

Tyler A&M Mothers' Club General Meeting

September 19, 2019

The general meeting was held at Pollard United Methodist Church at 6:30 p.m. with approximately 38 in attendance. A Mini-Boutique was set up for attendees to shop for Aggie-themed items. Our new Tyler Aggie Mom T-shirts and the decals featuring our logo were also for sale. The T-Shirt Quilt was on display, and raffle tickets to win either the quilt or an Aggieland Outfitters' \$100 gift certificate were also for sale.

At 6:40 p.m., Renee Wright, President, welcomed everyone with a "Howdy". She introduced herself and noted that she was excited to see so many new Aggie Moms. She invited attendees to help themselves to the refreshments. Katie Latham, Vice-President-at-Large, offered an opening prayer.

Renee passed around a list to make sure we have the email addresses of those present to ensure they receive club notices during the absence of Tracye Martin, 1st Vice-President – Membership. Karyn Ard, Corresponding Secretary, is filling in for Tracye. Renee introduced all of the officers with a brief description of their function.

The **minutes** from the April 18th general meeting, the May 2nd End-Of-Year Meeting, and the Howdy Dinner held on August 10th were previously emailed to the membership. Paper copies were also available. Sheila Parker made a **motion** to approve the minutes. Sharon Brown seconded the motion, and it carried with a "Gig 'Em".

The Fall **Goody Bags** will be an embroidered pillowcase. Goody Bags are delivered in College Station right before semester final exams. Order forms are available for both the Fall and the Spring. Volunteers are needed to help on delivery day.

Kristie Smonko, who was our 2nd Vice-President – Programs, has moved back to Killeen. Most of the **programs** have already been planned, but if you are willing to help us with this function, please let us know.

Christi Nelson and Paula Kimmey passed out order forms for the **Butter Braids fundraiser** that starts tonight. Forms are due back at the next meeting on October 17th. Sellers from last year also got their past order forms so that they could contact those customers for repeat orders. Butter Braids are delivered frozen. They are easy to sell and easy to thaw and bake. The cookies are pull-apart dough so that you can just bake a few. Several flavors of both the Butter Braids and cookies are available. New this year are caramel rolls. The orders will be delivered around the first of November. Extra order forms are available if you need more than one. Samples of some of the flavors were the refreshments for the meeting.

New this year is the ability to order Butter Braids online. Christi and Paula will send the link so that it can be posted to your social media accounts. The customer should select your name from the list because the Butter Braids and cookies will still be delivered in person since they are a frozen product. There is a convenience fee for ordering online. Ordering online does offer an option for those people who want to pay using a credit card rather than cash or checks.

The club earns 40% from this fundraiser. Our goal is to raise \$3000.

Renee pointed out that the reason we have fundraisers is to be able to give out **scholarships**. Last year we gave out thirty-seven \$500 scholarships.

Luba Pitonakova, 4th Vice-President – Projects, noted that Aggie Moms are great because the club gives the moms something to be a part of when they are missing their Aggies. She asked for ideas for the **items in the Silent Auction** to be held with the Scholarship Dinner in February. Lynette Maynard is coordinating the auction. Luba also asked for the names of business owners who might be interested in providing a donation for the auction. Dads are welcome at the dinner.

Renee announced that the **Scholarship Dinner and Auction** will be held February 29th on the top floor of the Robert M. Rogers Nursing & Health Sciences Center building at Tyler Junior College. The previous date had been February 8th, but it was moved to the 29th. Last year's 70th Birthday Celebration was a fun night with both silent and live auctions. It was a very successful fundraiser, and we are making it a yearly event.

Katie, who is also the **Boutique** Chairperson for the Federation this year, said that we are always welcome to ideas for items to sell at Boutique. We have not participated the last few years except for the raffle, but we can always consider it. We will probably raffle another BTHO quilt this year.

Renee noted that Katie's husband, Greig Latham, has published a book on how to study on Kindle for \$1 that would be a great resource for your Aggie.

Renee introduced **Brad Gifford '03**, who is the director of the TRiO Program at TJC. (TRiO is a program offered free to students. TRiO means Touching Lives, Reaching Out, Increasing Knowledge, and Opening Doors.) Brad gave an informative talk on **Financial Aid**. All college aid starts with the FAFSA – Free Application for Federal Student Aid. The FAFSA needs to be filled out yearly. “It is very important to complete your FAFSA!” Submittal opens October 1st through mid-March. The opening date was changed due to the filing time of tax returns, so that this year's FAFSA is based on 2018 income from tax forms filed in April. There are four types of student financial aid:

1. Pell Grants which are based on income.
2. TPEG (Texas Public Educational Grant) / TEOG (Texas Educational Opportunity Grant) / SEOG (Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant) – These grants have limited funds and are awarded on a first-come-first-served basis on when the FAFSA was submitted. The TPEG is only available for a student's first semester.
3. Student Loans – both subsidized, where the government pays the interest while in school, and unsubsidized, where the interest accrues during school. Student loan repayments start six months after graduation.
4. Scholarships

A&M also offers work-study programs which also require a FAFSA. Work-study programs are awarded based on the cost of attendance where there must be an additional need after other aid. There are also departments that hire student workers.

Every third FAFSA filed on the website is verified. Verification is done through lots of additional questions. It is “luck of the draw”.

Brad also gave pointers on **how to develop credit**. If the parents make the student an authorized user on their credit card (not the same as just allowing your student to use your credit card), then they inherit the same credit history that you have on that account. Parents could also set up a secured credit card, where you fund an account with a set amount of money. When the student uses the card, money is taken out of that account. After six months of good payment, this account would change to a revolving credit card.

Brad encourages students to set up a recurring expense on the card and then “cut it up” to avoid excessive charges.

Brad suggested that parents teach **budgeting skills** using envelopes. A certain amount of money each month is segregated into categories such as food, entertainment, and transportation. If the student overspends their food bill, they will have to cut down on entertainment or transportation to be able to buy groceries for the rest of the month.

Brad was given a gift as a thank-you.

Renee and Katie led the group in an Aggie-themed game. Katie spun the **Wheel of Aggie Fortune** (made by Aggie Mom Joni Farmer), and Renee either asked an Aggie trivia question about Traditions, Aggie Moms, Corps of Cadets, Campus Life, or In & About College Station depending on the spin. Attendees with the correct answers received a Hershey’s kiss. (Thanks to Jan Carter for passing out the candy!) If the spin landed on Whoop, Aggie, or Gig ‘Em, Renee told an Aggie joke.

Sharon Brown, 3rd Vice-President – Publicity, reminded Aggie Moms to visit the public (“Tyler A&M Mothers’ Club”) and private (“Tyler Aggie Moms”) **Facebook** pages.

Renee and Karyn held **door prize drawings**. Three attendees won prizes which included muffins from Karyn’s dad, Manuel Bulhoes (aka The Muffin Man).

Renee thanked everyone for coming. The next meeting will be October 17th. She encouraged attendees to talk to the committee members stationed around the room about areas of interest. She reminded everyone to turn in their membership and Goody Bag forms. There are Aggie Mom Brag forms and Prayer Request forms for items to be included in the newsletter.

Attendees gathered for a **group picture** taken by Margaret Rapp, Historian.

The meeting was concluded at 7:45 p.m.

(Minutes by Jessica Knowles, Recording Secretary)