



Date: Dec 15, 2010
To: All St James Athletic Club Members
From: SJAC Board
Re: **Security at St Claire's Gym**

As most members know, we have used St Claire's Gym for the last few years to accommodate the need for gym time for our winter sports teams. During this time a few incidents have occurred including a couple vehicle break-in's last year that has led a few members to approach the board about the safety of using St Claire. The board takes the safety of our families very seriously so we would like to update everyone on the latest with regard to St Claire and its continued use.

1. A number of people including some on the board have requested over the years that we look to see if other gyms are available in the general area that may be better suited for our needs and for safety. Each year, the board has looked for options but then as is the case now, there just is not much available and in the couple cases that were, the gyms were not conducive to our use (i.e. they could not handle volleyball). Clearly from a facilities perspective, St Claire's Gym is relatively new, well maintained and by far the best facility we have found for our use not to mention affordable. The board will continue to look at any and all options in the future and if a better alternative is found, we will pursue the use of it.
2. When the break-ins occurred last year, both St Claire's staff and our board contact the Cincinnati Police department to see their thoughts and to gather any facts we could. In short the CPD said that what was occurring in this area was not abnormal as compared to surrounding communities, that they did not have any reason to believe it was gang related and that in fact over the last couple years, the actual rate of reported incidents was down.

The break-ins according to them were "crimes of convenience" as in most instances, the goods stolen were left in clear sight within the vehicle. To this point, PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE ANY VALUABLES IN YOUR CAR WHERE THEY CAN BE SEEN AT ST CLAIRE'S OR ANYWHERE FOR THAT MATTER.

Finally when asked, the CPD did not feel that the use of St Claire's was a higher risk because of its location. They were given a list of our use dates and times and said that they would keep a closer eye on the area to help eliminate issues. Likewise the local neighborhood patrol which we have been told is very active was alerted to the situation and has since kept St Claire's as one of their focal points.

3. This year, St Claire's staff again contacted CPD to solicit their ideas which resulted in a facility walk through by the CPD representative and the St Claire staff. The primary recommendation made was to install a security fence around the majority of the property to limit the amount of access to the gym and parking lot. Absent such a fence, a fair amount of pedestrians walk through the parking lot as they travel from street to street. The CPD felt a fence would eliminate such traffic and it would also discourage hit and run break-ins if there were a single entrance to the parking lot.

As a result of this process, St Claire's board approved the installation of an 8 foot high metal fence that will enclose most of the St Claire property including the parking lot. The fence will have entrances at both ends of the parking lots as currently exist but the new fence will allow them to close one end for all activities aside from certain parish functions. The cost to St Claire to install this fence was 18K with installation expected to be complete sometime in December.

4. At the November Athletic Club General Meeting, two representatives from St Claire attended to give the board an update on their activities, explain the fence installation as well as to solicit any input and or ideas that the club may have. Aside from the fence, the primary discussion point was to discontinue the use of the main doors for entrance to the gym. Because this is not clearly visible to people inside the gym, the possibility of someone entering un-noticed was discussed. To address this, the entry to the gym will now be through the side door located at the corner of the gym nearest the parking look. This entrance comes directly into the gym making any and all entrants clearly visible.

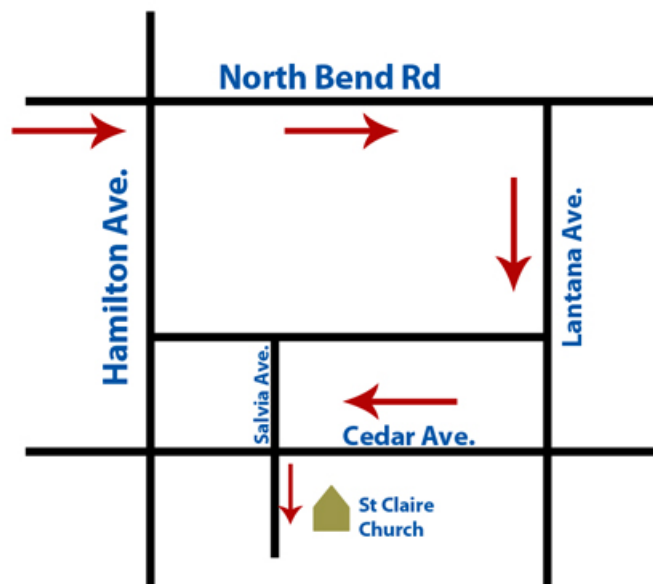
The main doors can and will still be used for exiting the building but by keeping these locked, all parties felt this offered a safer arrangement including making the hallway which is often used by the kids to get to the bathrooms safer and more secure.

5. A secondary point at the November meeting was about a couple families concern with traveling through the intersection of Hamilton Ave and Cedar Ave. given the proximity of the local bars where someone was fatally shot earlier this year. Again the CPD was contacted and they said as in the past that they felt this was an isolated incident and was not something that posse any serious concern to the St Claire facility. That said, the representatives from St Claire did provide a suggestion that anyone concerned with this use an alternate method to access St. Claire where you do not need to go through this intersection. Along with this letter is a map of showing this route which takes North Bend Rd to Lantana to Cedar.

Hopefully the above information addresses most of the questions that may still be lingering about the use of St Clare's Gym. If not, please feel free to contact any board member with your ideas and or questions and we will try to address them ASAP. Unfortunately the problems that have occurred at St Claire are not restricted to that area. As we have seen, such issues happen all over, often in our own back yards (break-ins in Lakehills, a shooting at the Marathon Station across from St James, etc.). While we can't and shouldn't run because of such things, we can and will continue to be vigilant and take steps where possible to maximize the safety of our teams and their families. We believe based on their actions that the staff of St Claire's is just as committed to insuring this as we are and we look forward to working with them in the future.

Respectfully,

St James Athletic Cub Board



Alternate Route to St Claire Gym

1. Take North Bend past Hamilton Ave to Lantana Ave. and turn right
2. Turn Right on Cedar
3. Follow one block until you reach St Claire Turn left on Salvia Ave.