



Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Annual Gala & Auction?

The annual Gala & Auction is our school's largest fundraising and social event of the year. The money raised at the auction helps offset the costs of educating each child, and **directly supports the school's annual operating expenses**. There is also a special "raise the paddle" appeal during the event that raises money for a specific school initiative each year. This year, our special appeal is *The Great Outdoors!* to enhance the outdoor campus experience for recess, lunch, athletics, and outdoor teaching.

So, what is the Field Party that people sometimes talk about?

This same fundraising event has been called the Field Party since it was held, for the last ten years, on our school's athletic field.

Why aren't we holding the event on our field again this year?

Our school recently renovated our athletic field – after two years of raising money for this improvement! – so it is a space that can be used for recess, PE class, and athletic teams. We can no longer hold non-athletic events on the field, as it would damage it (think tent poles, heels, tables, chairs, dance floor, etc. and what that would do to the even playing field and grass!).

What is the theme?

Each year, the volunteer committee planning the event chooses a theme. This year's theme is the Enchanted Garden to help us launch us into spring! Greens, florals, whimsical – there are all kinds of gardens and colors!

What do I wear? Is this super fancy?

It's time to get your party on! It's cocktail attire with a garden party flair, so have fun with it! Dresses/blazers work well, but it is not formal. And no, you don't need to go out and buy something new to wear, unless you want to, of course. We care about your presence, not what you wear!

What is the Silent Auction? What is the Live Auction?

The Silent Auction contains most of the auction items upon which people can bid. The Silent Auction opens in advance of the event and continues through the event. You will be able to bid on items online

from your phone or other device. The Silent Auction includes class baskets; other items and experiences donated by community businesses; teacher experiences; artwork; and sign-up parties.

The Live Auction occurs during the event itself and is led by a live auctioneer with fast-paced bidding. This is a very fun part of the evening, where we auction off five to ten select special trips, items, or experiences. Bidding wars can be epic, and it is a blast to participate!

What is the Special Appeal or “Raise the Paddle?”

“Raise the Paddle” occurs during the Live Auction when the auctioneer asks everyone to raise their auction paddle to donate at various monetary levels for a specific school-identified initiative. In recent years, our Raise the Paddle efforts have supported arts and sciences needs like microscopes, telescopes, art display panels and special lighting; classroom technology upgrades; and the field renovation. Our school typically raises \$20,000 with everyone’s generous contributions during this appeal!

This year’s appeal for *The Great Outdoors!* will support enhancements to our outdoor experience for recess, lunch, athletics, and outdoor teaching. We have a wish list of improvements that include replacing and expanding outdoor decking for the lunch tables, where classes can also gather for outdoor teaching; water bottle filler and fountain; new playground fence and other playground improvements; outdoor shed for PE and recess equipment, among other items. Outdoor education is an integral part of our program.

Do I have to buy something at the auction?

No, you are not required to buy anything at the event. All proceeds raised, though, benefit our ENTIRE school (Preschool, Lower, and Middle), and its students and teachers. The Gala & Auction Committee makes sure that there are items at different price points, so everyone can participate, should they wish. Please participate as your heart leads you! We truly value your presence at the event for a fun night with our St. Martin’s community.