



**2009-2010
Volunteer Opportunities**

**PTO Events
And School Activities**

A Note from the STAGS PTO President

Welcome Back!!

On behalf of the St. Thomas Aquinas Parent Teacher Organization I'd like to welcome you to the 2009/2010 School Year. The PTO Board has already begun planning another great year of events and activities for you and your family. We hope that you will be able to participate and enjoy many of them.

Over the past few years, we have been blessed with many wonderful parent and parish volunteers. So many of you have given your time and talents to make our events and activities possible. Each year as our events grow our needs grow as well and we ask your continued support as we plan the 2009/2010 school year. There are a wide variety of volunteer opportunities available in this booklet. We have included an overall calendar of events and brief descriptions of the volunteer needs for each activity can be found on pages 6 - 11. Please consider sharing your time and talents, and if possible, becoming an Event Chair or Co-Chair. You may indicate your interests by signing up for the event on Curriculum Night or contacting one of the PTO members listed below.

Upon receiving your interest you will be contacted by the Committee Chair prior to the event to compile a schedule of dates and times that work best for yourself and the committee. The Committee Chair will also reach out to other volunteers as the event draws near. In the past, we have also delegated specific grades to specific events to assist with pre-planning for an event. We will continue to do this as the need for volunteers is greater each year. With the help of volunteers, we have been able to meet our objectives and successfully complete more than 20 events yearly!

Comments and suggestions are always welcome. Please feel free to attend our Quarterly PTO meetings in September, November, February and April. Additionally, you may contact me directly at mb817@cox.net.

Thank you in advance for your time and talents.

Marisa Bell
STAGS PTO President

THE 2009-2010 PTO BOARD
Marisa Bell- President
KellyFitzmaurice -Vice President
Chi Sidener-Funk- Treasurer
Mary Haggerty- Secretary
Annabelle Mendoza- Room Parent Coordinator

STAGS PTO

What is PTO?

PTO is a parent and teacher association formed to provide a strong connection between home and school.

Who are the Members of PTO?

All parents and guardians of students as well as all staff of St. Thomas Aquinas Grade School.

What are the PTO Objectives?

STA-PTO will be a partnership of parents, students, administration and faculty. The organization will strive to support and assist the school in developing the whole child in a Catholic, faith-based environment, to promote academic excellence in a safe and nurturing environment, and to help foster personal responsibility, positive discipline, service to others and life long learning.

This organization shall cooperate with and assist the administration and faculty of the school by:

- Supporting and assisting the administration and faculty to achieve their goals.
- Respecting, promoting, and carrying out the policies and practices initiated and formulated by the school administration.
- Involving all parents in fundraising in order to sustain the further development of all students.
- Writing proposals and/or suggestions to the Advisory Board for consideration.
- Providing an avenue for communication between home and school.
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- Providing appropriate informational programs for the parents.
- Provide activities and events that will enhance the overall Catholic Experience for students, staff and parents.
- Generate funding to support all PTO events.

PTO History.

Our Parent Teacher Organization was created in August of 2003, the first year our wonderful school opened. Over the past 6 years the Board has developed new activities and events to enhance the school life at St. Thomas Aquinas. Based upon your feedback and the needs of our staff we continue to build on that foundation to provide for a smooth running Organization in the years to come.

VOLUNTEERS

Who can volunteer?

Everyone! It takes many dedicated parents and guardians to volunteer their time and efforts to create the success of St Thomas Aquinas Grade School.

Volunteering your time can be very rewarding. It is a wonderful way to make a positive influence in your child's life. Volunteering is also an important and fun opportunity to work closely with the staff members and other parents.

The volunteer opportunities at St. Thomas Aquinas Grade School are endless. Please consider volunteering your time for the events/activities that interest you and that would fit into your schedule.

Safety and Security/ Call to Protect Training

For the safety and security of our students all parents and volunteers must attend the Call to Protect Training course or have the update completed **prior** to volunteering for all STAGS events. It is also important that you sign in at the office and wear a volunteer badge, this will NOT document your hours but will identify you as a volunteer on campus.

What does an Event Chair Do?

As an event chair, you will organize and plan a specific event or activity. A PTO member will assist you and direct you as needed. If there is an event chair that you have a great interest in and are not sure you want to chair by yourself, sign-up to co-chair an event with a friend and have twice as much fun! We need your time and talents to have a successful year, these events make a difference to each child at STA. Please dedicate some time to make a difference in our children's education.

On the following pages you will find descriptions of the volunteer opportunities for STAGS events and school activities. Please consider volunteering to either chair an event or to work in some other capacity.

St Thomas Aquinas Grade School

Volunteer Characteristics and Responsibilities

An effective school is a partnership between parents, school and students. We are grateful for and dependent upon parent volunteers who enhance the quality of education we are able to provide all students. We encourage parents to become involved in the educational process, but for the protection of all students we require parents to adhere to very specific responsibilities.

Volunteer Characteristics

- Honest in approach and attitude
- Patient when working with students
- Flexible in responding to the needs of students
- Are prompt and dependable in their attendance
- Friendly to teachers and children
- Discreet, sincere, and dedicated
- Appreciative of the efforts of St Thomas Aquinas Grade School to provide the maximum learning opportunities for every student
- Supportive of administration and staff
- Able to communicate with staff in expressing concerns and questions with the teacher

Volunteer Responsibilities

Punctuality

As a courtesy to staff and other volunteers, please arrive on time. If you cannot make your scheduled volunteer time, please call the school or Committee Chair in advance.

Support

The teachers and staff are responsible for all that occurs at St. Thomas Aquinas Grade School during the school day or during school sponsored activities. Teachers are responsible for providing curriculum and/or lesson plans, disciplining students, evaluating achievement and counseling students. Volunteers supplement and support this system.

PTO EVENTS & VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Following is a list of PTO sponsored events and activities. You will find a description of the event as well as a general volunteer job description. Please note that some of the activities need event chairs and volunteers, while other activities may need volunteers only. The specific needs follow each of the event names.

~~AUGUST~~

Aug. 5th Ice Cream Social and Uniform Sale - This event is put on by the PTO Board and Members. All STAGS family members are encouraged to attend and socialize with new and old friends. You might also see some of your favorite teachers!

Aug. 10th Open House/Curriculum Night- This event is put on by Administration and STAGS Staff. Plan on attending this event to meet all of your children's teachers for the upcoming school year. Your child's teacher will pass out expectations for the school year and review their curriculum plan. You will also have an opportunity to sign up for upcoming PTO events that are offered for the 2009/2010 school year.

Aug. 28th STAGS Annual Beach Bash- This event kicks off the beginning of school and allows children to re-visit with old friends in out of school atmosphere. The event is held at the YMCA that neighbors our school. Volunteers are needed to help organize, set up, and clean up the date of the event as well as assist in decorating the Recreation Room where the event is held. All families are asked to bring a pot-luck dish to share.

~~SEPTEMBER~~

Sept. 9th General PTO Meeting- All parents and guardians are encouraged to attend PTO meetings. A Staff representative will be there to offer information on classroom activities. Discussion may include upcoming events and volunteer needs, on-going information on school growth, lectures and speakers that represent current issues. Volunteer Hours are given for attendance.

~~OCTOBER~~

Teacher Conference Lunches- Volunteers

Lunch is provided for teachers during conference days in October. Volunteers prepare and/or serve the appreciation meal during the conference days.

Turkey Drive- Volunteers

Volunteers are needed to help distribute turkeys to families who have purchased these items for Thanksgiving.

Oct 8th – 18th Scholastic Book Fair- Volunteers

Enjoy shopping for books for the entire family. The STAGS Book Fair is held twice annually and all profits benefit our School library and classroom needs. The event chair works with the PTO, principal and scholastic book representative to conduct a book fair that is designed to meet the needs of our school. **Event Co-Chairs** are recommended for this event to coordinate the operation and scheduling of the Book Fair. **Volunteers** are needed to help with student contests, decoration of signage, set-up, take down, and overall working the fair during the 10 day period.

Oct. 15th Spaghetti Dinner-Volunteers

Enjoy your STAGS Community at 1 of our Spaghetti Dinners. The Hospitality Committee graciously provides a free dinner to your family twice during the school year. **Volunteers** are needed to help set-up, distribute and clean-up dinner.

~~NOVEMBER~~

Nov. 17th General PTO Meeting- please see description above.

Nov. 5th Scrip Christmas Sale Begins- Volunteer

On-going volunteers are needed to assist the SCRIP team.

Nov. 21st Parish Ball-Parish Event- Volunteer

The Parish Ball is an annual event that benefits our school in many ways. Volunteers are needed in many aspects; donations, talents, pre-planning coordination as this event is worked on yearly, set-up, clean-up, working during event, ticket sales and many other needs. Please contact Committee Chair for further information.

Nov. 21st – Dec. 13th Honey Baked Ham- Volunteer

This is one of the few fundraisers created for the PTO to provide ongoing activities for our school. Volunteers are needed to help sell (mostly weekends before and after mass) and distribute items. This event is offered during Christmas and Easter.

~~DECEMBER~~

Cookie Drive for STAFF- Volunteer

Annually parents bake and purchase cookies and baked goods as a Christmas Present to our wonderful STAGS staff for all that they do for our children. **Volunteers** are needed to assist with the distribution and collection of all baked goodies...as well as make them!

~~JANUARY~~

Hot Cocoa Sale-Volunteer

Hot Cocoa will be sold prior to school as a fundraiser for our Hospitality and Student Council.

Catholic Schools Week Breakfast for Teachers-Volunteer

Catholic Schools Week events are put on mostly by our staff; however the PTO honors them with a breakfast at the weeks end. **Volunteers** are needed to help set up, cook and clean.

Jan 25th & 26th Authors Week- Volunteer

This is our second year for the event and it was a success. Local Authors will come to STAGS to share their gifts of literature and story telling. **Volunteers** are needed for welcome banners for the authors, breakfast and/or lunch, refreshments and thank you letters. This event will be held as long as funds are available.

~~FEBRUARY~~

Feb. 17th General PTO Meeting-Volunteer Hours given. Please see description above.

Feb. 27th – Mar. 21st Honey Baked Ham- Volunteer

This is our 2nd sale of the year. Please see description in November.

~~MARCH~~

March 12th Jog-a-thon – Volunteer

This is the largest fundraiser PTO offers. This event has provided smart boards for our classroom, science kits, new computers for the media center, overhead projectors and many other items. Collaboratively the principal, staff and PTO work together to meet the needs of our school with the profits. **Volunteers** are needed to assist with letter writing, donations, set-up, D.J., clean-up and many, many other duties. Please contact Committee Chair for specific needs.

March 10th - 2nd Spaghetti Dinner Family Night- Volunteer

Enjoy your STAGS Community at 1of our Spaghetti Dinners. The Hospitality Committee graciously provides a free dinner to your family twice during the school year. **Volunteers** are needed to help set-up, distribute and clean-up dinner

~~APRIL~~

Annual Appeal-

The Annual Appeal is a fundraising campaign. This fundraiser takes the place of door to door sales of candy, pizza, cookie dough etc. Each school family is expected to participate. When the school appeal is complete the Appeal Committee along with school and parent volunteers take the fundraiser to the parish through letters and a second

collection. Annual Appeals are a very common forum for Catholic fundraising in Catholic Schools.

Sugar Cookies/Lemonade Sale – Collaboratively our Hospitality Committee and Student Council will bake and sell lemonade and cookies. The profits assist with providing appreciation items/meals for our staff. **Volunteers are needed to help sell.**

April 27th General PTO Election-

Each year the PTO nominates a parent or guardian to volunteer on our School Board. This member will collaborate with other parents, parishioners and our principal monthly to review our school needs. They will serve a 3 year term, a short biography and application prior to the election is needed.

~~MAY~~

May 14th End of Year Picnic -Volunteer

This is our end of the year celebration where the staff and children can let loose and enjoy their community in a picnic fashion. The Room Parents in collaboration with the PTO ask each grade to donate a specific item to create a pot-luck. Volunteers are needed to assist with set-up, organization of goods, working “games”, clean-up and many other needs. The planning of this event begins in March.

Eighth Grade Graduation- Volunteer

Our current 7th grade families will host this event. A representative of the 7th grade is needed to coordinate with the principal for this event. Many volunteers will be needed to assist with the breakfast, dance and graduation. This includes decorating, cooking, cleaning, refreshments etc.

~~ONGOING and NEW EVENTS~~

CTO Campaign- Volunteer

This committee generates funds thru Arizona's state tax credit law to be used for tuition assistance. The committee educates the school parents and the parish on the benefits of this program. The committee usually meets about four times during the fall semester. Additionally, we cover about 8 weekends of masses during the fall semester. If you are interested in helping in anyway with this committee, please contact Bob Whitehouse at 535-9746.

Uniform Sale-Volunteer

This year the Uniform Committee will offer re-sale items for sale once a month in the conference room after school. Dates will be posted in the weekly Newsletter. Twice yearly Dennis Uniforms is invited on campus to sell new items as well.

Scrip Sale- Volunteer

Scrip is a term that means "substitute money". When you purchase Scrip, you are purchasing gift cards, at face value, that are used just like cash at participating local and national retailers. The revenue generated when STA purchases Scrip at a discount and sells the Scrip at face value. Each participating business determines their revenue percentage; this percentage is then applied to your \$150.00 Scrip obligation.

Ex. Purchase a \$25 Starbucks card with a 7% revenue would make \$1.75 towards obligation.

****Our Scrip Team will offer sales every week and at Sunday Masses. Please see school newsletter for specific days and time.**

Social Coffee Hour-Volunteer

PTO is going to offer a "social hour" provided for parents and non-school age children. These informal coffees provide a place for you to meet and talk with other parents. An **Event Chair** is needed for this event to help set-up before and clean up after event. **Volunteers** may also provide food. The PTO will provide drinks and paper products.

Box Top and Campbell's Soup Label Coordinator- 1 Volunteer

This Committee Chair collects and submits labels for a cash donation to our school.

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES & VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

All Around Volunteer

Willing to volunteer as needed for projects as they arise.

Coaches- Volunteer

Without coach volunteers we are unable to have teams. This need is for an entire season and your dedication is greatly appreciated. Grades 5th-8th can compete in basketball, flag-football, baseball, and volleyball.

Field Day

Work with P.E. Teacher to supervise a student team of mixed grade levels in non-competitive games, help serve a picnic lunch or assist at the nurse's station. This event is held outside during the last month of school.

Guest Speaker

Share your expertise with students of varying grade levels.

Health Screening Volunteer

One full day at school is required. Volunteers will be trained in the morning to screen the student population in areas of vision, hearing and scoliosis. Please see office for more information

Room Parent-Volunteer

This is a great way to get to know your teacher and families. Room Parents offer communication to their respective classrooms, assist with field trip needs (scheduling), organize classroom parties- for lower grades, assist with the creativity of the classroom basket that is auctioned at the Parish Ball, help schedule volunteers and confirm that the lunchroom is adequately staffed and assist with the End of the Year Picnic. Other needs vary depending on the grade.

Lunchroom Helpers

Assist the lunchroom staff in serving the students at lunchtime from approximately 10:30-1:00. Volunteer 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 days per week.

Playground Supervisors

Assure student safety on the playground. This is on an as needed basis.

Yearbook

Assist the Yearbook Committee Chair in taking and organizing pictures for our Annual Yearbook distributed the last week of school.

PTO FINANCES

The Parent Teacher Organization was created to fund the events it puts on annually. Any overages of these fundraisers are decided on by the Board and Principal. The items that are financed by the PTO are as follows: All Hospitality needs, Spaghetti Dinners, Beach Bash, Field Day, Authors Week, End of the Year BBQ, Teacher Gifts, and Ice Cream Social. All other needs that are brought to the PTO are agreed upon by the entire board.

PTO FUNDING

The St. Thomas Aquinas Grade School raises money in the following ways:

Box Tops for Education- The profits created by these items are used for all PTO financed events.

Campbell's Soup Labels-

Target-

Scholastic Book Fair- these monies are distributed in the way of books and products from Scholastic.

Honey Baked Ham- Profits from this are directly given to the 8th Grade Scholarship

Jog-a-Thon- A portion of these funds is donated to a local charity. All other funds created by this fundraiser are determined by the Principal with input from the PTO and School Board.