

Features



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The Virtues Of The Dexter Bearcat Booster Club

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The Virtues Of The Dexter Bearcat Booster Club

Small town living is full of big time fun. The Dexter Bearcat Booster Club has remained a major part of building school spirit and enthusiasm among the community and students for over fifteen years. But how and where did this club that has delivered so much value to our community originate? The history of the Dexter Booster Club is worth sharing.

On November 21, 1994, after hours of planning, a group of school enthusiasts - some of the most dedicated members of Bearcat Nation - arrived at a Dexter Public Schools board meeting seeking to shine a positive light on the hope of the formation of an “Activities Booster Club”. Clubs of this nature had been resisted by the school administration for many years due to noted bad experiences in other communities.

The original organizing group included:

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Other original Dexter Booster Club Members include Dr. Jerry Waddle, Debbie Snider, Joni Burleson, Jim Reiker, Phyllis Howard, Doug Cox, Sharon Guethle, Mark Becker and Bruce Christian.

Overcoming the preconceived notions of Booster Clubs being a ‘bad thing’ was not an easy task. A summary of benefits were presented to the administration that included community events to increase pride and enthusiasm for the school, a relationship ‘bridge’

between students and the community, and an involved method of raising additional funds for extracurricular activities within the district.

Much planning took place prior to this meeting, as these community leaders wanted to build a group that would stand the test of time. Many phone interviews were performed with existing clubs throughout Southeast Missouri schools, including Sikeston, Malden, Cape Central, Kennett and Kelly. Information and organization experiences were collected from a broad group of club members, club organizers, as well as school administrators.

The insight the group compiled became the very foundation of the clubs by-laws and methods of operation. Multiple examples were shared of the positive results of these clubs, as well as areas of caution that were important to avoid.

“[The Booster Club] is the greatest thing and I would recommend it,” shared Dennis Ziegenhorn of the Sikeston Booster Club. “It allows the community to become involved with the programs. It is a wonderful, wonderful thing.”

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presentation complete, the school board allotted for a one-year probationary period - to allow the club's formation and operation - with the oversight of the school's administration. Safeguards were built into the club by-laws with the intention of helping to avoid future conflicts.

Noteworthy is the leadership that was given to this project by Dr. Jerry Waddle and Dr. Ray Dowdy. Through the early 'formation' years, their ability to trust and offer guidance to the community leadership of the booster club board was critical to the success that the club continues to have today.

Since those early days, the club has continued to meet the purpose and objectives

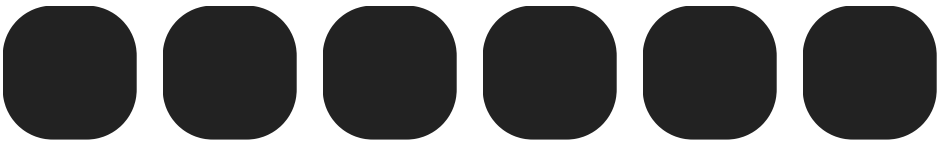
established in the by-laws of the Dexter Bearcat Booster Club. The very existence of the club is to “...lend support to the total student activities program of the Dexter High School and Middle School”

The Dexter Bearcat Booster Club has developed a rich history of support to all programs throughout the school district, while avoiding the pitfalls associated with the fears of “Clubs Gone Wrong”. The present leadership of the club continues to carry on the strong virtues of the past each year.

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