

PTO MEETING  
Wednesday, June 4, 2008  
Friendly Crossways Youth Hostel

After a wonderful wine-and-cheese celebration for the PTO volunteers, Andrea Hill, PTO co-president, called the meeting to order at 7:40 PM with 18 people in attendance. The venue for this meeting was Friendly Crossways Youth Hostel on Littleton County Road in Harvard. The PTO would like to publicly thank Mary Helan and Keith Turner for generously offering their beautiful facility for this event.

Andrea first thanked all the volunteers for their efforts this year. The PTO would not be able to function without the support of the hundreds of volunteers who give their time and energy to the many PTO programs and events. This year, in addition to fundraising, the PTO sponsored several new community-oriented events. Each of these required the vision, enthusiasm and leadership of our able volunteers. The PTO thanks each and every person who led a committee, participated in a supporting role, attended an event, or participated in any other way. We could not have done it without you! Andrea presented each volunteer with a lovely rose as a small token of the Board's appreciation.

Carolyn Grant and Beth Drummey next briefly reviewed the Treasurer's Report. The PTO's bank account balance is presently around \$22K, \$18K of which will be spent by the end of the school year on the remaining budgeted expenses. Dedicated Scrip funds total about \$4.8K, leaving the PTO with a small negative balance in distributable funds. It is hoped that a successful Fun Fair will provide additional money for funding requests. Carolyn explained that the first \$6K in Fun Fair profits is used for teachers' Apple Seed money; anything over \$6K is deposited in the general fund. The Fun Fair has typically brought in more than the budgeted \$6K in income. Scrip card sales have resulted in about \$5K in profit this year, with \$7K remaining in inventory. These funds are dedicated to technology requests.

Funding requests were next on the agenda. Mary Beth Banios, HES principal, presented three requests for HES. Her first request was for \$860 to replace six chains for the swings on the playground. The PTO purchased twelve swings earlier this year, and presently only six of them are in use. Ms. Banios explained that the reason for this is that the chains that hold up the swings are rotting and need to be replaced. In addition to the chains, the surface underneath the swings is not optimal – one child has been injured falling on a large sharp rock that is just under the surface. Removing this rock, according to Ms. Banios, would require excavating the area with heavy machinery. The dilemma is whether to replace the swing chains now, or look at the larger longer-term project of revamping the entire playground structure (including researching alternate locations). After a lengthy discussion, it was agreed that it would be best to have more swings available for use now. Five swings (eliminating the one over the rock) are not enough to handle the number of students at recess. It was agreed that the best solution at this point would be to move the swing that is presently over the rock to one of the open spots, and purchase five additional sets of chains. That would mean there would be 11 swings available for the children to enjoy at recess.

Ms. Banios' second request was to replace carpets in eleven HES classrooms. One first grade classroom is presently equipped with a rectangular carpet with big, bold, colored-coded rows that

make it easy to divide the class into groups. The other first, second and third grade classroom teachers would also like these carpets in their classrooms. One carpet costs \$400, so the total expense would be \$4400 for the eleven classrooms. Ms. Banios mentioned that the vendor was willing to waive shipping charges if eleven carpets were purchased.

Ms. Banios' final request was for funds to purchase reading mentor texts for their classrooms. She would like to give each teacher a \$100 stipend so that they are able to choose books for various units of study. There are 23 classrooms, so the total of this request is \$2300. Carolyn suggested that teachers provide lists of books they would like (as they have done in the past). Members can then purchase the books at yard sale, library book sales, the Scholastic Book sales, etc.

Karla Talanian spoke next on behalf of Bromfield's Curriculum Enrichment committee. Karla mentioned that all curriculum expenditures for Bromfield this year are posted on the Harvard PTO website. In addition, Karla has received recent requests from middle school teachers. First, the 8<sup>th</sup> grade math teacher has requested funds to purchase a device that measures acceleration and velocity. The cost of the device is around \$100. Second, the sixth grade math teacher would like to purchase a series of three texts, written jointly by Tufts and the Museum of Science, that are designed to encourage students to develop an interest in engineering. And finally, the sixth grade social studies teacher is presently using textbooks that are in poor condition. She could really benefit from replacement texts, and is willing to accept either new books or used books. Karla estimated that the cost of one new book would be around \$35. There are still some funds left in the Bromfield curriculum enrichment budget, so these funds will be used to support as many of these requests as possible. Scrip funds, dedicated for technology, could also be used to fund the acceleration/velocity device.

Carolyn and Beth reminded members present that approval of Ms. Banios' additional funding requests would be contingent upon Fun Fair profits. That being said, a motion was made to fund five sets of swing chains, at an estimated cost of \$700. The motion was seconded and passed by a majority. As for the carpet request, it was agreed that it would be great to provide the three additional first grade classrooms with the new carpets. A suggestion was made to ask HES parents to contribute \$20 towards a 'class fund' for their children's classrooms. These funds could be customized for each classroom, with the money going towards whatever the teacher needed (for first grade and second grade, that 'need' could be the carpets). Beth also suggested that research be done to find a different vendor who may be able to provide the carpets at a cheaper price. She offered to do this research herself. A motion was made to fund three carpets (contingent upon Fun Fair profits, Beth's research, and the alternative of soliciting class funds from parents, as discussed above). It was seconded and passed by a majority.

An open request from the Bromfield Science department for a laptop computer was discussed. The estimated cost is about \$1200. A motion was made and seconded to fund this request. It passed unanimously. This technology request will also be filled with the Scrip profits.

Michelle Catalina spoke next about her work on the HES courtyard. She would like to purchase hemlock mulch for the courtyard, at an estimated cost of around \$160. Michelle would like to design a quiet reading area in the shade of the courtyard. Some restructuring may need to be done in order to accomplish this. A suggestion was made to solicit a donation of the mulch from a local

company. As an enticement, it was suggested that a full-page advertisement in the Fall Fete catalog (worth \$150) could be offered in exchange. Michelle will attempt to get a donation first; if unsuccessful, she will come back the Board for approval of the expense.

A review of the new 2008/2009 budget was next on the agenda. Carolyn reported that the budget is basically the same as the previous budget, with a few items adjusted up for rising food costs. In addition, new budget line items were added for the new-this-year event Festival of Cultures, and the line item for Parent Workshops was removed. A suggestion was made concerning the scholarship line item. Rather than provide one \$1000 scholarship to one student, it was suggested that two \$500 scholarships be provided so that more than one student could benefit. The Board will consider this suggestion for next year's award ceremony. A motion was made to approve the budget as written. The motion was seconded and passed with a unanimous vote.

Next on the agenda was the election of the new PTO Board. First, Cathryn Noyes, PTO co-president, thanked outgoing officers Andrea Hill, Beth Drummey, Carolyn Grant and Jayne Rowe for their two years of service to the PTO and presented each with a gift. Cathryn then introduced the nominees: Lori Granville ([lori.granville@gmail.com](mailto:lori.granville@gmail.com)) was nominated for vice-president, Tina Bardenheuer ([tina\\_bardenheuer@hotmail.com](mailto:tina_bardenheuer@hotmail.com)) for secretary, Lynn Seymour ([lseymour@charter.net](mailto:lseymour@charter.net)) for treasurer, and Liz Wood ([liz@harvardmusculartherapy.com](mailto:liz@harvardmusculartherapy.com)) for the new position of Marketing/Communications. Cathryn ([cathrynnoyes1@msn.com](mailto:cathrynnoyes1@msn.com)) was nominated for an additional term for the office of president. A motion was made to approve the new slate of officers. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously. Congratulations to all!

Under 'new business', a discussion was held regarding room parents, their duties, and whether or not they should be reorganized in some way. Room parents' duties seem to vary depending on the needs of the teacher. This may be a future item of discussion.

Cathryn mentioned that the Fun Fair is still seeking volunteers for shifts at the game booths. The Fun Fair is scheduled for Friday, June 13<sup>th</sup> with a rain date of June 12<sup>th</sup>. If you are able to help, please contact Cathryn at [cathrynnoyes1@msn.com](mailto:cathrynnoyes1@msn.com).

Ms. Banios mentioned that there is one open position for a parent to serve on the School Council. Interested parties should contact Cathryn Noyes at [cathrynnoyes1@msn.com](mailto:cathrynnoyes1@msn.com).

Finally, the directory that members receive as a perk for their membership donation was discussed. Some members feel that receiving the directory should not be contingent upon joining the PTO; rather, it should be a 'gift' from the PTO. This idea is something that needs to be discussed with the membership committee. A suggestion was also made to give the secretaries at Bromfield a copy of the directory each year for their use.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 PM.

Respectively submitted,  
Jayne Rowe, secretary