

Students get a 'boost' from parents, community members

By Rebecca Herren
For Seaside Signal

The Seaside High School Booster Club is a community-based organization generously run by parents and community members who support student programs, arts and athletics — with an emphasis on academics. It engages community involvement and inspires to increase parent/student participation as well as support for athletes and coaches to create a positive and spirited atmosphere for students.

The Boosters promote fundraising and encourage students to actively fundraise for activities, but the Boosters themselves do not recruit, said co-presidents Stacie Gilligan and Toni Bennett.

"We just sent out our



REBECCA HERREN

Toni Bennett and Stacie Gilligan are co-presidents of the Seaside High School Boosters Club. Bennett has been a member since 2016 and her family owns Bruce's Candy Kitchen. Gilligan has been a member since 2005 and is the head secretary at Broadway Middle School.

sponsorship letters and that is where the majority of our funds come from," Gilligan said. "Some of them are private, but most of them are

businesses. As I said, we don't really go out and recruit, but anyone can give us money. If someone is not already on our list as a donor, they can cer-

tainly come to us."

There are three levels of sponsorships: \$1,000, \$500 and \$250. Donors of all levels receive gifts and entrance tickets to games. In addition to monetary givers, the Boosters have a few in-kind donors they can call on when needed.

The Boosters also raise funds through memberships and concession sales, as well as sporting events they organize in Seaside. Anyone can become a sponsor or donate to Boosters, and the board decides what, where and who will benefit. In the end, all the funds go back to the kids.

There is one stipulation Gilligan pointed out. If someone wants to donate, but requests their donation be distributed in a certain way, they should donate directly to the school. "We don't allocate

funds per donor requests."

Citing an annual budget of \$75,408 for the upcoming school year, the board allocates set amounts — for example: to the band, the athletic department and for awards — off the top, Gilligan said.

They provide mini-grants for programs, classes and teachers twice a year in amounts up to \$500, and automatically give \$200 to the band or any of the athletic teams when they go to state. The rest of the budget is allocated on approval by the board, and funds are set aside for future projects.

Past projects include the reader board sign at the high school, which Gilligan pointed out was "years in the making due to cost," and the robotics program at Broadway Middle School. Another proj-

ect includes the large signs hung in the high school gym acknowledging the \$1,000 donors. Other donors are listed on the Booster calendars.

Gilligan believes the school district is healthy and it has not had to eliminate any programs or activities in a few years. Though the schools do not rely on outside organizations like the Boosters to raise money to save its programs, the Boosters' support has helped to keep cutbacks at bay.

"If we feel it's a worthy cause, we'll help out," Gilligan said referencing Future Business Leaders of America, a recent program turned class at the high school. "We're here if they need us, but they are not dependent on us."

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