



## Mathews Octoberama FAQ's

It's that time of year again that we begin preparation for our school festival. We wanted to make it easy for everyone to participate... whether you are new to the Mathews Community or a long-time friend. Our Octoberama Chair put together a list of Frequently Asked Questions for use as a one-stop resource to make it easier for everyone to get involved!

### What is Octoberama?

It's not only the Mathews Fall Carnival; it's our annual school fundraiser! People often dread hearing about fundraising. Fundraising can be stressful, time consuming, and can feel like a job...and we don't want raising money for our school to be a burden. At Mathews, we make fundraising efforts both simple and fun! Instead of initiating multiple fundraisers via different clubs and organizations throughout the year like many schools (such as through sales of holiday items, candy, calendars, baked goods, etc.), we focus our efforts on one big event that is a group effort and enjoyable for all! Octoberama is free to attend, fun for the whole family, and has something for all ages including games, prizes, food, live music, silent auction, art projects, photo booth, dunking booth, bounce houses, and more!

### When and where is Octoberama?

Octoberama is always held at Mathews Elementary. This year Octoberama is October 17<sup>th</sup>, 11am-3pm.

### What does the money go toward that is raised at Octoberama?

The money raised allows the PTA to support our school library, offer grants to teachers for innovative teaching ideas, host author visits, support teacher training, family learning nights, maker movement activities, fund tech programs, and more. A majority of our money raised (85%) goes toward staff salaries so that Mathews can offer a technology teacher and math specialist.

### How can I get involved?

Student, Parent, Family, and Community Involvement are Key...and FUN! There is room for everyone to participate, from behind the scenes to helping out the day of the event! Here are some ways YOU can help:

**Students & Families:** Clean out your closets and donate those unwanted toys to be used as booth prizes (there is a large donation box right outside of the library...drop off unwanted toys in good condition anytime)!

Contribute to your class silent auction basket!

Have friends in other schools? Ask them to help promote our event!

Reach out to your neighbors and spread the word...all are welcome and you never know who might want to make a contribution to Mathews!

**Parents:** Volunteer to chair a position, sign up for an hour at the class booth, provide baked goods for the cakewalk, help organize class auction baskets, help with set-up/tear down of the event, help with silent auction, purchase handmade art at the art booth, help staff the ticket table, help staff the silent auction, solicit local businesses for contributions/donations for the silent auction, bid on silent auction items, donate toys for prizes, and more!

**Community:** Sponsor the event through donations and get your name on banners, posters, signage, etc. Donate items for the silent auction!  
Do you own a local business? Donate a gift card or items for the auction!

**How to help?** Contact your Home Room Parent to volunteer! There will be a sign-up sheet at back-to-school night or you can contact your Home Room Parent directly to sign up to help! Information will be sent home in your child's Wednesday folder with additional information and ways to contribute.

## **At the Event...**

### **Are the games free?**

Admission to the event is free but the games/inflatables/dunk booths/yoga tent/raffles/etc. require tickets (most games are 1-2 tickets).

### **How do I get tickets and how much do they cost?**

Tickets can be purchased in advance at Mathews (no lines at the door!) or they can be purchased the day of the event at tables set up in front of the school. Information about purchasing advanced tickets will be sent home in your child's Wednesday folder. Take advantage of receiving bonus tickets if you pre-order! Tickets are 50 cents each and can be purchased with cash, checks, and credit cards.

### **Do food vendors take credit cards?**

The cost of food will vary with each vendor. Food is purchased with event tickets (the same tickets are used for both games and food items). Some food vendors may accept cash or credit cards but it will depend on the vendor.

### **What types of payment will other on-site vendors accept?**

Art project stations and booths selling art will accept cash (some might accept credit cards). The Mathews t-shirt booth will accept cash or check (no credit cards/tickets). The Mathews Ticket sales booth will accept cash, check, or credit cards.

### **Where do I park?**

There is plenty of free parking available on the streets throughout the neighborhood. Please be respectful of our neighbors when parking in front of their homes and please avoid parking in the lots of surrounding businesses since those spaces are reserved for customers.

### **Are the games and inflatables supervised?**

Yes! We have a great variety of parent volunteers as well as additional community and UT volunteers overseeing each station at all times.

### **Is there an ATM on-site?**

No

### **Can silent auction items be paid for using tickets?**

No. Winners will need to pay via cash, check, or credit card.

### **Do you have to be present to win the silent auction baskets or raffle prizes?**

You only need to be present to bid on the auction items and enter your raffle ticket. You do not need to be present when the winners are announced. If you win, you will be called that day to make arrangements for payment and/or pick-up.

### **What are silent auction class baskets?**

Each grade is assigned a theme for the silent auction basket and each family purchases an item to contribute based on their child's grade theme. Themes will be announced at Back-to-School Night and information will also come home in Wednesday folders. After you learn your grade's theme, check out some of the helpful suggestions provided, purchase an item, and drop it off (unwrapped) in the auction box outside your classroom. Leave the price on the item along with your name so our gift basket chair can establish basket values when preparing them for the auction.

Our Octoberama chairs/volunteers will organize the baskets according to the theme, wrap them, set a price point, and have the baskets available to view and bid on at the event. Bid on as many baskets as often as you would like. Toward the end of the event, bidding closes and silent auction volunteers tally the results and contact the winners to claim their winnings.

\*\*\*There will plenty of other items (in addition to the class baskets) available for auction.

### **Can I bid on auction items early or online?**

Not at this time. Our goal is to get the community to attend the event and the active bidding makes it more fun and fair for everyone involved. You can, however, pick up your winnings the following days at school if you need to leave early.

### **What are the class basket themes this year?**

**Pre K & Kinder:** When I Grow Up I Want to Be...

**1<sup>st</sup> Grade:** LEGOS & Super Heroes

**2<sup>nd</sup> Grade:** Oh, The Places We Will Go (Travel, Road Trips, Weekend Adventures)

**3<sup>rd</sup> Grade:** Maker 'Learn, Tinker, Play, Create'!

**4<sup>th</sup> Grade:** Happy Moms & Happy Dads

**5<sup>th</sup> Grade:** Game On!

**6<sup>th</sup> Grade:** Backyard BBQ

Here are some helpful suggestions of items to fit each theme:

#### **Pre-K and Kindergarten: When I Grow Up I Want to Be...**

Suggestions: Toys related to any occupation! Use your imagination!

Examples include doctor kits, toy horses/stables/Playmobile farm, model/derby car kits, fashion design sketchbook, sewing/crochet set, veterinarian kit, baking kit, cooking/food sets, workbench/tool set/toolbox, puppet theater, play dough dentist set, dress-up clothes/costumes, magic sets, building blocks, art sets, instruments, finger paint, gift certificate to robotics camp, passes to the Thinkery, passes to Foodie Kids, kids cookbooks, passes to museums, tickets to theater/plays, journals, fun science experiment books

#### **1st Grade: LEGOS & Super Heroes**

Suggestions: Lego sets, Lego figurines, Lego books, gift card to Lego store, action figures, DVD's, games, books, mini-figures, key chains/backpack clip-ons, stuffed super hero characters

#### **2nd Grade: Oh, The Places We Will Go (Travel, Road Trips, Weekend Adventures)**

Suggestions: Car games, camping equipment, coolers, portable DVD players, Kindles, CD headsets, mini camera, fishing poles, lanterns, flashlights, car safety items, REI gift certificate, travel toys, travel table, bookstore gift certificate, gas cards, first aid/emergency kits, tent, sleeping bags, flashlights, kayak rentals on town lake (or paddle board), rock climbing passes, travel books (such as books on Big Bend, Yellowstone, etc.), travel pillows, travel mugs/coffee cups, thermos, weekend bags/backpacks, water bottles, compass, 'books on tape,' gift card to Whole Earth, book lights, camping how-to books, camping cookbooks

### **3rd grade: Maker 'Learn, Tinker, Play, Create!'**

Suggestions: Passes to Thinkery, gift card to Tinkering School, tinkering toys, gift card for Robotics camp, science games, experiment kits, science modeling kits, puzzles, loom bracelet kits, jewelry making kits, baking kits, craft paint kits, gift card to Hobby Lobby, gift card for art class, kids lab kits, rockets, origami, robots, LED toys, glowing putty, metal detectors, puzzles

### **4th Grade: Happy Moms & Happy Dads**

Suggestions:

**Moms:** Yoga mat/ball/bands/DVD's/clothing, gift certificate to a gym/yoga class/Pilates class/cycle class, massage/spa certificate, lotions, candles, mani/pedi, facials, gift card to salon, aromatherapy, gift card toward housekeeping service, ready-made meal delivery, wine/cheese gift cards, slippers, blankets, gourmet coffee/teas, chocolate, restaurant gift card

**Dads:** Golf certificate/Top Golf pass, golf balls/tees, car wash passes, movie tickets, sports event tickets, sportswear (fan/team jersey, hat, stadium chair, blanket, koozie), Round Rock Express tickets, car care items, restaurant gift certificate (Franklins, Hopdoddy's), UT merchandise, Home Depot/Lowes gift card

### **5th Grade: Game On!**

Suggestions: Board games of all kinds, tickets to live games (Round Rock Express, UT Longhorns games, hockey games), team/fan merchandise such as jerseys/hats, passes to Top Golf, bowling gift cards, golf course/putt putt gift cards, Dave and Busters gift card, Pinballs gift card, Main Event gift card, bounce house gift cards

### **6th Grade: Backyard BBQ**

Suggestions: Grill utensils, croquet set, badminton, apron, marinades, tablecloth, skewers, coolers, grill cookbooks, lawn chairs, lanterns, hammock, horseshoes, slip 'n slide, charcoal, gift certificate to BBQ restaurant, gift certificate to meat markets, meat rubs, grill accessories, oven mitts, NERF outdoor toys, meat seasonings, grocery store gift certificate, coolers, gift card to Home Depot/Lowes/Grill-related shops, napkins, creative plastic-ware, lemonade pitchers, freezer pop gels, crazy straws, flavored drinks/drink mixes

## **I'd Like to Volunteer at the Event!**

Please explain the positions on the sign-up sheet (sign-up sheet will be available at Back to School Night):

**Class booth:** Each classroom sponsors a game, art, or activity booth at Octoberama. Please be sure to sign up for one hour to run the booth for your child's class. You will be partnered with another parent or volunteer so that you always have help. Your role is to accept tickets from the kids, assist them with the game, keep prizes organized on the tables, and hand out prizes). Games, tables, chairs, supplies, prizes, etc. will be provided and already be set up for you on-site by other volunteers.

**Other booths (tickets, auction, raffle, silent auction):** If not helping at the class booth, please sign up to help one hour with an alternate booth with other volunteers.

**Event set-up:** Come early the morning of Octoberama to help set up tables, chairs, game booths, the stage, auction items, etc.

**Event Teardown:** Stay after the event to help take down tables & chairs, clean up, put away equipment, etc.

**Auction setup:** Help our silent auction team place baskets and other auction items on tables, organize bid sheets, tally bids, call highest bidders, accept payment for prizes, etc.

**Organize prizes:** Come to Mathews the week before the event and help our prize chair sort prizes according to size/game, clean donated toys, organize items, etc.

**Silent Auction Basket Prep:** Come to Mathews the week before the event and assist the gift basket chair organize auction items according to grade, place in baskets, price & label baskets, wrap/decorate baskets, and/or help by donating baskets/clear cellophane wrapping paper, ribbons/bows.

**Cakewalk Item:** Bake or purchase an item for the cakewalk such as cupcakes, cookies, cakes, brownies, etc. Colorfully decorated and fun seasonal items are always a big hit! We try to be mindful of our friends with food allergies, so please clearly label any items prepared with peanuts. Items can be left at Mathews the day before or the day of the event.

Do you have ideas on how to make Octoberama a better experience? Want to suggest a singer/songwriter/musician to perform? Are you a business owner that would like to help sponsor the event or contribute items for the auction? Do you know of a food vendor that would like to participate? We welcome your suggestions as well as your feedback! Planning for this year is underway, so if you would like to submit a contribution or referral please contact our 2015-16 Octoberama Chair, Courtney Knisely (Courtney.Knisely@gmail.com), or a member of our PTA.