

Mary Birks
School Board President
Mt. Lebanon School Board
September 18, 2017

Mt. Lebanon Ordinance

Last week, the Board received notice from Commission President, Mr. David Brumfeld about a recently proposed Ordinance that the Mt. Lebanon Commission introduced and scheduled for public hearing and vote on September 25, 2017. The ordinance, similar to approximately 40 throughout the state, bans discrimination in employment, housing and public accommodation on the grounds of race, religion, ethnicity, disability, gender, gender preference or sexual identity. He has invited other elected officials to speak at the meeting. While I am unable to attend the meeting on September 25th, I would like to voice our support of this ordinance; as the public is aware, the board recently re-affirmed our Nondiscrimination Policy, created back in 2010. We stand by that commitment and fully support the Commission's efforts to provide these same protections at the municipal level.

Unity in the Community Poster Winners

Congratulations to Mt. Lebanon senior Hannah Jones, and Mellon Middle School eighth-grader Benny Hornburg on winning Mt. Lebanon's Unity in the Community art contest sponsored by the Mt. Lebanon Community Relations Board. The goal of the contest was to celebrate cultural diversity and its role in sustaining our community and was open to any student grades six through 12 who lives in Mt. Lebanon. Hannah and Benny's works are now being used to promote diversity. Their artwork is also featured on T-shirts made by Commonwealth Press and on postcards and that will be used as part of the library's year-long Unity program theme. The original art hangs in the municipal building and photos are posted on the District's website, Facebook and Twitter sites.

Artists' Market

Plan to attend the Mt. Lebanon Artists' Market on Sept. 23 & 24 to support Mt. Lebanon High School visual arts students who will be participating in demonstrations of the wonderful techniques they use to create one of a kind works of art, guided by their high school teacher Mrs. Jennifer Rodriguez. Students will demonstrate their skills in drawing, painting, ceramics and much more from 10am until 6pm both days.

Great Alumni Award Recipients

Congratulations to this year's recipients of the Great Alumni Award: Dr. Judy Balk, class of 1981; Dr. Cheston Berlin, class of 1954; Dr. Tacy Byham, class of 1986; Mrs. Steffanie Jones Lewis, class of 1954; Dr. Linn Mollenauer, class of 1954; and Mr. Michael Riemer, class of 1978. All recipients will be honored with a special luncheon, as well as public recognition at the football game on Friday, October 6th. As previous recipients of this award, Mr. Lebowitz and I can attest to what a humbling experience it is to be chosen for this honor by our students. Congratulations to Mr. Riemer.

In other alumni news, I would like to invite our Mt. Lebanon High School Alumni community and their families to our annual Alumni Tailgate on Oct.6 from 6-8pm on the patio in back of the Athletic Building. The tailgate is a great spot to reconnect with classmates, watch the football game, enjoy the band and dine on a great BBQ picnic of ribs and chicken. Tickets are \$20 and can be purchased online at our website or at the gate.

Agenda Process

Last week, we had a spirited meeting and heard from many in our community about both the Capital Campaign as well as the future design/surface area of the Rock Pile. I'd like to address a comment I recently heard that the agenda items are 'leaked' to our public. That is simply not the case. The agenda process is this: as members of the

leadership team, Mr. Moorhead and I meet prior to the board's discussion meeting to set the agenda for the following week with Dr. Steinhauer. Along with the standard subjects, including the financials and personnel report, we will have other required agenda items based on the district's business needs, be they special education contracts, or capital improvements. Board members, as well as community members, also bring items to our attention for consideration. As the Board leadership, Mr. Moorhead and I have the responsibility of making certain items of public concern are placed on the agenda to allow time for public awareness, feedback, and discussion. As a representative to PTA Council there are times at Council meetings where upcoming agenda items would be discussed. I know the A/C was such an item. We know our community members are busy; they are attending to the essential work of child rearing, volunteering as well as being busy with work. We believe it is important to hear from as many of our community members as possible. So if someone asks me a direct question about what we are doing about the rock pile, I am going to be certain to inform the public when we are considering it for an agenda item. This is what occurred when we had a full house at the A/C discussion meeting; those board members connected to the elementary school parents informed them that the board would be discussing this possibility; and rightly so. The idea that agenda items are 'leaked' to the very public we represent is simply inaccurate. The board needs to discuss items that affect our district's students and its taxpayers. In keeping with our goal of transparency, it is in our best interest and all involved to hear from parents, students and constituents who provide valuable information for the Board to consider in our votes.

And finally....

Even though we don't have Student Council reports this month, I'd like to celebrate our high school student council's philanthropic spirit in response to the recent hurricanes. Student Council set up Corn Hole Tournaments for the entire school, by grade level, taking place all week, with faculty/staff occurring on the 25th, and the final round on the 28th. Donations will go to hurricane relief at Barbers Hill High School, located in Mont

Belvieu, Texas. I'm certain that we will hear about other efforts of support by the middle schools and elementary schools. Our students continue to make us all very proud to serve as Board Members!