

Tres Dias of St. Louis

Volume 5, Issue 2

November 2009



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Welcome to the New Electronic Newsletter

Like everything else in the 21st century, we have gone digital. Reasons for the change are to save the community costs, improve communication through more frequent letters and to add a little color to our lives. If you do not wish to receive this correspondence please let me know or if you have any ideas for the newsletter, I can be reached at wtrash2@hotmail.com.

Bill Meier

Price Increase in Weekend Fees

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The following information was put together by Mark Stiller, the Treasurer for the St. Louis Tres Dias Secretariat, at the request of the Secretariat.

Please read the information carefully and thoroughly. Feel free to contact me or any other member of the Secretariat if you have questions about any of the information that Mark has presented.

Lastly, know this...that the Secretariat did not reach the decision regarding weekend fees without first having much discussion (internally and with Todd Hall) and consideration of both the immediate situation and where we believe the St. Louis TD Community to be going.

Thanks, in advance, for your continued prayer, support, encouragement and commitment,

Kent Howard
Chairman, St. Louis Tres Dias Secretariat

Financial Facts

Rule #1 - It's all His

Rule #2 - God graciously allows us to be stewards.

Rule #3 - When in doubt refer to rule #1.

Since some confusion exists over our finances and with recent increases being requested in the weekend fee and with future increases being needed it is appropriate that I share more clearly the financial facts, where we are and where we can go.

Price Increase in Weekend Fees (continued)

Continued from page 1

Up until weekend #10 the rates we were charged by Todd Hall amounted to about \$120 per person for the weekend. Of course this fluctuated with the number of people on the weekend and the number of candidates since things like the meeting rooms and dining room rental are fixed regardless of the number of people. The fee charged to team members and candidates alike was \$140. The \$20 per person difference provided a surplus of between \$5000 and \$6000 per year to support the St. Louis community. This money was used to pay dues to the International Tres Dias organization, maintain a copyright license so we can use various songs on the weekends, provide the weekend materials (guidebooks, pilgrim's guides, crosses, storeroom supplies), producing and submitting the required tax forms to maintain our tax exempt status, offerings to the churches and organizations that support us etc.

Beginning in the spring of 2008, Todd Hall began raising their rates. While initially a shock, those familiar with the situation confirmed that we had been getting extraordinarily low rates. The Todd Hall governing board determined that these rates were too low to sustain ToddHall for the long term in meeting their expenses.

The secretariat, being sensitive to minimizing the impact of these increases on Tres Dias Team members and candidates, first cut back on controllable expenses by not providing an offering to our supporting organizations as we had in the past, skimping on supplies for the weekend as much as possible and allowing the balance of our check book to go down to a minimum. While our checkbook balance had typically been at about \$5000 after a weekend to support the organization before the next weekend, it is now less than \$1000. As a last resort we then increased the weekend fee as little as we thought possible to make ends meet. Meantime the rate increases from ToddHall exceeded even their guidance from the previous year. This put further pressure to increase the weekend fee. So where we stand today is the cost from ToddHall has stabilized at about \$185 per person, an increase of \$65 per person from the weekend #10-level. At the same time, the fee charged for the weekend has only risen \$40 per person to \$180 in that same time period. This difference (\$40 income increase with a \$65 increase in expense) makes it obvious to even the most financially/economically/monetarily-challenged that something must change.

We have worked with Todd Hall to minimize our cost while still assuring their financial stability and are working closely with the new management there. To return St. Louis Tres Dias to a firm financial footing we have proposed a weekend fee of \$210 per person. Putting this into perspective it would be difficult for any of us to get a hotel room for three days for this price, let alone pay for meals too.

In hindsight, our decision to minimize the weekend fee was probably short sighted. We believe that God has great plans for this organization and we shouldn't be limiting our potential by being miserly with His resources. Good stewards yes, miserly no. In hindsight, also, we have not been communicating with the entire community about our finances as we should. This is an attempt to change that direction as well.

Price Increase in Weekend Fees (continued)

Continued from page 2

Looking to the future we have a choice to make. We can:

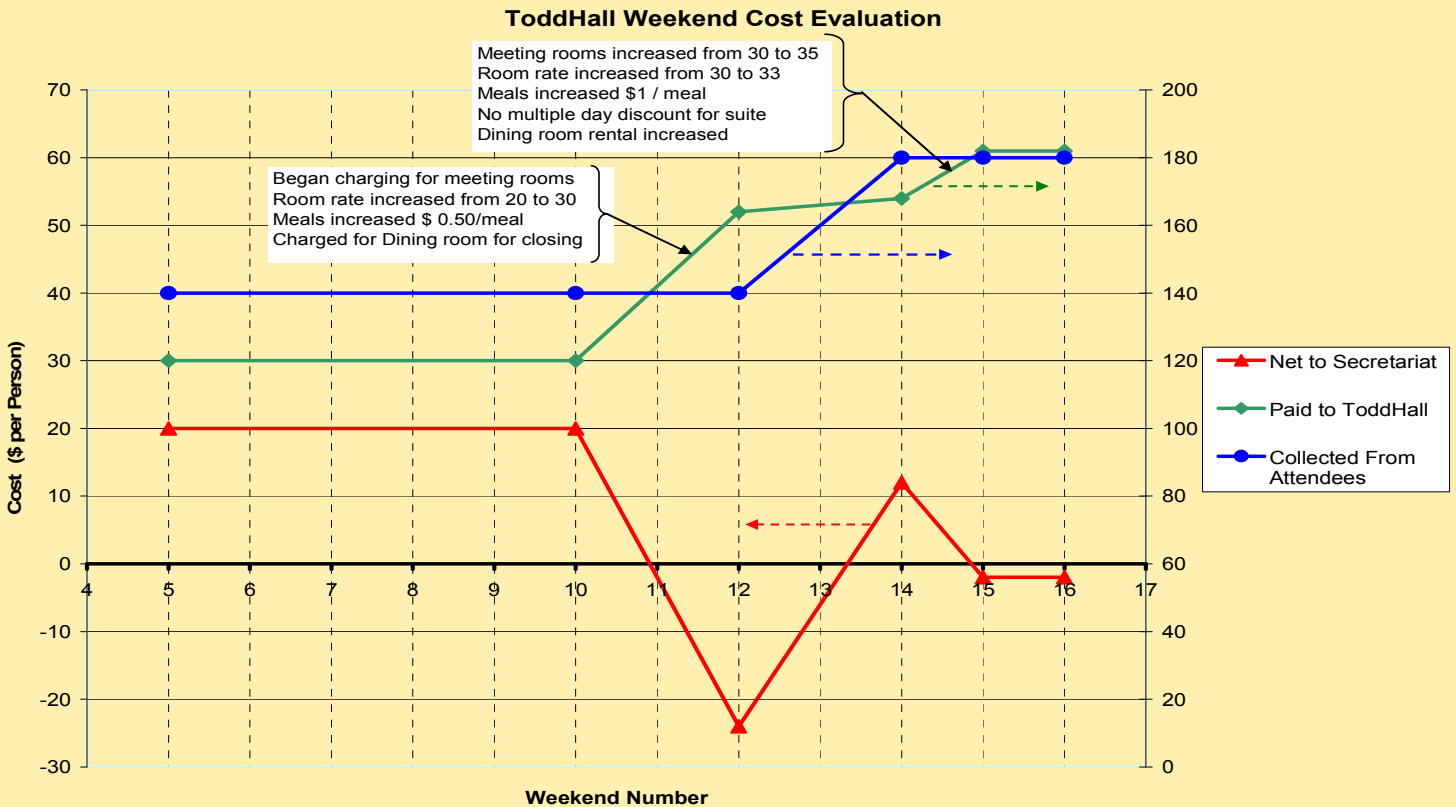
1. Maintain a minimal standard and continue to put on two weekends a year or,
2. Believe God for a future that is abundant, growing and alive

We serve a God who gives grace abundantly and overwhelms us with His love for us. We believe the Tres Dias weekend that immerses the candidates in love is effective at communicating God’s love. How can we choose anything but a future that is consistent with our beliefs?

Potential future needs include:

- We have some one-time expenses that must be made like replacing our ancient and occasionally leaking trailer that houses all the weekend supplies and banners from previous weekends.
- We envision opportunities to help start Tres Dias communities in other areas.
- Some communities charge a lesser subsidized fee to the candidates or no fee at all. What a great way to demonstrate our belief in the effectiveness of the Tres Dias.
- The organizations that support us deserve our very best and an offering at the end of the year is appropriate.

For those who like facts figures charts and graphs I include the following:



Respectfully submitted by Mark Stiller, Secretariat Treasurer

A Message from our Chairman

St. Louis Tres Dias Community,

Greetings from the members of your Secretariat. We hope that you have a wonderful holiday season this year and that you leap into 2010 with great energy and excitement over what God is doing in the lives of those around us and in our churches. Please be on the lookout for a letter from the Secretariat regarding weekend fees. Mark Stiller, our Treasurer, has outlined the facts and figures that lead the Secretariat to recently vote to increase future weekend fees. The letter that Mark wrote to you all very thoroughly explains how we got to where we are in the fees that have been required to this point and what we believe is required as we move forward. If you did not receive the email that contained this information from Mark, please see a reprint of the information in this newsletter. Again, feel free to contact any member of the Secretariat if you are left with any questions regarding this or any other St. Louis TD issue.

As you may be aware, the Secretariat is made up of members of the St. Louis TD community. In order to facilitate ongoing membership requirements for the Secretariat, we are trying to keep the open positions in front of you so that you may prayerfully consider what your involvement on the Secretariat might be able to be. Currently, we have the Weekend Couple, Treasurer and Chairman positions that are due to rotate. Please make contact with a current member of the Secretariat if you are interested in being a part of this important component of the St. Louis Tres Dias Community. Now is the time to be praying over who you might sponsor for the Spring weekends. Please seek God and honestly submit to His guidance for who He wants you to talk to about attending a TD weekend.

In Christ,

Kent Howard Chairman, St. Louis Tres Dias Secretariat

St. Louis Tres Dias Secretariat

Mike & Michele Young	John Lanham
A.W. & Sheryl Earls	Joe and Lynn McClurg
Dennis & Susie Powers	Murphy Ownbey
Nancy Hotz	Rev. Paul Ridenour
Kent Howard	Bill Meier
Jeff Smith	Mark Stiller
Angie Kell	

Rector Notes From Tres Dias #16

Men's Weekend

Men's Weekend #16

St. Louis Tres Dias had a sweet sixteen party, and God showed up as he always does to make the weekend life-changing. This was truly a weekend bathed in prayer. The first team member called was the Head Prayer Cha, Jim Erbe, who set the tone that prayer is deadly serious by using the sub-theme of “no retreat, no reserve, no regrets” to inspire a dedicated group of prayer chas to intercede. After a flurry of last-minute changes God finally had the team and the candidates that he wanted, which happened to include only two spiritual Directors. C.R. Kersten and Gary Tilley doubled up on some duties, and as usual, God knew just what He was doing. The Head Cha received the highest praise possible from a candidate on Sunday morning, who looked at Herb Bowles and said, “You really haven't done anything all weekend, have you?” The well prepared and experienced team, and especially the field general, Asst. Head Cha Bill Meier, made it look that easy.

The Scripture for the weekend was II Corinthians 12:9-10:

**"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.
... For when I am weak, then I am strong."**

Rembrandt's painting of the Storm on the Sea of Galilee was the visual for the weekend. Alvin Der provided the insight that many of the disciples on the ship were fishermen, which means they were sailors. They took the “manly” approach typical of many of us -- we are men and should be able to handle any situation by ourselves without asking for help. Only when the disciples were at the point of death did they seek the only help that could save them in the form of a sleeping Jesus in the hold of the ship. The analogy continues in that Jesus is on the ship with us as we go through our lives; he is there in our weakness; we just need to ask and he is there to help us.

Rick Warren has a chapter in his book, *The Purpose Driven Life*, titled, “Am I limiting God's power in my life by trying to hide my weaknesses?” On the weekend we were all encouraged to put our pride aside and seek Jesus first in all we do so that His power would be manifest in our lives and He would receive the praise and glory. If God acted in our strengths, we would take the credit, but if he acts in our weakness then He gets the glory which He alone deserves. God loves to use weak, imperfect, ordinary people to do extraordinary things.

With a nautical theme you can imagine that pirates and mighty men of the sea might show up on the weekend, but somehow seven stranded castaways made it on the weekend as well. The ship's bell rang clear at all required times in spite of the defeat of the alarm system by some dastardly bell-thieving traitors. Rumors of a Mark II Bell Protection System with tasers, dye packs and projecting spikes are still circulating. I am convinced that God has a great sense of humor and laughs with us on the weekend as long as we don't take ourselves too seriously.

So even with our enthusiastic, yet flawed and imperfect efforts, God is always faithful. Speakers shared their hearts, the team did the big things and the little things with hearts of service, and the lives of the team and the pescadores were changed forever to be closer to Him. Praise God from whom all blessings flow! Praise Him you creatures here below! Praise Him above ye heavenly host! Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost! Amen.

Mark Stiller

Tres Dias of St. Louis #5

Men's Rector-Tres Dias of St. Louis #16

Rector Notes From Tres Dias #16

Thoughts on Serving as Rector
by Sue Bogert

When I was 16 years old my Dad hooked a horse trailer to a truck and asked me to drive to a location 2 hours away to pick up a horse for him. I was very surprised since I had 2 older brothers. I asked why he was sending me instead of one of the boys. He said, "I know how the boys drive when I am not with them and I want the horse to be alive when it gets here". I was honored that my Dad trusted me that much and put his confidence in me.

It was a great honor to serve as Rector for Women's weekend #16 and left me with the same joy I felt when I was 16. I am happy to say that we all returned home alive! Thank you to all who took the journey with me and for all your hard work. Thank you Heavenly Father for including us in your plan and for touching us and the 19 precious sisters who attended as candidates.

Most of all I want to thank you Father in heaven for letting me know that you don't mind if I walk really close and inquire of you (bug you) each day as much as I did while serving as Rector. I love you LORD. I am in Him and He is in me.

(The horse made it too, incase you were wondering)



Sue Bogert
Southeast Tennessee Tres Dias #12
Women's Rector Tres Dias of St. Louis #16

SECUELA INFORMATION

Next Secuela

March 6, 2010

West County Assembly of God
13431 N Outer 40 Rd
Town and Country, MO 63017

Join us for an evening of fun, food and fellowship. Listen to a 4th day talk from a new pescadore, worship and catch up with old friends and meet new ones.

Please bring a covered dish to share, such as chicken, beef, casseroles, salads or vegetables. Or if you are truly rambunctious, lobster might be in order. A 2 liter to share also.

Hope to see you there!