

Parents Association Meeting
Wednesday February 11th 2009
6:30pm – Dodge Writing Center

WELCOME: Jayne welcomed everyone and thanked Trisha Castraberti for providing pizza, salad and drinks. This was the second evening meeting of the year; PA meetings are alternating between mornings and evening to accommodate various schedules of the parent community.

REMARKS FROM HEADMASTER: John Peterman announced that school re-enrollments are ahead of where they were at this time last year. Requests for financial aid are higher. The student body may be smaller next year; this year's graduating class is the largest ever, as there are 57 students in the 8th grade, which is larger than normal for Brookwood. The likelihood of a smaller student body as well as current economic conditions necessitated a closer look at the operating budget and overall school management. As was announced in the re-enrollment packet, Joyce Swagerty is leaving Brookwood to take on the Head of Upper Division at The Shady Hill School. A thorough examination of all departments was completed and a decision was made to downsize some of the administration. Evan Diamond will assume a new role of Upper School Coordinator and Kent Lenci will be in charge of student and faculty development. John and Barb will oversee the transition of the Upper School restructuring. The Board of Trustees will still continue to look at ways to keep expenses at a minimum. The curriculum will not be impacted by administrative cutbacks. There is discussion about adding a writing program in the Lower School to boost the acquisition of writing skills similar to the way the reading program develops reading skills in those grades. John concluded his remarks with special thanks to Jayne, Trisha and all members of the PA who are working on the auction and other PA events which so greatly benefit the school.

SUMMER CAMP: Brochures for summer camp will arrive in mailboxes to everyone tomorrow or next day.

COMMITTEE UPDATES:

SEED: Vice President Beth Payson gave a brief overview of what the parent SEED group does at their meetings. The group has grown since last year and 12-14 parents have been meeting regularly but anyone is welcome to join them at any meeting. A summary of the September through January meetings is attached. If anyone has questions please contact Mary Scofield or Dalene Blasen.

Art committee: Stori Cadigan and Vicki Lincoln have been meeting w/ Kathy Stewart and the art department to get this new committee up and running and see how they can be of most use. If you are interested in helping out with matting, framing and hanging of art in the school please contact Vicki or Stori. A schedule is attached of the times during the week when volunteers are needed and it will also be posted in the next PA Newsletter.

Sustainability committee: This newly formed committee has grown from the group that was meeting regularly over the past two years organizing the Sustainability Fair. There

will be another fair next fall and the hope is to take on one or two projects beyond the fair each year, such as a catalog recycling drive. The Board of Trustees has also formed a sustainability committee to work in tandem with the parent group. The first meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 12th at 8:30am in the Moniz Dining Room.

Admissions: Barb DiGuiseppe wanted to thank anyone who has been involved in admissions (tours, open houses, etc.) as it has been a banner year.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

The 8th grade play is coming up. Tickets go on sale next week. Class ambassadors should be in contact with new families to let them know how this is really a school-wide event that everyone in the community comes out to see. This year's theme is the Lion King and the community has been seeing previews at school meeting.

Parent Education: There was great feedback from the winter forum with Teen Parenting expert Joani Geltmen and she will be returning this spring for an evening talk. Ned Hallowell, a nationally renowned expert on ADD will be at Brookwood on April 14th. Dr. Hallowell was Brookwood's school psychologist for many years and went on to write several books and open a center for ADD in Sudbury, MA. He is a great speaker and a wonderful resource. His topic is likely to be "crazy busy" - - how do we manage our own time as well as that of our kids. Although these events are not technically open to the public, parents are welcome to bring a friend.

Auction: Auction Chair Trisha Castraberti introduced the logos for our spring auction, "One World – An International Celebration". Already nearly 70 parents have signed up to volunteer to help with some aspect of the event but we're still trying to build up a few more committees. The event will take place in the School Meeting House and six tents representing six parts of the world, plus Ireland as a beverage station, will be set up for people to enjoy food and drinks from around the world. The theme is meant to celebrate the cultures of the world and include all members of the Brookwood community. The participation and attendance of our parent community is critical to the success of this event. Ticket prices range from \$15-\$100 and the hope is that parents will pay what they are able. Ticket purchases will be confidential. A concerted effort is being made to solicit items to be auctioned from within the Brookwood community and not to solicit area businesses. Some of the items being auctioned include unique experiences from faculty and administration as well as class gifts. Class Ambassadors and/or parents in each class will be asked to help coordinate the class gifts. Items will be able to be viewed on line (look for the link in TWAB and at Brookwood.edu). Heather Robb, who is working on faculty experiences for the auction, reported that she has been "blown away by the generosity and creativity of the faculty and staff". Trisha hopes that parents take a page from this enthusiasm and think about building similar unique experiences. Trisha highlighted the bonuses of volunteering – a great way to meet people. Decorating and acquisitions are just two of the areas where we can use some help. The Mini Cooper raffle will be held again this year. Given the economy it was decided to lower the ticket

price from \$200 to \$100 and to try to sell a few more (250 vs. 200) in hopes of netting \$15K for the school. This year the raffle is being chaired by Kim Begien and Leslie Murphy and they're looking for more people to sell tickets. Thanks were given to parent Mark Drury for volunteering his time for PR/design of the invitation and other materials.

It is hoped that the decorations will be low key and brought from the homes of those members of the community with ties to the regions being celebrated. Trisha is working on getting some of food donated, which will be tapas style with each tent having one hot and one cold dish. Drinks will be sold for \$5/each and soda and water will be free. Auctioneer will be Jonny Pizze who is also a magician and live entertainment is still being discussed. Nurse Paula is generously creating another painting, her work last year was one of the big-ticket sellers, and we are trying to coordinate having the original transferred on to lithographs so more people can have an opportunity to purchase one.

WRAP-UP: Jayne asked for feedback on the PA and on the auction in general given the tough economy, etc. One parent suggested reaching out to people from the areas we are representing, especially those who may not typically come to events like this.