

## Hudson Athletic Booster Club and Membership Information

In the late 1950's, Jim Buxton, Lowell Smith, Bob Hills, Ken Uhle, Hal Bayless and Gaspar Lococco were among a group of Hudson residents who initially founded the Hudson Athletic Booster Club. These men saw a need for fund raising to support Hudson's student athletes. In addition, they realized that a larger more modern stadium was necessary to enable football, track and later, soccer teams, to compete in the Suburban League. They sold shares of stock, purchased a stadium kit, and with the physical and financial support of many Hudson residents, they built the structure now known as Dante Lavelli Field.

Over the past forty years, hundreds of generous Hudson residents, too numerous to mention, have given their time and effort to promote Hudson Athletics. The Hudson Athletic Booster Club is still a parent volunteer group whose primary goal is to raise funds to supplement the Hudson Athletic Department's budget. These funds help to provide equipment, facilities, uniforms and supplies for sanctioned Hudson High School and Hudson Middle School sports teams. In addition, the club provides publicity, sponsors the Ray Hyser Sportsmanship Awards, provides \$56,000 annually in college scholarships and funds special projects deemed necessary to keep Hudson's athletes competitive with other schools. Supplemental funds in recent years have provided timers for swimming and track events, pitching machines, support for cheerleaders, a new spring floor for the gymnastics team and additional training for coaches. In addition to Lavelli Field, larger special projects have included the donation of the equipment for the middle school and high school weight rooms, special video taping equipment and three transportation vans for use by the athletic department. Recently, the Hudson Athletic Booster Club has supported the irrigation project on the soccer, softball and baseball fields, approved partial funding of the new indoor baseball/softball building, provided funds to help purchase a new scoreboard for the field hockey team and provided funds to purchase three portable defibrillators as life saving tools for cardiac emergencies at sporting events.

Each year an athlete is chosen from every Hudson High School varsity team to receive the Ray Hyser Sportsmanship Award. Ray Hyser, a former Hudson resident, coach and athletic director, exemplified the qualities of leadership, pride and desire, which are the main criteria for selecting each candidate. The Ray Hyser recipient leads by positive example, knows how to win with humility or lose with dignity and demonstrates a need to excel in sports competition and in the classroom. He or she works diligently to promote and build both school and team spirit.

The college scholarship awards are consistent with Hudson's goal of excellence in the classroom and on the field. Each year, two male and two female student athletes are chosen based on academic achievement, athletic participation and athletic achievement. In addition, each candidate must submit an essay.

Seven years ago, Hudson joined the Western Reserve Conference. "The new league which is made up of larger schools than most in the Suburban League, has offered new challenges for our athletic programs and increased demands for additional funding," said Kurt Nygaard, Hudson Athletic Booster Club Past President.

In addition, new challenges will be forthcoming within the next few years as a result of the withdrawal of four teams from the Western Reserve Conference. Annually, the Booster Club budgets over \$85,000 of financial support at the request of the Hudson Athletic Director, Ray Ebersol. Each year the Hudson Athletic Booster Club promotes fundraisers to support our athletes. Our membership is our most important source of revenue. As the Hudson community grows, existing teams increase in size and new teams become school sanctioned sports, the need continues to grow for additional support from the Booster Club. The Booster Club annual membership drive has provided nearly 60% of the club's revenue in the past.

Each Fall, over 400 student athletes canvas the Hudson neighborhoods seeking memberships and donations. The Hudson community recognizes the importance of student athletics and has always supported our fund raising efforts. Our goal is to continually increase our membership. Long range plans include continued fundraising to aid our athletic programs at both the middle school as well as at the high school and to increase active participation by our members.

The Hudson Athletic Booster Club would like to encourage all Hudson residents to become involved, both with continued memberships and by attending the monthly meetings of the club. We need new hands, new ideas, and new personalities to insure that we are properly serving all of Hudson's athletes.

The Hudson Athletic Booster Club meets the first Monday of each month in room A211 at

Hudson High School. All interested individuals are invited to attend. For further information on how to get involved in the Hudson Athletic Booster Club, please contact the current membership chair or the current HABC President.