

# St. Anastasia School PTO Monthly Business Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, October 21, 2009

7:45 AM – 10:00 AM

Parish Hall

## Opening

In attendance: eight board members, Mrs. Connolly, and five parents. The Board and meeting attendees were treated to earnest and precious opening prayers, songs and the Pledge of Allegiance by the kindergarten class. It was an extraordinarily cute opening for the Board meeting, and all in attendance appreciated how sweetly they led us and the reminder by their presence of our Board's purpose.

The meeting was opened by Board President Carolyn Godlewski who introduced the officers.

## Agenda Items

<b>FIRST VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT</b>	Theresa Hoiles and Traci Thomas, First Vice Presidents
The hot lunch program is off to a great start thanks to Hot Lunch Coordinators Traci Verbaarschott and Patty Wiacek.	
Career Day is February 3rd. Louise Kolesnikow has volunteered to be the Career Day Speaker Coordinator. They need more volunteers and presenters for Career Day.	
<b>SECOND VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT</b>	Jacque McIntyre-Winston, Second Vice President
The Welcome Coffee on the first day of school was very successful. Parents reunited after summer vacation. New parents to St. Anastasia met with more experienced parents to mingle and begin to build those parent bonds that reinforce the community at St. Anastasia School where our children thrive and succeed.	
Back to School Night's refreshments were even more elaborate this year thanks to Reilly Harris, Laure Healy, and Peggy Smith. They decided to add more substantial finger foods since some parents arrive straight from work without a chance to eat beforehand. Their display was beautiful and the finger foods and desserts were truly tasty.	
The Pancake Breakfast on September 20 <sup>th</sup> was chaired by Danielle Chatman and was a sweet success again this year.	

Second Vice President's Report (cont).

The Parish Picnic chaired by Jane Fortin and Ingrid Flintoft was a chance for school families and parishioners to gather together for fun, games, music and yummy In-n-Out burgers.

Portals to Science was introduced to St. Anastasia by Sue Leifield and is off to a great start. The program is reminiscent of Gateway to Art except science is the focus. The first project was a solar oven. Students learned how to build a solar oven but perhaps more importantly how a solar oven can affect a society. Students became aware of the dangers some women in Africa face just by setting out to gather wood. A solar oven can save their lives. The students were encouraged to donate 25 cents toward the purchase of a solar oven for an African woman. Not only did the students learn that science solves environmental issues, science provides alternatives and solutions that can change lives.

Volunteers have signed on as room parents for every class now.

The K-3 Talent Program is being chaired by Teresa Syta. The Committee has decided to create an altar cloth which will be re-used from year to year as the talent show backdrop.

The Christmas Program Committee began meeting in the summer and is moving forward with preparations for the big show.

**THIRD VICE  
PRESIDENT'S  
REPORT**

Susan Pearson, Third Vice President

Innisbrook Gift Wrap Coordinators Sandy McDaniel, Mia Tepper, and Scott Tepper have completed another successful gift wrap sale. St. Anastasia receives 50% of all sales. An official final sales total is not yet available. (See "Sales" discussion at pg. 3.)

Golf Tournament chairperson Erik Helmstetter and Chris Turkmany presently have 90 participants for the October 26<sup>th</sup> games. They need volunteers at the registration table.

Mrs. Nelson's Book Fair Company will be on campus at St. Anastasia from October 23 through 29. Nancy McMorrow is coordinating the volunteers for the book fair. A percentage of all proceeds from the book sales will benefit St. Anastasia School.

Islands fundraiser night for St. Anastasia will be November 3 & 4 at their location on 6081 Center Drive in Westchester. St. Anastasia receives 20% of the profits from food and beverage sales when servers are presented with the flyer. (See "Restaurant Fundraisers" discussion on pg. 4.)

Third Vice President's Report (cont.)

Chairing the See's Candies sales drives are Mary Paquin and Patty Wiacek. Two See's Candies drives are scheduled for this school year to coincide with Christmas and Easter. The amount of profit is different for every item sold. For example, the profit on a gift box is 50%. For every gift certificate sold, the school receives approximately \$1.50 to \$2.00. (See "See's Candies" discussion on pg. 4 and action item on pg. 4.)

Rosalie Schultz has volunteered to chair the Hawaii raffle this year. She presently needs more volunteers to help her.

**DISCUSSION & CONCLUSIONS**

Sales

The Board considered whether proceeds from sales might increase if the school stopped selling gift wrap every year and instead alternated gift wrap with another item for sale. The concern that the market for gift wrap becomes saturated could be alleviated if the school sold another item every other year.

Innisbrook has proven to be an extraordinarily cooperative fundraising partner. The Board considered selling some other product with Innisbrook. However, some attendees of the meeting were less impressed with Innisbrook school supplies program. It seems that Innisbrook does not have anything other product that works as well as the gift wrap.

Third Vice President Susan Pearson receives many company mailers in her inbox. She plans to consider them and report back to the Board with a few sales options to consider.

Fundraising

The Board recognizes that motivation for sales increases when the benefit is concrete and specific. Fundraising publicity can make the connection between fundraisers and the school or school community's needs. By relating sales to a more particularized school expense directly involving the students or by reminding parents that their purchases from school fundraisers can fulfill donation requests, parents and parishioners might feel more of a connection to the fundraiser and a motivation to sell or buy. For example, parents could buy See's candies to add to the Thanksgiving gift baskets. Presently parents are buying books at the Book Fair to fulfill teachers' requests for books in the classroom. These kinds of connections increase motivation and make fundraising less reactive and more proactive. A meeting attendee reminded the Board that fundraising for the playground was emotionally satisfying and the results were transparent and immediately gratifying to both the parents and students.

Third Vice President's Report (cont.)

Grants

Mrs. Connolly received the last installment of the five-year grant awarded to the school by the Hannon Foundation. The Board discussed the possibility of future grant writing. Grant writing is time intensive, foundations are short of funds, and few foundations reward grants to grade schools. However, the school has a good relationship and history with the Hannon and Fritz B. Burns Foundations. Those foundations are potential sources for grant funds.

Mandatory Scrip

Because it is relatively simple to register for the scrip programs, the Board wants to make it mandatory for parents to sign up for scrip. A form will go home in the beginning of the school year included in the packet with the emergency card and other start-of-year forms.

Restaurant Fundraisers

The Board discussed having an after-school fundraiser at Rubio's in El Segundo. Rubio's donates 20% of all profits to the school. The El Segundo location is better than the Howard Hughes location because it offers plentiful free parking.

See's Candies

The Board discussed including a flyer in the electronic envelope to advertise two due dates for See's Candies sales. The earlier November due date will allow families to receive their candy before Thanksgiving. The flyer will also remind parents that they can buy See's Candies to include in the Thanksgiving gift basket charity. The second due date will allow delivery for Christmas.

Pledge Payment

Parents who chose to split their pledge payments in half should be aware that a payment is now due to Linda Schmidt.

ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Create See's Candies flyer for electronic envelope and include a reminder that See's Candies can be included in the Thanksgiving gift baskets.	Mary Paquin	Oct. 22

FOURTH VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Esmeralda Balsz and Stephanie Nuno

St. Anastasia sponsored a school supply collection for Alexandria House, a transitional home for women and children. Jennifer Altergott chaired the collection on the first day of school. A new idea this year is an end-of-school-year collection allowing students to donate gently-used school supplies.

Fourth Vice President's Report (cont.)

Miss Carter is the Teacher Moderator of the SOS program. The SOS sponsors a tutoring program where the Sixth through Eighth Grade students help younger students with their studies. Ms. Carter has organized math and reading buddies for half-hour tutoring sessions every other Monday.

Adopt-a-Family Coordinators Matt Fissing and Rose Healy Fissing need class coordinators for the Third, Fifth, and Eighth Grades. St. Margaret's Center identifies families needing Christmas charity and cheer, and every St. Anastasia class "adopts" some of these families. Class coordinators organize the gift collection. Class angels take on specific gift requests and help with delivery.

Donations to the can drive are on-going. Deposit your canned food donations in the basket at the Manchester entrance of St. Anastasia Church.

**ADMINISTRATIVE  
REPORT**

Rosemary Connolly

During the parent-teacher conferences on October 13<sup>th</sup> through 15<sup>th</sup>, Mrs. Connolly met with prospective kindergarteners and their families and gave tours of the school to them. The school also has openings for prospective students in the Third and Seventh Grades. All prospective students must meet the high academic and conduct standards of the school. (See "Prospective Students" discussion on pg. 5 and action item on pg. 5.)

The website [www.gradlink.com](http://www.gradlink.com) allows parents to access their son or daughter's password-protected grades, g.p.a., notes, and notices from the teachers. Overall it has been well received and without many glitches.

Mrs. Connolly pointed out how well the first project of Portals to Science went for the students. She noted that amount of fathers who serve as docents for the program.

Friday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>, is the earthquake drill. We do these drills in order to ensure that certain procedures become routine even in the face of an emergency. It is a way to prepare the students, staff, and families.

Administrative Report (cont.)

**DISCUSSIONS & CONCLUSIONS**

Prospective Students

The Board discussed that families considering a new school pay particular attention to whether that school's Eighth Graders are accepted to quality high schools. Since high school results are a particular point of pride for St. Anastasia, the Board thought it would be good to publicize what high schools accept our Eighth Grader in "The Tidings," "Westchester Home Town News," and "The Argonaut." These results will also be announced at the kindergarten open house and at registration.

ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Advertise in local newspapers and "The Tidings" the fact that St. Anastasia Eighth Graders are accepted to excellent high schools and often to their first choice.	Mrs. Connolly	none

New Business

Suzanne Van Zwol discussed the importance of students routinely using hand sanitizers particularly when they are leaving the classroom to eat. Teacher should reinforce what parents should be teaching at home about sanitary practices to avoid the spread of germs.

Closing

The meeting was called to an end at 10:00 AM.

Minutes submitted by Kelly M. Ritter.