

SAINT THOMAS ACADEMY MOTHERS' CLUB MEETING

Minutes for Tuesday, September 9, 2009

Opening:

Susie Housh welcomed everyone and introduced Marge Mansur, Community of Prayer Chair, who read the opening Prayer.

Guest Speakers:

Dr. Mich, Headmaster, welcomed all members of the Mothers' Club and thanked them for trusting Saint Thomas Academy with their sons. Dr. Mich predicted that it will be a good year and asked mothers to speak with their sons about goals for the year. Dr. Mich suggested asking the boys to think about end of the year reflections and what the boys would like to be able to say to themselves at years end.

Dr. Mich thanked the Mothers' Club for all they do, especially thankful to the Environment Committee for their work on the gardens over the summer. He recalled when the college he attending improved it's appearance, students treatment of the college and buildings also improved. Dr. Mich said mothers bring a civility to the school and that the Mothers' Club additions make a difference. Dr. Mich informed the group that this is the 125th anniversary of Saint Thomas Academy. There will be a 25 year supplement to the Family Album of Saint Thomas Academy originally recorded by Sy Turbes, James Keane and Wally Kurtz. Dr. Mich is hopeful that a supplement will continue each 25 years.

Mr. Byrne, Assistant Headmaster, stated that it was a pleasure to be at the meeting. He noted the smiles on mother's faces and the low heads of the boys being dropped off the first week of school. Mr. Byrne asked that parents review good hygiene with the boys to ensure every effort is made in the prevention and spread of illness. He said due to public health agency rules, parents be as specific as they can when reporting an absent son, clarifying specific symptoms. Mr. Byrne asked parents to encourage boys to bring home their clothes and athletic uniforms for laundering. Mr. Byrne also asked parents to encourage sons to get involved with the many co-curricular activities at school.

Announcements from Mr. Byrne:

Parent Night is Monday September 14, directories and calendars will be available.

There will be several late start (8:50 am) days again this year.

On September 16, Bishop Piche will be at the Opening Mass and Reception.

Chris Ritten, Director of Institutional Advancement, introduced himself explaining his primary charge is fundraising. Chris indicated his schedule does not interfere with any Mothers' Club (MC) events and offered his support to MC in any way possible. Chris asked MC if they could furnish volunteers to help with the Homecoming weekend family carnival October 9-11, 2009. He is looking for 6-8 volunteers to work for a few hours monitoring games.

Presentations from Coaches Panel:

Tony Kinzley, Science Department and Assistant Cross-Country Coach stated the goals for the Cross-Country team are to be highly competitive (last year was first time in 10 years STA has gone to state in Cross-Country) and to give an experience that promotes running as a lifelong activity. Coach Kinzley hopes the boys will benefit and learn lessons through hard work and belonging to the team. Cross-Country does not cut anyone, the expectations are straight forward. If the boys show up and work hard they will have success. All boys are encouraged to come out for Cross-Country next fall.

Dave Ziebarth, Social Studies Department and Varsity Football Coach emphasized the goals of the team are to win conference, section and state. The purpose of the team is for members to understand the definition of ‘perfect’ as having an honorable relationship with their selves, their families and their friends (similar to football players in movie Friday Night Lights). Through hard work of the season Coach ‘Z’ notes that the boys truly learn, trust, love, and care for each other. Deep, lifelong friendships are formed. The football team does not ‘cut’ any players.

Abby Webber, Athletic Trainer said her goals and hopes are that there are few or no injuries.

Julius Tangwe, Theology and Varsity Soccer Coach feels that coaching and being part of a team is about life, education and commitment. His Master’s degree focus is on Coaching and Spirituality. Coach Tangwe stated human rights and development are instrumental in the boys expressing themselves when playing soccer. Coach Tangwe believes we all have a story, the story will be told and we need space for that to arise. When coaching and playing, each voice has an opportunity to develop and express it’s self. Coach Tangwe’s goals are to win and to win “clean”. By competing in a way that expresses oneself on the field - physical and spiritual development will occur. The boys experience sacrifice, responsibility, commitment and loyalty.

Jack Zahr, Director of Athletics and Athletics, Assistant Track Coach said one of his favorite things about coaching is when he coaches the son of someone he has previously coached. Jack has coached 14 sports at various levels and 29 activities. Jack informed there are two new activities this year, a Bowling Club and a Latin club. About 90 percent of the STA students are involved in at least one sport or activity. Jack noted that the benefits of this involvement are seen in higher GPAs and lowered absenteeism. The many sports and activities give boys the opportunity to learn about real life situations. Boys know if they want to participate they must be responsible. Jack is grateful to be able to work with our sons. He asked mothers to encourage the boys to be at school on time and partners in developing leaders who are responsible and advocate for themselves. Jack especially wanted to thank the Mothers’ Club for the video camera they gave as a gift last year. Jack clarifies that some middle school sports are part of the MSHL (track, cross-country, swimming, wrestling) and that some of the middle school sports are part of the CAA (soccer, football) which fall under different rules. In addition, some middle school sports practice during their 7th & 8th PE period, while others practice after school.

Discussion:

Parents were reminded to encourage boys to make sure clothing and towels are laundered and avoid sharing personal clothing and beverage containers.

Currently the cognitive baseline test will be every other year. This test is a tool to determine if a boy is ready to return to a contact sport after an injury.

The turf field has been thought to be 'safer' than the previous grass field, 'yielding' more when contact is made.

Committee/Activities Report:

Mary Sullivan Rickey, Co-Chair VISTA Fine Arts, enthusiastically encouraged mothers to support and join VISTA Fine Arts. Founded in 1984 VISTA Fine Arts has supported and sponsored STA and Vis middle school and high school students with many opportunities to experience live performances, workshops and artists. Vista supports the STA Art Show and the popular Variety Show which is open to the community, celebrating the talent at the two schools. The group meets at noon the third Friday of every month and would love to have new members join in the rewarding experience, working with and getting to know the students. This year the seniors will go to The Buddy Holly Story.

Diane Peterson, Membership Chair, spoke of the rewarding connections one makes through participating in the Mothers' Club. Diane supplied membership brochures, which members can use to make financial donations and sign up for volunteer opportunities. Two gift baskets were to be raffled off at the Thursday evening social for those who have signed up.

Anne Kane, Corresponding Secretary, asked everyone to supply STA with their most current email address. Anne explained that the MC is going 'green' and there will be no more paper mailings. A *new* monthly Mothers' Club E-News is updating mothers with activities in the following month.

Cammy Baer, Eucharistic Adoration Chair, believing in the power of prayer and communal prayer, is looking for volunteers for adoration one hour one time a month. Everyone is welcome. Sign up sheets are available on the information table.

Jennifer Weichert invited mothers to watch the MC link on the website and MC E-News for dates and times to help with ongoing gardening and landscaping projects.

Reminders:

Thursday, September 10: Get Acquainted Gathering at Pool & Yacht Club.

Wednesday, September 16: Opening Mass and Reception

Wednesday, September 30: Harvest Mass and Meal

Tuesday, October 20, 7 pm, the Visitation Parents Association and STA Mothers' Club meet personal finance advisor Nathan Dugan to discuss "The Talk" about finances. All parents and students in grades 6-12 are encouraged to attend.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Pat FitzPatrick
Recording Secretary