class of 1984 hosts its 30th Reunion – Meet & Greet & Tour of Building & Museum, Dunbar Food Court
August 21 and 22 @ 3:30 – 8:00 pm	Grand Opening of New Stadium & Athletic Field, The Stadium
August 23 @ 2:00 pm	Football Battle for the North Capitol Corridor, McKinley vs.Dunbar @ Dunbar Stadium
October 11th @ 3:00 pm	Class of 1954 hosts its 60th Reunion, The Dunbar Armory
October 18th @ 8:00 pm	Class of 1994 hosts its 20th Reunion, The Dunbar Armory

Ski Team is City-Wide Runner-Up

With just novices and beginners, the Dunbar Ski Team finished second in the City Wide DCIAA Ski Championship for 2014. Under Coach Elaine Matthews, the team made amazing progress in only three outings at Ski Liberty which, considering the lack of experience, was a remarkable achievement.

Ms. Matthews, a former Dunbar teacher and alum, is retiring this year after many years as a voluntary coach having cheerfully served in this capacity at her own expense. Under her guidance over the years, Dunbar Ski Teams have won several championships against more seasoned opponents. She is most deserving of many Kudos and well wishes in her retirement. ■



Pictured from left to right are: Bryant Howard, Maleek Briggs, Thomas Felder, Coach Elaine Matthews and Aiden Pearson.

Membership Activity

Data summarized below reflects the growth and generosity of Dunbar Alumni for the periods indicated. Overall, it is a most encouraging picture especially the recent addition of Life Members. Recent activity through DAF online presence, including Pay Pal, will be addressed in the next edition of *The Vine*, which will also include current scholarship donations for the 2014 Awards Day.

Membership:

For the Period 10/1/2013 – 4/15/2014 (Includes 17 Life Members)

• New Members.....	50
• Renewals	48
• Class	5*
Total	103 (\$9125)

Specified Scholarships:

For the Period 9/1/2013 – 4/15/2014

• 37 Gifts.....	\$ 9250
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Annual Appeal Donations:

For the Period 1/1/2014 – 4/15/2014

• 11 Donors.....	\$ 896
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*Includes Class of 1953 Life Membership

Dunbar Alumni Federation (DAF) Membership/Contribution/Donation Form

MEMBERSHIP MAKES A DIFFERENCE



For the Gibsons, providing scholarship support and preserving the Dunbar legacy is a family affair. In responding to the Dunbar Alumni Federation Annual Membership Campaign, John M. Gibson, Class of 1950 and Albertina Hughes Gibson, Class of 1951 decided to do much more than pay their annual membership dues of \$25.00. As an alternative, they established two five hundred dollar (\$500.00) Lifetime Memberships which have been graciously accepted by the Federation. With the initiative of the Gibson's generosity, the DAF will continue to offer "Lifetime Memberships" in the amount of \$500, in order to enhance the foundation of the Federation mission to provide scholarship and other support to Dunbar students. Moreover, it will enhance our ability to tell the Dunbar story to future generations in order to ensure the legacy of Dunbar as a forever institution. ■

We invite all alumni to respond to the Gibson's thoughtful challenge.

Complete and mail this form along with your tax deductible payment to the DAF (address at the bottom of the form) for annual individual or class membership, lifetime membership, and/or to make a donation.

Name: _____

Class of: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone #: _____

E-mail Address: _____

- ☐ I wish to become a new member of DAF. A check in the amount of \$25.00 is enclosed for one-year membership (Jan. 1 – Dec. 31).
- ☐ I wish to renew my membership in DAF for one year. A check for \$25.00 is enclosed.
- ☐ I wish to become a Lifetime Member of DAF. A check for \$500.00 is enclosed.
- ☐ The DHS Class of _____ wishes to establish a Class Membership in DAF for one year (Jan 1-Dec 31). A check for \$50.00 is enclosed.
- ☐ I wish to make a donation to the annual appeal. A check for \$60 or more is enclosed.
- ☐ I wish to make a donation to the DAF Scholarship Fund. A check in the amount of \$100 or more is enclosed.
- ☐ I wish to make a donation to the Endowment Fund. I pledge to contribute \$5,000 in increments of \$1000 per year for 5 years. A check in the amount of \$1000 is enclosed.
- ☐ I wish to make a donation to support the operations of the Dr. Lawrence E. Graves Museum for Dunbar History. A check in the amount of \$10,000 or more is enclosed.

I/we understand these tax exempt contributions will be used to benefit students, faculty, parents and graduates of the Paul Laurence Dunbar High School of Washington, DC.

Please mail form and check to: Dunbar Alumni Federation
P.O. Box 60714
Washington, DC 20039

**Visit our Website at
www.dunbaralumnifederation.org**

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Awards Day Set For June 6th

As in the past, the Dunbar Alumni Federation is working closely with Dunbar staff to assist our graduating seniors in their quest for scholarships and other financial aid. And, again, we are appealing to Dunbar Alumni and Alumni classes for assistance. ***Awards Day this year will be held on Friday, June 6th at 3:00 pm*** and arrangements are being made to include other students to witness the presentations of awards. It is a fine tradition for the Alumni to return to give back to Dunbar, and will hopefully inspire our future graduates.

For better accounting and coordination, we are recommending that contributions be sent to the Dunbar

Alumni Federation at P.O. Box 60714, Washington, DC 20039. If preferred, contributions can be sent to “Dunbar Senior High School Scholarship Fund” at Dunbar High School, 101 N Street N.W., Washington, DC 20001.

While we welcome contributions of any amount, we suggest that scholarships “named” for a donor, or in memory of a loved one, should be at least \$300. But please know that all contributions will positively impact our deserving and promising graduates. Questions can be directed to the Alumni Office at Dunbar or to the senior counselor, Ms. Sherema Copes, at 202-698-3762. ■

It's about supporting the hopes, dreams and aspirations of young people! If we don't...who will?

Keep a pluggin' away!