P&F President’s report, 2011

Reflecting on 2011, it was certainly an emotional rollercoaster of a year!

Floods

We started the year with the devastating floods – as a community, we were probably fortunate that the number of school families directly affected was not higher, but no-one living in Brisbane’s west will forget the scenes of utter heartbreak, and the smell of the mud.

Thank God, the P&F had started using broadcast emails to communicate with the whole community in late 2010, and this meant that we were able to touch base with most parents and others in the parish, establish who needed help, and get the army of volunteers to the right place at the right time. One of my lasting memories of the flood will be Fr Greg Jacobs with a shovel in his hand, scraping mud out of the Pradella’s pool! The St Ignatius community were amazing in this time of need, and just quietly, I cried with pride and compassion as we loaded car after car with hot meals, clean underpants and toiletries donated by St Iggies families to donate to local flood victims.

Our amazing community continued its generosity, when we decided to share the financial benefits of our major fundraiser – Goldicott Opera. $10,000 of the $25,000 profit was given to a small Catholic school in our area that was hit hard by the floods.

The flood of generosity this year wasn’t limited to helping with the physical floods. This community has come together to support its members who faced many forms of heartache this year – the meals, the gifts, all the support that you have shown to others in our midst is truly the spirit of St Ignatius moving in our community. Through your love and generosity, you are living the words of this parish’s mission prayer: “We, the St Ignatius community…..pray that we give hope to others by a practical, personal kindness, affirming each person's dignity, worth and destiny in Christ.”

Fun

We also know that having fun together is a key to building this tight-knit community, and we certainly did that, this year! Events included -

- the Trivia Night – fierce rivalry, lots of fun and some amazing costumes – boys, we loved those ballet costumes (!), and who’ll forget the Mud Army or the schoolgirls!
- Goldicott Opera – a gutsy call by the Committee (Maree!) to proceed despite the clouds was vindicated, and we had an amazing night under the stars with the gorgeous Bella Divas. Thanks to Sister Anna’s prayers for a protective bubble until after 10pm, the rain held off until the evening had formally concluded, and then invigorated us all to clean up in record time ahead of the storm clouds.
- School Disco – I don’t know if the kids or the parents had more fun – thank you to our Year 7 parents for coordinating this event.
- Riverfire – a new tradition started!
• Sunset Soiree – great music, great pizzas, and a relaxed casual way to finish 2011 with great friends

These events and all the others are about getting to know the other parents in our school, building our community ties and enjoying the camaraderie. As the parent of a new “preppie” this year, I have loved getting to know a whole new group of parents, and the enthusiasm of the new blood has been wonderful.

Finances

From a financial point of view, the major achievements of the P&F this year have been -

• $22,500 to complete the introduction of an Interactive Whiteboard in every classroom in the school. This project, undertaken over the past 2 years, has cost the P&F about $75,000, and fulfils our children’s birth right, as digital natives, under the creative and clever guidance of the school’s teachers and the wonderful Jill Wilson
• A further $25,000 for technology, including iPads, iPods, laptops and computers across the school
• Nearly $4000 for robotics kits
• Approximately $3000 to maintain and replace equipment previously purchased by the P&F for the school – we have replaced a large number of fridges and have paid for the servicing of the airconditioning units across the school

The P&F is also aware that now, and in the future, families in our community suffer enormous distress due to bereavement, illness, trauma, accident and disaster. Together with the Parish, we have established a fund to be administered by the school to assist with day-to-day issues e.g. housekeeping assistance, medical bills, school fees, and the purchase of essential white goods - to Lift Up Their Hearts.

For your efforts, thank you

Thank you to all St Ignatius parents, for the support you have shown to the P&F and to each other, this year – you are wonderful people and we are truly blessed.

The class co-ordinators have a key role in building our school community – they

• “muster the troops” for the class-designated fundraising activity,
• arrange “plays in the park”, and
• organise coffee mornings and progressive dinners for parents.

These are the things that build our sense of community with other parents in our child’s year. The class co-ordinators are also the “eyes and ears” of the P&F – passing on to the class what happened at the P&F meetings, and letting the P&F know if there are issues that should be addressed. Thank you to all who volunteered this year in this role – you build a better school community with your efforts.
Thanks also to those who feed and clothe our children – the Tuckshop and Uniform shop volunteers. Kathy Ducker, Nicole Harris, Rameka Chappell and their band of helpers give our kids their Friday tuckshop treat, and Felicity Riedent-Tiercelet and her helpers ensure that every child looks great in their uniform.

I’d particularly like to thank Maree Ott, who is stepping down from the role of Vice President – Maree, I’d have been lost without your friendship, calming words of wisdom and attention to detail in the last three years. Toni Casey and Shelley Duffy have also been wonderful in their roles, and I really appreciate their friendship, which makes this job more fun.

Every parent in the School is a member of the P&F, and I thank you for the support that you give to the School and to the P&F. Thanks to our principal, Roycelyn and her team, for their support. And thank you to the parents who attend P&F meetings, for your friendship.

I give special thanks to my loving husband and kids, who tolerate and support me in this role.

God bless, and Merry Christmas

Kaylene Perissinotto