

## **Friends of Bocking School**

### **Chairman's Report 2015**

This year, other ways have been looked into to try to raise extra money and our profile.

In the case of raising money the Friends have maintained the usual fayre of The Christmas Bazaar and the May Day Fayre.

The Christmas Bazaar in which all profits go towards significantly reducing the overall cost of each child for the trip to the pantomime was a huge success with a profit of £2517.33 which was up £1013.69 on the previous years. With the Mayday Fayre the Friends made the decision to hire a bungee run and gladiator dual along with introducing stocks made by Ed Duncombe and selling drinks around different parts of the school grounds with a view to increasing profit. This proved to be successful as these attractions and refreshment changes added to the old favourites such as The Junior Driving School and stalls such as Hook A Duck and bottle stalls - along with the hot weather - brought people into the school in their droves. So much so that May Day ended with a profit of £4709.84, up £1664.174 on last year.

The Friends also kept the tradition of The Halloween and Valentines Discos. They have been well-supported in previous years and this was also true for the last school year. It is always good to see the imaginative costumes of the children. This year also saw Year 5 introducing their photo booth at the Discos as a way to raise funds for their Year 5 enterprise. This was a big hit with the children of other years so plans are in place to use the photo booth again at this school years discos. The Valentines disco had a slight hiccup in that the person who usually books the DJ booked him for the wrong day. But in the end adversity was overcome, Mrs Padgett was able to strut her stuff for the last time and a good time was seemed to be had by all.

The Pamper Evening was given another chance to excel in March and this time it proved its worth with all the slots booked up early in the evening. So much so that latecomers had to be turned away disappointed.

The Quiz Nights again were well supported, especially the Autumn and Winter quizzes. So successful that The Friends have had to look for larger premises for these to be held.

In June, parents found that there is one day in the year their children are never tired after a long hard day at school as The Big Bounce proves. 2 hours plus of continuous bouncing and still having to be prised off the last one to be deflated. This year there were more children bouncing than in previous Big Bounces, mainly due to the extra reception class,

On Sports Day, it was decided to sell ice creams and ice lollies during the lunch break. This was so popular they were sold out after 35 minutes and one of our committee was sent up the town for a second batch.

Two new events were added to our fund raising calender, the Bingo Night and Camp Night. The Bingo Night was so well-supported, The Rose And Crown, where the event was held, didn't have enough chairs for the participants so a few were left standing up. Apparently there was seating for 50 people.

The Camp Night was extremely popular, so much so that another was hastily arranged before the end of the summer term, which turned into a camp Weekend, another well supported event.

There has, this year, been an increase in Co-op cards that have been distributed amongst parents, carers and staff. These can be used to raise money when a purchase in all Chelmsford Star Co-op shops is made by a cardholders, or used at the Co-op funeral services. Purchases made online through The EasyFund-raising Website gives a good contribution to the Friends of Bocking School pot. If you speak to our Secretary Nicola Morgan at any time she'll give the details on these.

The Friends have tried to raise their profile in various ways. There is the notice board on the school building opposite the swing field, which is regularly updated to keep everyone informed of up coming events. Every term a newsletter is given to the elder sibling. Also the elder sibling receives a leaflet forming of an upcoming events and all this plus more is advertised on the friends Facebook page which is a closed page which any parent, carer, grandparent or staff member will only be added on approval by the chairman or secretary.

With the income of these events it enables the Committee to hold events like The Easter Egg Hunt which took place just before Easter. This had pupils from all classes desperately looking for parts of decorative laminated egg shapes hidden all around the playground. A definite time of excitement for the children and a few staff members.

Money that is raised also helps purchase items like the Mosaic for The Hungry Caterpillar Cafe, the clearing of the New Forest School Wood, items like benches and play equipment near the ramp of the year 1 classroom, money towards reducing the cost of school trips etc. This, when added to the previous year's items purchased by the Friends - the chicken run, the kitchen for the children to use, the canopies - show the school would look a lesser place without the work and effort of the dedicated parents, carers and staff who want to see the school a better place for the children.

With this there is a need to say a special thank you to a few people: The Vice Chair Lisa Baxter, who does a lot of background work so the events can run at a profit. Lisa will be the person asking for addresses to advertise The Christmas bazaar; the Secretary Nicola Morgan who, amongst other things, keeps our notice board up to date and designs and distributes the leaflets so you all know what's going on. Nicola is also behind the planning of the major events so they run smoothly; the Treasurer, Sarah King, who counts the money; the Uniform Secretary, Sarah Broome, who was responsible for the move to on-line ordering direct from the suppliers. Also thanks to Allyson Richards, Vicky Dudman, Ed Duncombe, Kelly Jansen, Carole Wiffen, Becky Clarke and Rachel Scott who endure a trip to the Retreat so plans for these events can be laid.

A big thank you also goes out to Claire Rennie, who was the source of info on what was happening, not just at this school but all around the world, so our events didn't clash with well basically anything. Claire is retiring from the Friend's group and she goes with the best wishes and a lot of thanks from all The Committee.

Also thank you again to the same people and to the schools staff and the small proportion of parents, carers and pupils who put themselves out and helped in one way or another in some or all the events which were held this year.

The McMillan Coffee morning which doesn't raise money for the Friend's pot but was again well supported and thank you to everyone especially those who gave up their morning to serve the Coffee and cake.

As every little bit of profit goes into making the children schooling easier, better and more enjoyable it is hard to understand why some people moan or whinge that they have to pay to enjoy some of the events, why they bother to donate empty bottles for the Tombola's or, the biggest issue in my opinion, put their names down to help on the events only to not bother turning up leaving the organisers having to find last minute replacements.

Other than that it's been a fine year in which a profit of £5440.56 was made. And with this I put myself forward to continue for 1 more year

October 2015