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The year starts with fruestuck!

Welcome back.

It's good to see you all, new and familiar faces.

Das Jaehrliche deutsche Fruehstueck und die General Versammlung finden am ersten Maerz statt. Dabei gibt es eine kurze Willkommens Rede, etwas zum essen, caffee und dann noch mehr zum essen. Das ist unser traditoneller Start zum neuen Jahr, wobei sich die Eltern mit dem Kommittee treffen koennen um mehr ueber die Leitung der Schule zu erfahren.

PLEASE BRING A PLATE!

The Annual German breakfast and AGM is on the 1st March. This includes a short welcome speech, food, coffee, and more food. It is the traditional start to the year, in which the parents can meet each other, and the Committee, and learn more about the running of the school.

Speaking of which...

The school cannot function without a parents committee. Several positions will be open, including the presidency. It is very important that there is a functioning committee or else the school cannot operate. Parents don't need previous experience in these roles - just need to be enthusiastic and care about the school. We are also very keen to get parents on the committee who are teachers, so we can add that perspective to the committee. We are very keen to get parents on the general committee without specific roles.

Attached you will find a description of some of the fun and not very frightening things you can do to help your school...

Enrolments

Just as a reminder, the school enrolments forms are now due.

The Department of Education forms are due back on March 1st. They must be signed and stamped by your child's day school principal. If you have lost or misplaced your forms there are plenty of spare copies in the staff room.

Student classes

As the teachers get an idea of the most appropriate class for your child, there may still be some students reassigned to different classes.

Gold St Primary School

The German Saturday School only rents class rooms from Gold Street Primary School and have no ties to them. Although the teachers are responsible for supervising the students in their classes, we would ask that parents discuss with their children the importance of respecting the fact that we are renting these rooms and that the rooms actually belong to the teachers at Gold Street. It is important that the children don't move or interfere with anything in the rooms while they are there on Saturdays. We get complaints from the Gold Street School Principal on Monday mornings and don't want to have a continuing bad relationship with the school, or worse still, get our lease terminated.



**The German Saturday School
Parents Committee – Everything
you have ever wanted to know, but
were too afraid to ask....**

The facts.

As usual, at the upcoming AGM, we'll be accepting nominations for all committee positions. Most of all however we need people just to attend our meetings and add their experiences to assist in running the school. The committee meets roughly once a month from 9.30a.m to around 11a.m. It's fine if you cannot make every meeting, or be there for a whole meeting.

The hard sell.

The more parent perspectives, contributions, ideas and help we get, the better the school runs and the experience is enhanced for all of our children. The meetings are really informal; we always have great coffee, something nice to munch on and a lot of laughs! You don't need any experience with committees and you don't need to be a native German speaker. More importantly, the school cannot operate without a functioning committee, so if there is no parent committee the school cannot remain open.

The Roles...

General Committee Member

We need people who are willing to discuss ideas of how to best run a school such as ours and muck in and help out from time to time. The more people who volunteer to help run the school, the less work must be done by each of us. Please don't be shy. After all, it's for your kids too.

President & Vice President

Working together these two roles include: Chairing the regular meetings, liaising between parents, teachers, day school, and government bodies etc, coordinating the planning of school events, overseeing the administrative aspects and generally helping out in a hands-on way.

Treasurer

Responsible for tracking all incoming and outgoing funds, payment of salaries and invoices, banking and fiscal reporting. Will need own calculator.

Secretary

Records and distributes minutes of each meeting and distributes the Meeting Agenda. Responsible for checking emails sent to the school, forwarding notices to committee members and/or parents via email. Assists president in record keeping and correspondence.

Cashier

Is responsible for collecting and collating of school fees, and assists in registering students.

Newsletter Editor

The Editor is responsible for the drafting, production and distribution of the school newsletter, and for the inclusion of any good jokes in German.

Public Officer

This role covers any dealings with Consumer Affairs.

Website Coordinator

Responsible for monitoring and updating the website and responsible for maintaining the electronic mailing lists



The Warm and Fuzzy Section.

Real life committee members tell you why they have enjoyed working for the school over the past year

President- Ruth Wilson

I'm not what made me put up my hand to become president last year, my son had only been at the school three terms and I wasn't even a member of the committee... but I had a feeling here were a lot of very sensible, level headed people doing a great job and maybe it was my time to step up. It's been a great experience. The committee members come from all walks of life and each bring their skills and talents to the table. Everyone is generous with their time and their support, no-one takes themselves too seriously and it really feels like a team effort when we tackle something. We've achieved great things in 2007 and it seems like 2008 will only be bigger and better!

Cashier – Ann Kemeny

I have been doing this role for a few years now and everyone looks the other way when I come chasing them for fees!! But I am always so friendly about it!! I first arrived at the school with just one of my three children who are all here now, on the first Saturday lesson in 2000. Just as my son was welcomed into the class by his teacher, so one of the committee members immediately made me feel welcome. I sat in the staff room with other parents, and very quickly decided to become involved. Being on the committee has been a wonderful way to meet new people, discover connections and further our interests in Germany. The meetings are fun; we are all busy, so we share out the maintaining tasks and understand each other's pressures; we have more than enough time for laughter and coffee and cake, and we still get lots done. Please pop your head in the room on a Saturday morning and join in for some coffee or a chat (German, English, and any variation in between!) If you don't know anyone, it will be a matter of a few seconds only before you do

Secretary – Jocelyn Ng

I have had this role only in the past year but have been a committee member before this. I guess you can tell from the name that I'm not German. My daughter was born in Munich and we lived there till she was almost ten. She was practically a native speaker, even with a slight Bavarian accent. We didn't want her to lose it that's why she's in this school. In Germany, I used to say, "Mein Deutsch ist immer noch schlecht." Now, it has probably gone from bad to worse. But it does help to hear it every now and then.... As secretary, the main task is to take the minutes of the committee meetings. I never fail to have someone, usually Michelle (as president), fill in my question marks. Among all the organizations and people whose names get tossed around during the meeting, the one I like best is that Multicultural Commissioner. What's his name? Sounds quite like Romanoff but his name ends in "iw"! And then there's AGTV, which doesn't have anything to do with TV.... Anyway, I just make sure I file things properly (electronically especially) because if it's not in my head, at least I can search for it!

Our Award from the Victorian Multicultural Commission

At Victoria's Multicultural Awards for Excellence in November 2007, The German Saturday School Inc received an award for Service Delivery to Multicultural Victoria in LOTE Education.

Our school was cited as an exemplary community language school.

We are very proud and honoured to have received this recognition of our school community and our achievements.

Our school has been established for 25 years and educated hundreds of school-age students in German language and culture. As a non-profit organisation, we depend on the commitment, engagement and wide talent pool of our teachers and families to continually develop our school's curriculum, policies and procedures. We applied for the award because we are proud of our achievements and felt that it would be great to have all the hard work that goes into running our school was acknowledged in a wider forum. Our application detailed the structure of our school, our teachers, our students and our many achievements such as our unequalled track record in winning prizes at the regional and state AGTV poetry competitions!

Our application noted that one of the greatest benefits of being part of the school is finding a peer group. The younger children begin to realise that it's not just their mother / father/ grandparent that speaks this 'other' language- children can speak it too, and it can be fun! The older children sometimes have an alliance of resistance (there are plenty of other things a teenager can do on a Saturday morning!) but they remain motivated by the strength of the friendships they build and they have the maturity to see the benefits of acquiring a second language.

Similarly the parents find people with shared experiences; Germans establishing a new home in Australia, Australians who have spent long periods in Germany, people who have grown up in Melbourne in German speaking households. Although the cultures are very compatible and each can assimilate in the other quite successfully, the unsettling feeling of sitting between cultures eg; 'I call Germany home but have lived in Melbourne for 8 years' cannot be under-estimated. At the German Saturday School parents have the common goal of giving their children a second language but on a more abstract level they can find a reference group for their own connection to the German language.



We are thrilled to have received the award- it's a beautiful thing and will be proudly on display at all our future gatherings and events!