

Timberwolves Lacrosse

A Look at Fundraising and Expenses

Spring 2018

Dear Timberwolves Families,

If you're reading this, you must be interested in why the Timberwolves do fundraising, and where the money goes. Has anyone noticed players from other teams wearing a variety of helmets on the field? No, they are not borrowing players from other organizations— those helmets were purchased by their parents. Imagine, on top of registration fees, having to purchase hundreds of dollars of equipment for a sport your child just wants to try out, or for equipment they will likely outgrow within a year or two.

The Timberwolves Lacrosse program is unique among many teams in the IBLA and in our surrounding area, as we provide all necessary safety equipment for our players. Providing equipment to our players is an integral part of giving every family the ability to try lacrosse with as little financial investment as possible. This entire cost of equipment is not passed through to the parents. Registration fees are relatively low, even compared with the programs that do not provide safety equipment. However, you may have noticed we have increased the number of fundraising efforts this year. Many parents have asked where the registration and fundraising money goes. It's a logical question, so we'd like to share some information with you.

Fundraising

First, we are so very grateful to the Special Events Committee for their time and creative efforts in helping to raise funds so the Timberwolves can continue to provide safe equipment and a great experience for our kids. They are constantly thinking of ways to involve the whole organization and improve our program! This spring, we have had:

- multiple dining nights at R-Dogs and Antioch Pizza,
- a pre-season roller skating party,
- a jump night at Jump America.

Dining nights are a convenient way to raise funds, get others in the community involved, raise awareness of our program, and they also serve as fantastic team-building events. However, stop and think for a moment about what 15% of your dining bill actually produces. It is less than most families tip their servers. Those attending the other fundraising efforts this year had a great time and we look forward to more successful events in the future. Every little bit helps, but we have many expenses to cover throughout the year. Just where does that money go?

Expenses

There are numerous expenses associated with the lacrosse program. Following are some examples, but others may come up over the course of the season as well.

Equipment:

- Uniforms - the best in the area for sure, and the players get to keep them.
- Helmets - have a shelf life and are generally on a 3-5 year rotation, depending upon budget and cost per item. If a player were to buy a new helmet online equivalent to what he/she is currently using, the cost per item would be over \$200. Used are available for less, but quality is questionable and it is likely your child's size will change more than once over their Timberwolves career.
- Elbow pads, shoulder pads, and gloves - All are provided to our players. We generally look to phase-out and replace these items in the off-season to save money. Our board members are always looking for bulk rates and special deals to keep costs down.

- Balls - It is hard to believe how many we lose each year. They get lost in the reeds, woods, away fields, and even an occasional, surely unintended, players' bag. For indoor space, we need to purchase indoor balls as well. Lacrosse balls are a huge expense each year.
- Sanitization - All of our equipment gets sanitized yearly. In general, the cost of this service is well over \$1000.
- Other equipment such as goals, rebounders, first aid kits, goalie gear and sticks, and more, repaired/replaced as needed.

Maintenance:

- Recurring: Seeding the grass, painting the fields, cleaning service for the bathrooms, rental space for the equipment trailer . . . these are just a few examples of ongoing, recurring maintenance costs.
- Incidental: Scoreboard repair, other field repairs, the purchase of a flip scoreboard "just in case", etc. All the little things that come up.
- Celebrations: Awards, awards picnic, Mother's Day flowers, etc.

Equipment Shed:

You may recall that last summer Boy Scout Troop 188 built a storage shed at Loffredo Park. All associated costs were funded by the lacrosse program. The cost of the shed will be offset by a reduction in storage rental fees over time, but the account did take a significant hit in 2017. Additionally, we still pay monthly rent for our trailer's parking space.

League Fees:

- We pay the league for each team participating.
- Included in these fees are provisional oversight, operational costs, referee fees, tournament expenses, and more.

Program Growth:

- With the rise of popularity and the addition of lacrosse to the IHSA, we have been growing! Fantastic! With that growth comes the need for additional equipment.
- Did you know we had about 60 7th and 8th graders this year? Amazing, considering the expansion of other area programs as well. The sport is growing, which is great news!
- With the addition of the "Minis" program, more, smaller equipment was needed this year. We were super excited to see the addition of so many young players. This means more kids playing lacrosse at a younger age, which is great for the future of the sport and the Timberwolves!

Fundraising, Revisited

There are many different ways to raise funds. In past years, the concession stand has been a big source of our income, but its operation depends upon parent volunteers to not only man the concession stand, but run it, which is a very demanding role. Understandably, parents would rather watch their child play than work in a concession stand all day! Therefore, we now outsource our concessions to a great local business and sponsor, Scotty's Hot Dog Stand. Another popular way to raise funds is by direct sales. Traditionally, we do not ask our kids to "sell" products. We want to keep our costs down, continue supplying safe equipment for our kids, but we don't want to make the kids sell items people do not want.

We are always looking to find fundraising opportunities that are fun, convenient, and rewarding for our families, like our first ever Ball Drop this summer! We welcome your feedback and suggestions, so if you have any ideas or would like to get involved, please reach out to one of your lacrosse board members.

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