

MTAA NEWSLETTER

January 2012

We hope this newsletter finds you all well and we welcome you to a new year with MTAA Sports.

This year, we will continue to offer all the same sports programs as in the past while we strive to find new, more efficient ways to do business and keep enhancing the experience for the parents and children. To keep abreast of what is happening, we invite you to come to a board meeting which takes place the 4th Monday of every month at 7pm at the Rec Center on River Road. Commissioners from the various sports give reports regarding what is happening in their sport each month and we also discuss various aspects of running & improving the organization which is a great way to stay informed and get information first hand rather than hearing it through a “whisper down the alley” format.

The 2012 elected board members are:

Frank Pilat – President	Scott Yerger – at large
Danielle Sheipe – Vice President	Chris Rear – at large
Kelli Miller – Treasurer	Jeff Beiber – at large
Kevin Button – Sergeant at Arms	Sheri Fulp – at large
Wendy Button – Recording Secretary	
Don Raifsnider Jr. – Corresponding Secretary	

Many of you probably recognize these names. That is most likely because almost all of these 10 people are also coaches and commissioners of sports. Some are both.

Normally, there are 5 more at large board members. This year, because of lack of volunteer participation, we did not have enough people come to meetings and quality to be board members. Running an organization the size of MTAA with only 10 people doing almost all the “grunt work” is a challenge and there will certainly be things that will inadvertently fall through the cracks which will cause parents to be upset with the way things are run.

Please see the next page for a letter from the Board of Directors for more about this challenge.

Football

Flag
Knee-hi
Mites
Midgets

Cheerleading

Football
Wrestling

Field Hockey

Junior
Senior

Wrestling

K thru 6

Basketball

Boys Knee-hi
Boys Mites
Boys Junior
Girls Mites
Girls Junior

Baseball

Coach Pitch
Knee-hi
Mites
Diamond League
Jr Diamond League
12u Tournament
Fall League

Girls Softball

8u Coach Pitch
10u
12u

An Urgent Letter From the Board of Directors

Dear MTAA Parents,

As some of you may be aware, the MTAA organization serves 750+ children annually across 7 sports. The main goal of the organization is to mentor our youth and teach them to develop their skills on the field and instill sportsmanship, team effort, and other important life lessons off the field. The responsibility of the organization includes registration, uniforms, field maintenance, coach and commissioner selection, scheduling of all activities, concessions, and monthly decision making that affects the organization.

Generally, the organization has 15 board members that oversee these responsibilities. However, in 2011 the need for help has become an increasing issue. In December a new board was voted in for 2012. Instead of having 15 board members we are now down to only 10 because there is not enough interest.

For 2012 our biggest challenge is going to be running an organization of this size effectively with so little help. Many of the current board members have children who will be aging out in the next two years and they too will most likely be moving on.

WE NEED OTHERS TO GET INVOLVED!!! Without more help the organization will inevitably fold. This organization is 50+ years old and it would be a shame to see Muhlenberg's youth have no athletic program for children 12 years old and under. Additionally this feeder program insures the development of skills which enable our Junior and Senior High athletic programs to remain competitive in the county.

Although the current by-laws require that any new member has to attend 3 meetings annually, the board may appoint individuals who have not met this requirement in 2011. The 2012 board would require any individual who is interested to attend at least 2 board meetings to become familiar with aspects of the organization. Once that requirement is met the board can vote and appoint eligible persons onto the 2012 board at their discretion. Once voted in, you're asked to attend monthly meetings, offer input, and assist with running the organization. A general board member could be asked to help with a certain event or task; none of which are difficult or extremely time consuming.

We understand the majority of parents work and time is precious. Ninety nine percent of the board members have children in the organization and hold down full time jobs as well.

Being "too busy" is a way of life for most parents, board members included. However, the organization is in jeopardy and unless we have more parents showing interest all of our children could soon have no place to play. We simply cannot continue to do it with just 10 board members.

We hear many people say "this organization isn't what it used to be when I was a kid". They are right; times are different. In most households today BOTH parents work. Sports are now starting as early as 5 or 6 year olds; 30 years ago they started at ages 8-10. If you have older children involved in activities they are no longer just limited to training during that season only. In fact most Jr. High (and above) sports are training well beyond their own season. Time is limited for us all. Times are different and in order to keep the organization successful we need to evolve with it.

We need help!!!! It is becoming evident that we cannot do it with so few volunteers.

Please consider getting involved. The next board meeting is **Monday, January 23rd at the Rec, Center at 7pm**. Please start by attending a meeting to become familiar with the inside of the organization. No one is under any obligation just for attending.

Hope to see some of you there!!!

Sincerely,

The 2012 MTAA Board

BASEBALL NEWS



Signups for the 2012 seasons of baseball Rec Center on River Road on January 14th & 15th from 9am to Noon as well as January 16th from 6 to 8pm. The age breakdowns for each sport are as follows:

<u>Level</u>	<u>Ages (As of April 30)</u>
Tee Ball	5 & 6 (girls & boys)
Coach Pitch	7 & 8
Knee Hi	9 & 10
Mite	11 & 12

All games will be played at the MTAA facility against other MTAA teams. No travel required.

As you can see, there have been changes made to the baseball age limits. As a trial run, last year, MTAA did not offer tee ball and all younger players were included in the coach pitch level. This did not work exactly as we had hoped so tee ball has been brought back. If your child played coach pitch last year, but would now be included in the tee ball division because of age, you will have the option to keep him/her at the coach pitch level again this year. Talk to the commissioner at sign ups about this.

We are also allowing Coach Pitch players currently in 2nd grade to be eligible to participate in the Knee High evaluation process if their parents would like them to be considered for Knee Highs. Boys picked to play up at the Knee High level will be done by the baseball commissioner and the number of players chosen will be determined after all 9 and 10 year olds have been drafted. The coaches would then draft these selected 2nd graders to their rosters to fill in the available spots. There is NO GUARANTEE that these 2nd graders being evaluated will make the Knee High level. All kids 2nd graders who try out but do not make the Knee High level will be placed on the Coach Pitch roster by the Coach Pitch Commissioner.

Mite level ages are 11 & 12 with no exceptions. Knee High level ages are 9 & 10 with selected 8 year olds as stated above with no exceptions. Knee High and Mite levels only differ by a few rules (sliding, stealing, etc) so we are keeping the 9 & 10 year olds in the Knee High level regardless of what level they played in last year.

Baseball Evaluations are taking place at the C.E. Cole gym on March 4th.

8 year old 2nd graders who wish to be evaluated for Knee Highs as well as all 9 & 10 year olds should report from 10am to 1pm. 11 & 12 year olds should report from 2pm to 5pm.

If you have any questions, concerns, or need clarification on the age limit changes, please speak to the commissioners at sign ups.

The Baseball Commissioners are looking for coaches at every level; tee ball through Diamond League. **If you are interested in coaching, please speak with the commissioners at sign ups.**

Travel Baseball:

<u>Level</u>	<u>Ages (As of April 30)</u>
Junior Diamond Lg.	8-10
Diamond Lg.	11 & 12

These teams are part of a traveling league that is made up of primarily Berks County teams. Some travel outside the county may be required.

Evaluations for JDL & DL will take place at the Middle School gym February 6th & 7th from 6 to 8pm

Softball News



Signups for the 2012 season of softball will take place on January 14th & 15th from 9am to noon as well as January 16th from 6 to 8pm. The age breakdowns for softball are as follows:

<u>Level</u>	<u>Ages (As of December 31)</u>
8U (Coach Pitch)	6 – 8
10U	9 & 10
12U	11 & 12

These teams are part of the Berks County Girls Softball League - traveling required.

12U players should report to the Middle School gym on EITHER Monday February 27th OR Tuesday February 28th at 6:00pm for evaluations. Each night will end at 8:00pm.

Girls playing their SECOND YEAR of 10U this year will also have evaluations. All second year 10U players should report to the Middle School gym on EITHER Wednesday February 29th OR Thursday March 1st at 6:00pm. Each night will end at 8:00pm.

Evaluations at the second year of 10U is something different this year. In the past, any girl playing in her second year of MTAA softball was automatically moved to the 10U “A” squad. However, based on projected numbers for this year, MTAA will have more girls returning for their second year than we have available space on the team. This is a **MANDATORY EVALUATION FOR ANY SECOND YEAR PLAYER ONLY**. Any girl not present on one of the above 10U evaluation nights will not be eligible to play on the “A” squad no matter her ability. If your daughter is not interested in being considered for the “A” squad, she does not have to be present at the evaluations; however, once evaluations are completed, there will be no make-up time should she change her mind.

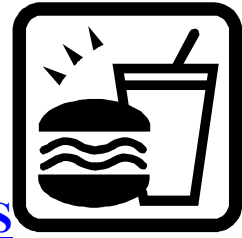
If, after sign-ups take place, it is found our projections on number of girls returning is incorrect, we will contact you prior to Wednesday February 29th and let you know evaluations have been cancelled.

For both levels of evaluations, the girls will be evaluated on fielding, throwing, sprints, batting and, for those interested pitching & catching. The individuals grading their performance will be the coaching staff of the level, past coaches and impartial members of our organization. This will be a **CLOSED DOOR EVALUATION** meaning that **no parents or siblings will be permitted in the gym area while evaluations are being conducted – no exceptions.**

More information about the specifics of evaluations will be given out at sign-ups.



CONCESSION STAND HAPPENINGS



Running the concession stand at the MTAA field during baseball and softball games has been and continues to be a major source of income for our organization as well as an added convenience for all spectators. However, that convenience comes with a price.

Every year, finding volunteers willing to help operate the stand becomes more and more difficult. In order for the organization and spectators to benefit from concessions, we need everyone's cooperation.

Again this year, we will require the home team to send two parents into the concession stand to work during their game. If there are two games going on at one time (one on each field), only one person from each home team will be needed. We realize no one wants to miss their child playing but if parents cooperate among each other and split the game into ½ hour time shifts, no one will be missing much of the game. If EVERY parent cooperates and takes their fair share of time, no one should feel burdened by this duty. In addition, we will be streamlining the menu this year to make working even easier.

We also realize the thought of working in the concession stand can often make your palms sweat and bring on some anxiety if you've never done it before. Believe us!!! It is NOT scary, and we all really have a great time in there laughing, talking, and socializing! There will be a board member in the stand at all times. As stated in the beginning of the newsletter, having only 10 board members compared to 15 this year will mean each board member will have to take more shifts. Another reason we need more board members!!! The board member typically runs the grill & fryers unless the parent is comfortable doing it (it's an awesome place to watch the game!). Otherwise, the parent can run the register (it's super simple to do), hand food out the window, and get drinks/candy. If the stand is not busy, believe us, we will not lock you in there! The board member will most likely tell you to go watch the game and ask you to just check back from time to time and come back if it becomes busy or let us know where you're sitting so we can come find you.

If everyone resolves to work together, no one should have to feel like they are the one person from the team who is always in the stand!

Also, please note that the concession stand will have standard operating hours this year as follows:

Monday – Friday 5:30pm to 9:00pm
Saturday & Sunday 10:30am to 9:00pm
Grill closes at 8:30pm each night.

Because of this. If you have an early game on the weekend or will be there past 9:00pm, make sure your child has a drink with him/her!

If anyone simply loves food service and would like to donate your time to the daily running of the stand and take regular shifts as the board members do, please send an email to us at mtaasports@gmail.com. We'd appreciate it more than you can imagine!



Facts and Tid Bits

- MTAA has a new email address that can be used for any questions you may have. It's how you received this newsletter today. We will use this method to send out announcements to members about various events and information between newsletters. **The address is mtaasports@gmail.com and it will be checked several times per week.**
- Our website is still under some construction so updates may not take place as quickly as we'd like until it's done. You can still check it out as there is a lot of helpful information on it while it's being worked on. We expect it to be completed by the start of the spring baseball/softball season. In the mean time, check out our FaceBook page and use the email address listed above.
- Spring clean up at the MTAA field is scheduled for March 31 beginning at 8am. We will need to clean the concession stand, gather up sticks, leaves & other debris from the fields and parking lot, clean the bathrooms, and do any other painting and misc. small repairs. Your help is needed! If enough people pitch in, it should only take a few hours. If you want a nice place for your kids to play, please come help make that happen!
- We are in need of electricians, plumbers, painters, carpenters, etc. to do jobs as they come up at the field. If you work in such industry and are willing to donate some time, we'd greatly appreciate it. MTAA now has their 501c3 status so, if you own your own company, you may be able to write off your time given. Check with your company accountant.
- **We have an immediate need for anyone who knows anything about PA systems to get ours working properly for announcing this year as well as anyone with plumbing experience to repair a broken water line in the concession stand.**
- Board meetings take place at the Rec Center on River Road on the 4th Monday of each month beginning at 7:00pm. Come and see what's happening in your organization!
- Board members and volunteers in our organization (coaches, commissioners, etc.) do not have to be parents of children playing. Grandparents, aunts, uncles, neighbors, anyone is welcome to come give their time. ** Coaches need updated clearances.
- Thanks to the generosity of Ed & Linda Button, there soon will be bleachers to sit on at the small field at the MTAA complex.

