

PAHAA—Past, Present & Future

PAST

In 2007 a few Paris homeschool parents, responding to their kids' desires to play competitive basketball, began talking about options that might be available in our area. Websites were searched and phone calls were made that resulted in our discovery that competitive, organized basketball for homeschool groups was alive and well in Texas. In fact, there were a few homeschool and private school teams already organized within a 90-mile radius of Paris.

A couple of the kids began talking to their friends to find out if we had enough to form a team. Coaches were secured—Polly Holladay for the girls and Richard Logan for the boys—Paris Area Homeschool Athletic Association was officially formed, and the teams came together in time to participate in the 2007-2008 season. The kids voted and chose our team name (Warriors) and colors (red, black and white). We became members of the East Texas Athletic Conference (ETAC), joining CHESS from Sulphur Springs, CHAAMP from Mt Pleasant, Bethel Christian Academy from Pittsburg, and Grayson Christian from Sherman.

The next year all 5 of these teams made the decision to join the Texas Christian Athletic League (T-CAL), being placed as a group into the newly formed Northeast district. That year we had the same coaches and the girl's team won the district and regional titles, making it to the T-CAL state tournament in Waxahachie.

Kyle Jones took over as head coach of the boy's team for the 2009-2010 season. Our teams improved each year and our girl's team made it back to the T-CAL state tournament for the next 2 years, winning the state championship in 2011. Our boy's team also qualified for the state tournament in 2011. Following the 2010-2011 season, our board voted to withdraw from T-CAL, and become an independent homeschool team. We played a full season in 2011-2012, culminating in our own Paris Hoops Invitational Tournament in March 2012.

The word of our organization spread, and we had more homeschool families interested in our program than ever before. In 2013 we added JH boys and girls to our list of teams. Up to 60 of our children participated that year!

The 2016-2017-basketball season was the 9th for PAHAA. Throughout the years we have become more organized and have a stable set of Bylaws by which we operate. In 2013 PAHAA added the position of Athletic Director to our organization. Tony VanDerWilt accepted the Senior Athletic Director position. Tony established himself as the AD and brought a passion, deeper technical knowledge of the game and a new way of thinking with him. He began a challenging Off Season program with the Varsity Girls and in 2014 added it into the Varsity Boys team as well. The changes he brought helped our Varsity teams dramatically improve and hone those skills they were deficient in. Great progress in basic skills-as well as deeper relationships between the players and coaches- has been made. Our purpose, as stated in the Bylaws, is to honor and glorify the Lord Jesus Christ, using athletics as a vehicle for the physical, mental, and Christian development of our children.

PAHAA consists of its membership (families who join the organization) and is led by our Athletic Director and our Board of Directors.

PRESENT

Kyle Jones has stepped up to serve as our 2016-17 Senior Athletic Director. Kyle has a love for the game that began in high school and he continued on to become the head boys coach at Waco Christian School from 1987-1991. Kyle brings with him an added technical expertise along with organized coaching experience.

After a very successful experience the last four years, we will once again host our annual Paris Hoops Invitational tournament in January 2018. The 2017 tournament had 16 teams participate (8 girls, 8 boys), with teams from Texas and Oklahoma.

Two years ago we took on a new tournament that is hosted by the National Christian Homeschool league, Big South regional tournament, in Duncanville, TX., and we plan to enter that again as well as participating in The National Christian Homeschool Championship Tournament in Springfield, Mo. with our 2 18U teams. Our players and parents alike have thoroughly enjoyed being part of these large Homeschool events.

Since our organization is made up of volunteers, we depend and organize around the involvement of every parent and player in some way. From coaching, to running the clock, keeping books, taking admissions, concessions, providing water for the athletes, and planning our year-end awards banquet, there is a job for everyone.

FUTURE

PAHAA is committed to providing competitive activities for our children while maintaining a Christian, spiritually enriching environment. In the past we did strive to abide by a commitment of no more than 3 days of planned activities (practices and games) per week, with the exception of weeks in which a tournament may be scheduled. As we have grown however this commitment has gotten much harder to keep and we will all need to be flexible as we move ahead in the coming years.

In addition to basketball, there are numerous other opportunities available for competitive activities. Two years ago we added a robotics team, and there is opportunity for participation in other sports such as volleyball, baseball, or track & field, as well as arts & academic contests provided the finances and leaders are available.

In 2015 we received our non-profit status and will continue working with our CPA to ensure we stay financially stable. We are also seeking land and desire to build our own facility to enable us to hold practices and games regularly.

May God be glorified ultimately as we all work together to continue providing our children with this excellent opportunity!