

Focus on...

Friends of Woodstock School, Inc.

an independent 501(c)(3) non-profit organization supporting the educational mission and purposes of **WOODSTOCK SCHOOL**

An Occasional Newsletter

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*2014 Friends of
Woodstock School
Annual Meeting &
Reunion*

July 11 - 14, 2014

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Curry Clubs Morph Seamlessly to Woodstock Clubs

by Lorrie Doman-Sheydayi '87
FWS Chair, Alumni Committee

Woodstock Clubs are an energized incarnation of the Curry Club concept from times past, where alumni, parents, former staff, and friends across the generations, but connected by geographic proximity, periodically come together. These new Woodstock Clubs rely on the interest and passions of their members to do more than just eat – although eating is fun, too. Envision groups of any size that meet at cultural events, catch a movie together, enjoy a Happy Hour after work, or hike a beautiful trail. We suggest that the groups also meet at least twice a year for big gatherings, such as Worldwide Woodstock Day, coming up on Saturday, October 19.

Regional Coordinators -The group leaders are called Regional Coordinators. They serve as conduits of information from the national Friends of Woodstock School to the local level, and back. For example, when Principal Jonathan Long toured the West Coast this spring, we called on the Regional Coordinators to vet

suitable meeting venues and work the phones to inform everyone in their locale of Jonathan's visit. The Regional Coordinators serve an important function, and we appreciate their effort and dedication.

These engaged clubs are an important first step in building an alumni organization that connects three different players - the people of Woodstock, FWS (Friends of Woodstock School, the North American alumni and fundraising organization), and the school itself. Each individually has an important role in strengthening and supporting the other two parts. We can all benefit from stronger ties and closer Woodstock connections. Our Woodstock Clubs and their Regional Coordinators are growing the world smaller based on the simple idea that Woodstockers have fun together and can accomplish a lot with other Woodstockers. Let's see what we can do.

(Contact: paisleys@q.com)

Chess, Birding, Soccer? What Are Your Passions? PASSAGE at Woodstock

by Bethany Okie, Dean of Enrichment

My name is Bethany Okie. My husband, Abe, and I are from Atlanta, GA, and we are finishing our third year at Woodstock School. We were both hired as music teachers, but two years ago I moved into the vacant drama position. As a former musical theatre major and working actress, it's a good fit for me. It has been exciting to work toward rebuilding the theatrical life of the Woodstock community back to its glory years of top-notch productions and broad student involvement.

The recent successes in the drama program are an example of what we're hoping to do with the enrichment program: give students an opportunity to pursue interests which develop their character through experiential learning.

New concept of after-school activities - Enrichment (or "after-school activities" as they are often called) has always been a part of student life at Woodstock. There are many successful clubs, sports, and activities that engage students throughout the week. However, there hasn't been a cohesive vision or purpose as to what these activities are intended to accomplish. Are we allowing students the space and opportunities to discover an interest and develop it into a passion? What is the framework for activities which enables students to succeed at their efforts? With a larger student body and more activities, how do we avoid burnout? These are some of the questions we're seeking to answer.

We have developed an impressive list of options for student enrichment opportunities. How these activities will be staffed and scheduled is a big piece of the puzzle.

Enrichment requirements - We have a new weekly class schedule for the 2013-2014 school year which includes time allocated for enrichment activities. All teachers are required, in addition to their normal course workload, to spend around three hours per week of enrichment time with students. All Senior School students will need to participate in two to five enrichment slots.

Our planning has included surveying the passions and skills of the staff and matching them with the interests and needs of Senior School students. Several staff have volunteered to lead more clubs and activities than are required because they are excited about the opportunity. A student survey this semester brought to light many student interests. These range from cooking to debate club, science experiment club, astronomy, math, service, silent contemplation, many sports, knitting, crafts . . . and the list continues.

The PASSAGE program - We launched the new enrichment program with 105 clubs. It is called the PASSAGE program. Just as the word "passage" means journey, our goal for student involvement in Enrichment at Woodstock is to take them on a journey to discover their passions and gifts.



Abe and Bethany Okie

Appropriately, the word PASSAGE is an acronym describing the program:

Passion & Perseverance is found through pursuing one's interests in

Arts & Sciences

Service & Spirituality

Athletics & Adventure

Global Understanding & Leadership

Through Expeditions of Discovery

Our intent is not to add more busy-ness to our already full schedule, but to help students make choices as to what specific interests they wish to pursue in a focused manner. Rather than encouraging aimless dabbling, this will be an opportunity for students to find what their interests are and gain the skills and knowledge necessary to pursue these interests in depth.

Our final goal is to provide students and teachers the opportunity to reflect on what they have learned. Teachers of enrichment activities will write comments on student participation and will speak to the gifts and abilities of the students. Students themselves will have time to reflect upon their experiences as they try different expeditions of discovery and work to explore their passions, gifts, and goals.

(Contact: [BethanyOkie@woodstock.ac.in](mailto: BethanyOkie@woodstock.ac.in))



Ms. Shonila Chander
Social Studies Faculty



Dr. Jonathan Long
Principal

We Shared Stories and Asked Questions: Reflections from Knoxville, TN

by Akshay Birla '05

Each year a few hundred people in North America descend on a college campus to celebrate their shared heritage of Woodstock School. The locals are bewildered, and you can't stop us Woodstockers from chatting away throughout the weekend. Our reunion at Maryville College, near Knoxville, TN was no exception. It was spectacularly organized and set in mountains that made me nostalgic for Mussoorie.

I wasn't expecting a lot of people from the 90s to show up so when I saw one, Chris Green '00, I thought he was familiar. He looked like that crazy genius art teacher from 7th grade who taught us how to make papier-mâché masks. He then got us to write lines of narratives that we cut up, put in a bowl, and reassembled to come up with a shared narrative. We acted out that story using our masks, first at Parker Hall, and then at Happy Valley.

Akshay finds his art teacher - But this man - I remembered him as being really tall - and this Chris Green wasn't that much taller than I. Of course, it took me a while to realize that my memory is that of a fourteen-year old. We enjoyed a great personal reunion. Meeting Chris was also a reminder of the powerful impact of teachers, of alumni who give back to the school by teaching there, and of the role of art in shaping creative thought and interaction. Chris has continued his work and has an installation at the United Nations, "The Tree of Promises." Check it out at www.chrisgreenkinetics.com/Tree_of_Promises.html

Chris' story of giving back was enhanced by the many alumni who were recognized as members of the Lyre Tree

Society and others who have contributed repeatedly over 10+ years. Their generosity as well as that of several of my classmates emphasized for me that those institutions that serve the public good need public support to sustain them.

Optimism about Woodstock - In that context, it was inspiring to hear from Principal Jonathan Long. He described his vision for the school, both as an institution that makes an impact on its students and as a teacher training college that will play a substantial role in reshaping the education workforce in India. I've never been more optimistic about the school. As our alumni community engages more with the school, it too will be infected with this optimism.

Baltimore in 2014 - But as we change, we know that the world has changed. In many ways, it has become more enlightened; in some ways it has become crueler. How then, will Woodstock keep up? A question from a prospective parent, "Our son is gay; will he be safe at Woodstock?" was a reminder that no parent would have asked Woodstock this question fifteen years ago. Few schools would have had answers. Our alumni events where we share stories and pose questions are powerful means through which we contribute to the future of Woodstock. The school needs our support to be as positive a force in the lives of future students as it was for us. I will be back for the Woodstock conference in 2014, and I hope you'll join me in Baltimore.

(Contact: birla13@hotmail.com)

Introducing Bruce Davis '73

by Marianna Presler
McJimsey '54



Bruce Davis is a Woodstock School "lifer." He was born at Landour Community Hospital and graduated from Woodstock in 1973. His self-definition as a "lifer" has continued into adulthood for he has been serving for five years on the Friends of Woodstock School Board as Treasurer and Finance Committee Chair.

College application forms ask about one's extra-curricular activities. Bruce's list, as is true of many of our school's college applicants, might have included interests not usual for high school graduates in suburban Chicago where Bruce lives. He remembers marbles, chestnut fights, tops, chappal tag, making props and bum wads for Going Down Day, or collecting beetles and ferns. His college application probably did mention Bruce's participation in basketball, swimming, and track and field while at Woodstock.

Bruce majored in Asian Studies at the University of Chicago and received an M.A. from Tufts University's Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy. During an internship at the India Desk of the State Department, he helped plan a State visit by Prime Minister Morarji Desai.

In the mid-1980s, Bruce spent four years as the India and South Asia Country Officer for the Continental Illinois National Bank. His career has included corporate finance and banking. He is currently a partner at Appraisal Associates, a commercial real estate appraisal firm in Chicago.

Bruce's parents are retired missionaries from Orissa. In Landour, the family, including Bruce, his sister, Carolyn '78, and his two brothers, Glenn '80 and John '71, lived at Abergeldie. Bruce and his wife, Susan, have a daughter, Elizabeth, and a son, Christopher.

Bruce entered boarding for the first time in second grade. A barber visited Ridgewood on weekends. Not knowing how to instruct the barber, Bruce looked to the "big kids" in 4th or 5th grade for advice. They told him to ask for a "butch." His head was essentially shaved. As a consequence, Bruce quickly learned how to think for himself.

Friends of Woodstock School Annual Meeting and Reunion of 2014

by Molly Seiders '87
Chair, 2014 Local Meeting Committee

The Friends of Woodstock School are incredibly excited to announce the next annual meeting and reunion.

Date: July 11-14, 2014

Location: Notre Dame of Maryland University - Baltimore, Maryland

Website: <http://www.ndm.edu>

Baltimore Attractions: <http://baltimore.org>

The Local Meeting Committee (LMC) is focusing on activities and amazing speakers. Some of the activities will include exploring Baltimore's Inner Harbor, the National Aquarium for the children, or an Orioles game. With so much to do in the close vicinity of Baltimore, Washington DC, and Harpers Ferry, WV, please use this opportunity to extend your trip.

We encourage class reunions, whether it's the 3rd, 12th or 60th year. The LMC will provide packages that will suit your class needs and desires. Reminisce over old times while making new memories hiking the Appalachian Trail, tubing in Harpers Ferry, enjoying a dinner cruise in the Inner Harbor of Baltimore, or sightseeing in Washington, DC. Bring your family, classmates, and Woodstock friends to this unique annual meeting and reunion. See you'all in July.
(Contact: libber1992@yahoo.com)

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Thank You for Supporting WfE

by Jane Cummings, Executive Director

The Woodstock Fund for Excellence (WfE) is the undesignated annual fund of Friends of Woodstock School. Every year, the Board of Directors sets an annual goal to enable FWS to respond to grant requests from Woodstock for projects or programs "where most needed" and to cover costs of maintaining an active alumni program in North America.

The annual goal is based on a fiscal year, July 1 - June 30. In 2012, we set an annual goal of raising \$130,000 for fiscal year 2012-13.

We reached our goal - and more thanks to the support of 324 alumni and friends who contributed a total of \$138,501 to the fund. Special thanks go to a generous alumnus who put \$25,000 on the table to be matched by others in a special one-month appeal. One hundred and fifteen of you responded to this challenge and \$53,470 was contributed to the WfE from this special appeal.

Important support for the annual WfE comes from sustaining donors - alumni and friends who request that a certain amount each month, ranging from \$20 to \$100, be withdrawn from their bank account or charged to their credit card. Once the request is made to FWS, we take care of the rest and the process continues until you request a change.

Click [HERE](#) to make your tax exempt gift to the 2013-14 WfE Annual Fund Drive!

Principal Jonathan Long to visit North America

Dr. Long will visit alumni and friends in several cities on the East Coast and in Canada in October. Attend an event planned for any of the following cities if you are in the area. Contact Li Chu at lichucalif@att.com or David Wheeler at 425-353-8422 for further details and to let us know if you plan to attend.

Saturday, Oct 19 - Atlanta, Georgia

Sunday, Oct. 20 - Washington DC

Tuesday, Oct. 22 - Lancaster, PA and Philadelphia PA

Thursday, Oct. 24 - New York City

Friday, Oct. 25 - Cambridge, MA

Sunday, Oct. 27 - Toronto, Canada