

LEONARDO DA VINCI



PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION

NEWSLETTER

November 29, 2017

Volume IV, Edition 9

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

DECEMBER

5- Popcorn Tuesday

11- Holiday Scrip orders due for staff

12- PTO Meeting, 6:30

19- Popcorn Tuesday

Gift Cards and Favorite Things

The PTO knows that our school thrives because of the wonderful staff, and we want to help you show your appreciation for all of them.

Gift Cards

We will be coordinating scrip gift cards for teachers and staff this holiday season. A flyer was sent home with students with all the details. Mark down the individual and the amount you would like to contribute. The staff will be informed of all the families that have contributed, but individual amounts will not be disclosed. The staff will then be able to pick gift cards they want from the scrip program. This is entirely voluntary, but it's an easy way to show appreciation. Orders should be turned into the PTO Box in the school office by *Monday, December 11*. Get a copy of the details and order form [here](#).

Favorite Things

If you don't want to participate in the scrip program, or are looking for ways throughout the year to say thank you to a teacher, the PTO has also compiled a list of staff members' "[favorite things](#)". It's another way to thank the people that put so much heart into our school community. You can also find a link on our website.

Marcus Cinema Fundraising Update

Thank you for supporting the Marcus Cinema Fundraising effort. The school raised over \$1,300 through this fundraiser.

CURRENT PTO OFFICERS

President- Jan O'Neil

Vice President- Katie Higgins

Treasurer- Veronica Corpus-Dax

Secretary- Amy Morrow

Check out our website! [Leonardo da Vinci Website](#)

"Like" us on Facebook! [Leonardo da Vinci Facebook Page](#)

If you no longer wish to receive these emails, please reply and request to be removed from the list

Leonardo da Vinci School PTO Meeting Minutes

November 14, 2017

Attendance-

Jan O'Neil, Katie Higgins, Veronica Corpus-Dax, Amy Morrow, Tammy VanDyke, Allison Hockers, Lisa Knuth, Greta Swanson, Tiffany Bowles, Mary Rupp, Marisa Hanson

Call to order- Jan O'Neil called the meeting to order at 6:33pm

President's Report- Thank you card from the staff for the meals during teacher conferences was shared with the group. The Staff Favorite Things was discussed. This is a list that the teachers compile of their favorite restaurants, places to shop and food. It has been updated this year. A link will go out in the newsletter and is on the PTO website. This list can be used by family and staff to give tokens of appreciation to the teachers.

VP Report- Andreea Solomon has stepped forward to chair the chess tournament this year. She is working with the WSCF to secure a date for our school. Also, Marcus Cinema Fundraiser ends this Friday.

Treasurer Report- Current balances include \$5,842.62 in the checking account, \$18,076.89 in the savings account for a total of \$23,919.51. Upcoming approved expenditures include \$8,967.94 for the Garden of Infinite Possibilities, leaving an ending balance of \$14,951.77. Also, still waiting on the latest apparel bill, which is projected to be in the range of \$1,000 to \$2,000.

Fundraising/Apparel Report- Caryn Gehm, fundraising coordinator unable to be present. Report provided by Jan O'Neil. This is the third year that the PTO will be coordinating the holiday scrip program for teachers. Scrip is a program through local and national business where gift cards purchased through the program result in a portion of the gift card amount being contributed back to the school. It is used as a source of income by the PTO. The PTO recognizes that students at da Vinci have many different teachers, making it difficult for families that wish to recognize teachers during the holidays. Instead, families can give money to "accounts" for each teacher. The teachers are informed of which families have contributed, but never informed of the dollar amount from individual families. Throughout the year, the teachers can then purchase gift cards with the money in their individual "accounts". Information about the program went home earlier in the day with the youngest student from each family. Gifts are due back by December 11 in the PTO Box in the main office.

Marcus Cinema fundraiser is currently ongoing and will end this Friday. Similar fundraiser offered in the spring due to its popularity in previous years.

Jan O'Neil then opened the meeting to discussion about a proposed fundraiser. She was approached by a parent to host a fundraiser at her place of business, similar to the previous Smart Cow fundraiser. She proposed that on a certain day, a percentage of all profits would go to the Leonardo da Vinci PTO. History of previous proposals for similar fundraisers was then shared with the meeting. In the past, the PTO has told families that the PTO will not solicit sales for home-based businesses run by da Vinci families. Families of such businesses have always been given the option of making item or gift certificate donations to the Renaissance Faire- this would allow them publicity to the Leonardo da Vinci community and would be a way to support the PTO. The PTO has been approached by several home-based businesses in the past, and at this point, feels that a policy needs to be implemented. In addition, since the current proposal is from an actual store front, not a home based business, the President wondered if it should be treated in a similar manner to home based business, or if would be a different category. A discussion among the group ensued, with the consensus being that the PTO should not solicit business for any family run business when the solicitation is offered exclusively to da Vinci families. The distinction was made between chain businesses that have a corporate policy of local donations (for example, Smart Cow, which has grass root Tuesdays throughout the year benefiting many local schools and groups) and a private business that would do a one-time event to benefit da Vinci based on a family connection with the school. The group present agreed with this distinction. Katie Higgins suggested that the PTO draft a policy stating these concerns and bring it to the larger group for further discussion.

Principal's Report- Nothing to report.

Staff Report- Nothing to report.

SPAC Report- Topics for discussion so far this year include bullying, transportation within the district, the curriculum process, and gifted and talented services in the district. Members of the SPAC will be commenting on these topics through the web-based meeting platform that the SPAC has adopted this year. Members of the SPAC also received information about the district budget, the referendum proposal and the state budget. The upcoming survey for the SPAC involves the Turbo Charge program.

Marisa Hanson noted that it is unclear if the SPAC will continue with this web-based format after this year, or if they will try to return to more of an in-person, round table discussion.

Volunteer Report- Wendy Bauer unable to be present tonight. Jan O'Neil reported that the survey had decreased response this year, but did note that both Harvest Fest and popcorn Tuesdays were able to recruit some volunteers from the survey results. Mary Rupp wondered if the paper surveys were used during conferences. It was reported that they were available, and a few people did fill them out during that period. Jan O'Neil noted that responses might be better if the volunteer survey was started earlier in the school year, or even at the end of summer. If a volunteer coordinator is secured for next year, surveys should go out to families during the back to school/placement testing period.

Harvest Fest- Mary Rupp from the Harvest Fest planning committee was present to discuss the event. She had comments from the coordinators and welcomed feedback from the group present. Areas discussed included:

- **Physical set-up of the event-** In the future, coordinators feel that having one entrance to the event would help with flow. They feel that additional signage upon entrance would help attendees know about all the activities and their locations. In addition, a paper program with a list of activities and locations could be provided upon entrance to help with orientation to the event. There were also concerns about the number of students exiting the building, apparently unaccompanied, during the event. The safety of the students was the primary concern. In the future, volunteers will be needed as "monitors" to keep students from running outside and from roaming around the building. Additionally, it needs to be stated that this is a family event and that students should not be dropped off. The expectation is that all students will be chaperoned. We did not block off the stairwells prior to the event this year and had students hanging out in the stairwells and the upper floor of the building. In the future, all areas not being used for the event must be blocked off prior to the event starting. Mrs. VanDyke noted that students were also loitering in the restrooms. Part of the "monitor" position in the future will include periodic sweeps of the restrooms.
- **Games-** Mary Rupp welcomed comments about using the hall space for games. Those present at the meeting felt that running games hallways did not seem to be a problem, as they did not prevent passage through the hallway. In addition, there have been concerns in the past about having games in the classrooms, as there is always the concern for the privacy and cleanliness of the classroom. Having some of the games in the hallways prevents causing issues in the classrooms. The Harvest Fest committee felt that the broom stick game worked well. They would not recommend repeating the balloon stomp game as it was very labor intensive and required a lot of materials. They felt that the cereal stroll was well received, but that in the future it needs more organization and should be kept out of the central walkway. They suggested placing chairs out for the number of players for each round. If an attendee wants to play, he or she must be seated in the chair prior to the start of the "stroll". They also felt that perhaps there could be more games utilizing the DJ, such as the limbo and/or a costume contest. The committee noted that the students liked receiving prizes for the games, but they wonder if "bigger" prizes for winning the game would be better received. They also suggested a costume contest with entrants divided either by grade or by costume category. Prizes could be awarded for this contest as well. Allison Hockers noted for any games in the gym, the clear tape used this year left a residue on the gym floor. She stated that she has had good luck using painters tape for marking off areas on the floor and requested that in the future we use painters tape.
- **Food-** The bake sale did very well and generated over \$450. In the future, might consider adding additional offerings, with more substantial fare, like pizza, hot dogs, or nachos, as the event occurs over the dinner hour.
- **Crafts-** The crafts went well. The committee would like to look into purchasing supplies that are owned by the PTO and used at these events so that the art room supplies are not used (such as scissors, glue, staplers). They could be used by any events sponsored by the PTO that involve crafts. They did feel that pushing some of the tables together in the craft area might use the space better and allow the volunteers more room in which to move around and help the crafters.

- **Photo Booth-** The photo booth did not get a lot of use as an actual photo booth. It might be better received if it wasn't in the central area. The committee felt that maybe attendees were self-conscious about posing for photos right in the middle of all the activities. There were props for the photo booth, but they were not well used, as they were difficult to find when the photo area was right in the middle of everything. Perhaps moving it to a hallway or more out of the way space would be helpful. Mary Rupp wondered if it would be possible to purchase a printer for the photo area. Veronica Dax noted that in the past a family had donated use of their personal Polaroid camera and that PTO purchased the film. In the future, if a photo booth is desired, the PTO could set aside funds and/or fundraise to supply the equipment necessary for this activity. Veronica Dax also suggested using the playground benches instead of hay bales if seating is needed for the photo booth. The hay bales broke open during the evening and caused quite a mess.
- **General Questions and comments about Harvest Fest-** The overall intent of the evening should be considered in the planning of the event in the future. Many people noted the different interests of the wide age range that was present at the event. There was discussion about dividing the evening into 2 parts, with the first part for the elementary students, and the second part for the middle school students. Concerns were raised about families that have students in both grade levels, and about providing volunteers for a longer evening. Suggestions were made about dividing the activities up into more discrete areas- leaving the gym as mainly a dance area and having most of the other activities in areas outside of the gym. There was also talk about removing all the activities and leaving the evening as a "dance party" with costumes. The budget for harvest fest this year was \$350. The committee spent \$118. There is room in the existing budget to spend more money if desired. In addition, when the PTO budget is made (usually in July), additional money could be budgeted for Harvest Fest if desired.

General Questions

- Marisa Hanson asked if Mrs. Meader would be doing the Festival Food Discount Card Fundraiser this year. She noted that she liked having the benefits at Festival Food provided by this Fundraiser. Mrs. VanDyke responded that due to Mrs. Meader's maternity leave, she will not be doing the fundraiser this year. Mrs. Hockers stated that she wouldn't mind running the fundraiser and using the proceeds toward the Pi Day fundraising goal. Jan O'Neil suggested that she contact Caryn Gehm for information about this activity.
- Greta Swanson wondered about the Marcus Cinema Fundraiser. She noted that payment information was not clear on the forms that went home with the students. The payment information will be added to the PTO newsletter going out on 11/15/17

Meeting adjourned at 7:21