

**St. Monica Home & School Association**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2009**

Present: Kathy Jablonowski, Karen Potter, Barbara Diamond, Kate Neitzel, Norma Herbers, Nancy Wolf, Lisa Nelson, Tanya Chick, Ceil Bradford

Kathy opened the meeting with a prayer.

Maria Schram and Fr. Jerry were unable to join the meeting

**Co-Presidents:**

Kathy mentioned the Irish Dance Performance presented by Rince Nia Academy. Nancy Wolf offered that Sean Beglan, the school's owner, was impressed with our student body. He stated that our students were the most polite and quiet audience that he had encountered.

Kathy mentioned that 2 weeks ago the Teacher Appreciation luncheon was held. The event was hosted by Mary Beth McNally and Peg Rolfs. They did a wonderful job!

The green St. Monica group provided the following information in regard to their efforts to provide awareness of environmental issues:

*Green St. Monica is a new group. We fall under the Human Concerns umbrella and welcome involvement from all members of the St. Monica community.*

*The goal is to help our community increase awareness of environmental issues, educational opportunities, and action.*

*First meeting is the Tuesday after spring break—**Tuesday, April 21<sup>st</sup>, 7:30 pm, in the Ministry Center Conference Room. Please join us.***

*This group has been working on some things informally up till now.*

**1. Natural Lawn Care:** *the Buildings & Grounds committee is moving forward and has committed to no spraying and synthetic chemical treatment of the grass or beds. They've gotten soil testing and a recommendation from a natural lawn care consultant. This is a great decision that is healthier for all of us and the earth. They need our help though. Green St. Monica will be sponsoring 3 short mornings this season for our Green Team to come together and make the St. Monica grounds even more beautiful—we'll weed, clean up outside, and hopefully mulch and maybe plant. There will also be teams working on Human Concerns Day on June 6<sup>th</sup>. We will be gathering on **May 16, July 18, and Sept 19, from 8:30 to 10:30 am. Please consider helping us out at least one morning. We need your help.***

**2. Sustainability:** *We've helped connect parishioners with resources and expertise in energy efficiency with the St. Monica team to help them discover new ways to save energy and money throughout the building. They've gathered some information and are in the initial stages.*

**3. Green Cleaning:** *We've identified some external sources for the St. Monica staff that evaluate green cleaning products and help schools make choices that are safer for use around children.*

**4. Greenraising.com:** *New resources, educational opportunities, and ways of doing things sometimes have additional costs, at least in the immediate term. Also, Budgets have been cut back, and giving is down. We're trying to help raise funds in a way that doesn't conflict with other organizational fundraising. Check out this website for candles, reusable tote bags, jewelry, water bottles, soap, lotion, gift sets, and all sorts of other thoughtful gifts. You buy great items that are better for the earth and you, and 25% of sales go to St. Monica Parish & School to help support environmental programs, like natural lawn care.*

***How you can help:***

1. *Come to the meeting on April 21*

2. *Sign up for at least one Green Team morning to help beautify the grounds*
3. *Buy something this spring from Greenraising.com*
4. *Pick some new earth friendly thing for your family to try this week*

*Questions or ideas or want to get involved? Contact Nikki DeGuire at [nsdeguire@yahoo.com](mailto:nsdeguire@yahoo.com) or 963-9023. She plans to come to the May meeting. You can also talk to Sandy Hellman or Laura End.*

#### **Faculty Recognition:**

Karen raised the topic of recognizing the faculty and staff for their landmark years of service (i.e.: 5, 10, 15, 20 and 25 years). In the past H&S had done this and the practice fell by the wayside. Those present at the meeting suggested that the Sunshine Committee be responsible for sending cards to those celebrating 5, 10, 15 and 20 years. They suggested sending flowers to those celebrating 25 years.

Mrs. Miller will be celebrating 25 years this school year. It was decided to present her with flowers at the last mass of the school year. Going forward, the teachers will be recognized at the 1<sup>st</sup> all school mass of the year.

#### **Recruitment:**

Ceil reported on the New Parent Coffee. The consistent question that was raised was about the host families program. Karen commented that Tom was working with Amy Cade to make sure that the families currently signed up will be assigned host families this spring. There were several suggestions at the meeting to hold the coffee in January or February instead of March.

Ceil Bradford reported that there are about 16 new families. There are some concerns about the fact that K4 and K5 are not filled. However, first grade is usually completely full.

See Us in Action Day was held on Tuesday, March 31. There were about 5 new families that came.

#### **Annual Fund:**

Tom Mlada could not be present. Lisa Nelson mentioned that it was reported at the SBC meeting that the Annual Fund was a little behind last year's numbers. 40% of the families SMS families have participated so far.

#### **Treasurer:**

Beth Cafaro stated that her most recent transactions included paying for the Chinese Acrobat program and babysitting for Variety Show and H&S meetings. There is approximately \$8000 in checking and \$9000 in the money market fund.

#### **Scrip:**

Norma stated that she will be the chair along with Jennifer Lamont next year. There was great cheering and praise from those present at the meeting.

She discussed that they will be upgrading their software. Karen recommended that they make the purchase right from the Scrip checking account instead of having Beth handle the transaction.

Lisa Nelson asked Norma to come to the next SBC meeting (May) to explain scrip to the School Board. A decision needs to be made as to where the Scrip program should be in the structure of the school. Most schools have the scrip program fall under the auspices of the parish; some schools have the development department operate it. While it is a fundraiser for SMS H&S, the bulk of the profit goes to families in the form of tuition credit. Norma and Lisa agreed to discuss this and determine if Norma could attend.

#### **School Board Liaison:**

Lisa Nelson stated that the School Board is reviewing the religious education curriculum to insure that all students are receiving the appropriate instruction for their grade level. Mrs. Shumaker commented that the students in Jr. High are receiving very high quality religious instruction. Perhaps a better job needs to be done in communicating that to the parents. The SBC will continue reviewing and improving where needed.

The Athletic Committee will be creating a hand book of conduct for all team members, coaches and parents. It is in line with the recommendations of the Milwaukee Archdiocese.

There will be a VIP Picture day for the Volley Ball Teams. Kathy Gomez is the contact for coordinating through VIP. The goal is to have the VIP picture days for the sport teams on the school calendar to simplify the process.

The Athletic Committee is also working to find out if there is interest in a basketball clinic in the spring for 4<sup>th</sup> grade families. They are also going to open up volleyball to boys as well as girls.

Lisa reported that the Evening of Reflection was very nice and well attended.

Mrs. Stewart attended the school board meeting and reviewed how Maddie Kiefer's death was handled in the school.

Dr. Brian Fidlin conducted a program entitled, "Troubled Waters-Navigating the Adolescent Years". He did an excellent presentation about understanding the adolescent years and drug awareness.

The SBC Listening Sessions that were held raised awareness of several important issues. These include the following: Parents feel there should be greater continuity in the amount of homework. More emphasis should be placed on study skills. There needs to be a greater marketing and selling of the benefits of SMS Junior High. There should be more religious education. Mrs. Shumaker responded that Jr. High religious education is very solid. SBC will review and focus on the religious education experience at SMS. A task force will be created to investigate concerns related to the religious curriculum.

The Financial Aid request deadline is May 1. The final approval of the tuition for the 2009-2010 school year will be at this evening's SBC meeting.

Parish council is asking all parish committees to identify how every committee completes the Parish Mission.

The technology committee is actively keeping our computer systems and software up to date.

Lisa Nelson reported that the uniform policy will be reviewed by the School Board in May. The light blue shirt will stay in, the skort is out and there a few other changes will "tighten up" the policy.

Barbara Diamond raised the question about spirit wear and whether it should be continued. Karen responded that it is fun to have and Maria Schram should be the one to decide whether or not we can continue with it. There is some concern that there are too many logos out there.

**Christian Formation:**

Liz Sather reported that Peggy Hines Porter is encouraging parish and school families to work together on parish events. She is seeking more adult ministry involvement.

Lisa Nelson suggested that we have mass or a prayer service on the mornings that the Richards and Cumberland schools have a late start day.

More catechists are needed for confirmation classes on Thursdays and Sundays. There will be a catechist retreat session with all of the North Shore parishes.

The SMS day school and parish school of religion will have the same text books that meet Archdiocese standards.

Sr. Ann Kelly is working with the Adult Ministry committee. She is working to provide faith formation for adults. She will organize several retreat evenings and half days of reflections. She is evaluating the possibility of Sunday school for adults.

Submitted by Karen Potter