

## **Festival Planning Committee Minutes Meeting of June 21, 2012**

**Attending:** Fr. David Blanchfield, Suzanne Calnon, Rusty Cappadona, Bill Groener, Fr. Mike Hoag, Greg Kryspin, Lorraine Larkin, Dan & Florence Loch, Lisa & Jack O'Melia

Suzanne began the meeting with a brief opening prayer at 7:40 pm.

### **New Chairperson**

Suzanne explained, as she had done in a previous e-mail to the committee members, that she is stepping down as chairperson of the Festival Planning Committee.

A discussion followed concerning the future of the parish festival and if the parish should skip holding the festival this year, then have it return in 2013. Fr. Mike said that even if a year is skipped, a new chairperson should come forward to preserve momentum for future festivals. Florence expressed a deep concern that the festival would not return unless it were held this year.

After some further discussion, Dan volunteered to be the new chairperson and the committee began brainstorming ideas for the 2012 festival.

### **This Year's Festival**

#### Location

Suzanne said she had reserved Cranbury Park and its pavilion for \$100 for Sunday, September 23. She pointed out that a parish in-pew "ballot" survey at Sunday Masses on April 21-22, 2007 showed that parishioners preferred the park to the church hall for the festival by a vote of more than two-to-one.

Jack, however, advanced the idea to hold the festival at the church hall rather than the park. Seniors appreciate its being at the hall. A festival at the church hall would cut down significantly on the work of transporting the many materials (tables, chairs, grill, food, utensils, paper goods, children's games, etc.) from the church to Cranbury Park and make cooking easier what with the large grill and the kitchen right at the church hall.

Some said senior parishioners greatly preferred the church hall. Rusty felt strongly said that children like the park and its open spaces.

A majority of those present opted for the church hall.

#### Theme and Menu

In keeping with the decision to hold the festival at the church hall so set-up would be easier, it was agreed not to have an elaborate, specialized theme or a multiple-entre, quasi-theme-specific menu as we have had the past several years, but to keep the day and the menu simple.

The menu would be hamburgers, hot dogs, potato salad, coleslaw, and green salad, most, if not all of which would be purchased in bulk from Costco and supplemented by requests for donations from Stew Leonard's, Costco, Shop Rite, and others.

Desserts would be requested by sign-up for desserts to share and/or to enter in a Dessert Contest. Food prep would be significantly decreased from the past several years when food prep volunteers were needed for the Saturday-before in addition to the Sunday-morning-of the festival.

Bill Groener will help with Food, but is not in town on September 30. John Davis is not available because of business requirements. Tom Bennett did not attend and Suzanne did not hear from him. Dan will ask Karen Christensen to head Food since she organized the June 23 parish raffle picnic for 200 parishioners.

*[ After the meeting – Dan called Karen Christensen and she agreed to head Food. Karen sent Dan the Costco shopping list she used and the menu from Boar’s Head catering John Davis used for the June 23 parish raffle picnic for 200 people. ]*

*[ Again, after the meeting – Tom Bennett, who headed the festival cooking in the past, contacted Dan and offered to help. Dan asked him to advise Karen on food quantities to purchase and to head and be one of the grillers. ]*

The Festival Food planning binder is missing and was not turned in last year. *[ After the meeting – Dan asked and neither Karen or Lorraine have the Food binder. Dan asked Tom Bennett who said he may have the binder and would look for it. ]*

#### Date

The REACH religious education schedule surfaced as a concern. Fr. David said Director of Religious Education Kathy Coyne feels there are too many breaks in the REACH schedule of classes. With classes starting on September 9, a September 23rd festival means a break in the REACH schedule after only two sessions, followed by a break in another two weeks for the October 8 Columbus Day holiday.

Several members suggested the festival be on Sunday, September 30, the actual Feast Day of St. Jerome, the parish’s patron saint, and the traditional date for the festival. The members thought September 30 was preferable to September 23. Some suggested that a church hall festival also made possible a rain date of Sunday, October 13.

Suzanne will try to recover the \$100 already paid for reserving the Cranbury Park pavilion. *[ After the meeting – Suzanne went in person to the Norwalk Parks and Recreation Department and asked for a refund. Their policy is not to give refunds, but given the far-in-advance date of the reservation, the secretary would ask the department head. No answer yet. Suzanne feels we will not get a refund. ]*

#### Increasing Attendance of Families

Discussion next centered on how to attract more children to the festival so it would be, as always was intended, for families. In 2010 some 80 children attended the festival at the park. Last year 50 children attended when, just before its scheduled date, the festival was transferred to the church hall because rain threatened use of the park.

Fr. David advanced a novel idea: hold the festival at the church hall right after the 11:00 AM Sunday Mass and on a REACH Sunday. The children (some 200) would already be at the church and need only walk downstairs at 11:30 AM to be at the festival. The REACH classes that day would be held as they are on Passion Sunday.

All grades would go to the 9:15 AM Mass, all grades would have class after the 9:15, and there would be no 10:30 AM Mass in the church hall for Grade 4-6.

The members present decided this plan to hold the festival on a REACH Sunday should be tried and that a simplified theme of "Parish Family Festival" would be good. This "theme" would of course include families and also all members of the parish family, meaning single individuals.

#### Entertainment and Children's Games

Daniela O'Callaghan has run Entertainment extremely well for at least the last six years, but cannot do so this year. Dan will try to recruit a new person to head Entertainment.

Jack will provided recorded music. He also will research information on games for adults, perhaps even Bingo.

Part of the idea of having the festival at the church this year rather than the park is not only to simplify the food, but also to accentuate the games for children. Coupled with the plan to hold the festival immediately after REACH, this is intended to bring in more children and their families.

Fr. Mike spoke highly of the simple class-day games played by the students at All Saints School and said he would contact All Saints parents to get detailed information about those class-day games.

Dan talked about the inflatables available from Taylor Rental in Wilton as possibilities for children's games and showed a print-out from the Taylor Rental web site of a basketball hoops game inflatable.

Fr. David suggested the grassy area beside the rear parking lot and next to the school building as suitable for outdoor games for children. Others felt this area was both too small and, more importantly, too far away from the hall and would require parents to relocate from the hall to the other side of the building and that grassy area in order to be with their children.

*[ After the meeting – Maria Cappadona, who worked with Daniela in past years, volunteered to help with Entertainment. Fr. Mike obtained from Kathy Rohr a 14-page set of specific instructions for the class-day All Saints School outdoor games. Dan forwarded this outdoor games information to Maria and e-mailed her the contact information for the last two festival magicians, the contact information for Geiger's Garden Center small pumpkins for decorating, and the Wilton Taylor Rental web page information on rental party inflatables. ]*

#### Admission Price

With a continuing of the depressed economy, Jack suggested a Family Price admission of \$20. Others suggested that another way to increase attendance by families and children was simply to give free admission to children if accompanied by a paying adult, as we did for the last Parish Fish Fry/Bake. Another member recommended reducing the adult admission to \$10, a \$5 decrease from the \$15 charged in 2010 and 2011 and a \$2 decrease from the \$12 charged from 2006 to 2009.

The members present agreed to this pricing. It would make adult attendance more affordable and should make for increased attendance by the children who would already be at church on September 30 for their REACH classes.

#### Festival Liturgy

Joe O'Callaghan is not available to head Festival Liturgy. The Festival Liturgy planning binder is missing and was not turned in last year. *[ After the meeting – Dan asked and Joe does not have the Liturgy binder. ]*

As with past festivals held at the church hall, there will be no separate 4:30 PM concluding festival liturgy, but there will be the regularly scheduled Sunday 6:00 PM Life Teen Mass to which festival attendees will be invited, especially if they stay after 4:00 PM to help with clean-up. *[ After the meeting – Suzanne thought a special festival liturgy is not needed because the festival will begin right after the Sunday 11:00 AM Mass and celebrating a festival liturgy at the Sunday 6:00 PM Mass would be two hours after the festival ends. ]*

#### **Festival Planning Committee Roles**

- Chairperson – Dan Loch
- Food – Karen Christensen with Bill Groener, Tom Bennett
- Entertainment – Maria Cappadona
- Set-Up – Rusty Cappadona (and Dan will ask Alex Sgoutas also to help as he has done since 2008).
- Tickets / Treasurer – Greg Kryspin
- Publicity – Kathy Kryspin, Dan Loch
- Volunteers – Florence Loch
- Photography – Jack O'Melia
- Dessert Contest – Lorraine Larkin
- Liturgy – to be decided

The meeting ended at 8:54 PM.

Submitted by:

Dan Loch, Chairperson

July 23, 2012