Parents’ Club of Stanford University
Job Description for Fall Tea Chair
Updated June 2014 by Marcia Hansen and Maria Carano

Overview of Job

In September, usually on the second Thursday before New Student Orientation (NSO), the Parents’ Club hosts a Fall Tea to welcome local parents of freshman. A Club meeting is held at 11:00 followed by the Tea from Noon to 1:30. The Tea is held at a member’s home near campus. Finger sandwiches and desserts contributed by members are served. Stanford representatives speak briefly. Your job as Tea Chair is to organize this event, including preparing and sending out invitations, soliciting and coordinating volunteers, coordinating food and drink donations, coordinating with the hostess, etc. You will have a committee of three or four people to help you.

Detailed Job Description

Budget: The Tea is allocated a small amount each year which will be set forth in the Club’s budget. You should receive the budget from the President in June. If you have questions, contact the Treasurer. Expenditures in excess of this budget amount must receive prior permission from the Board of Directors. Keep your original receipts for any costs you incur and submit them, with the Club reimbursement form (on the website), to the Treasurer. The budget is generally between $500 and $600. The budget will need to cover the cost of such things as invitations, stamps, balloons, drinks, paper goods and small hostess gift.

Set the Date of The Tea (May): The Tea is usually in September on the Thursday before NSO. There is a general Club meeting at 11:00 followed by the Tea from 12:00 to 1:30. One of your first jobs will be to work with the President of the Club to determine the date of the Tea. The date is usually set in May. Before the date can be finalized, you must confirm that the house where you are holding the Tea is available and that the three Stanford Deans who speak at the Tea are available. See below.

Secure the Location for the Tea (May): For many years, Stephanie Koran has hosted the Fall Tea in her home, 710 Alvarado Row on Stanford campus. The President (or the Tea Chair if requested by the President) should email or call Stephanie to see if she will again serve as hostess. The Chair and her Committee do a walk-through a week or so before the Tea at Stephanie’s house to work out set-up, if Stephanie feels it is necessary. Since she’s done it every year there is not a lot of strategizing that needs to be done. A hostess gift should be obtained for Stephanie to thank her for hosting.
**Determining if Stanford Representatives can Attend (May):** After confirming that the Tea location is available, the President (or Tea Chair if requested by the President) will contact the Stanford speakers – Dean of Freshmen, Vice Provost of Student Affairs and Dean of Admissions – to find out if they are available on the proposed date. Once you are sure all three can attend, let them know the final date so they put it on their calendar. The speakers will be sent paper invitations in August along with the Parents’ Club liaison, an assistant Vice Provost and the Assistant Dean of Admissions.

**Invitations to New Parents:** The Club sends paper invitations to local freshman parents. You may just update the prior year’s invitation or come up with a new invitation. The printer is Jeff Burnham at ChaseVP, 408-779-8400, jeff@chaseVP.com. Samples of past invitations are attached. Contact the printer in early July to discuss (1) how to make changes to the invitation from last year and (2) when you need to have the final invitation to them in order to get the printed invitations back, stuffed and in the mail on time. Generally, the invitations should be ordered in mid-July in order to get them in time to have them in the mail in mid August. **Invitations should be received by the freshman parents no later than three weeks before the Tea.** If you send them too early, they’ll ignore them and if you send them too late, they might have other plans.

- **Making changes to the invitation.** The simplest way to do the invitation is to just update the information that will change: date, time, who to RSVP to. Run it by the President to proof before you finalize it with the printer. The printer will probably send you a Word document from last year to edit.
- **Who do we invite:** Personnel at Stanford change from year to year, but in July, ask Edith Nguyen-Wu (650-725-3115, edithwu@stanford.edu) or Susan Hawke at the Institutional Research & Decision Support Department (650-725-6233, shawke@stanford.edu) to send us a list of freshmen students living within a 40 mile radius of Stanford (they do it by zip code) as well as transfer students living within a 25-mile radius of Stanford. Determine how many people this is because we really just want to invite about 250 people. Talk to the Club President if you need help narrowing the list down. Once you have pared the list down to 250, ask your contact at Stanford for mailing labels for the parents you have chosen. The mailing labels will say “To the Parents of [Name of student] and then the address.
- **When to send:** Invitations should be sent approximately month before the Tea so they arrive no later than three weeks before the Tea. In the invitation, invitees should be directed to RSVP to the Tea Chair or someone on the Tea Committee. We usually give both an email address and a phone number for the RSVP person.
- **You will need to buy stamps.**

**Invitations to Current Members.** Give the information about the Tea to the President and she will email an announcement to all current members. In that email you will request that members bring finger sandwiches, desserts or drinks, sign up to help for
certain shifts, etc. RSVPS should be directed to the Tea Chair or someone on the Tea Committee.

**Volunteers:** As mentioned above, the President, will send out an email requesting volunteers for food, drinks and set-up.

- **Food.** Finger sandwiches and bite sized dessert items are served. Attractive presentation is important. Nice platters are a must. We don’t want platters of sandwiches in Safeway plastic containers. Generally 5 sandwiches/person and three dessert bites/person is adequate. Email everyone bringing food a day or so before to confirm what they are bringing.

- **Drinks.** We usually serve iced tea and water but lemonade or Arnold Palmers are fine, too. For iced water, the Club owns an antique silver samovar or urn that is kept in one of the Club’s storage areas. Check with the head of Retail Sales who will know where the urn is. We also have three plastic pitchers in our supplies but feel free to innovate on how you serve the drinks. Amounts will depend on how many are attending.

- **Paper Goods and other supplies.** You will need plastic cups, small paper napkins, ice, ice chests, pitchers, nametags, etc. The amounts of these items will depend on how many are attending. The President has a box of party supplies so check with her first to see what we already have. Stephanie Koran (the host) does not like using paper plates so we try to just use napkins.

- **Signs/Balloons.** One person should be assigned to purchase balloons to attach to the closest street sign and to a car right in front of the house to help people locate the house. The Club owns A-frame plastic signs that say “Parents Club” which should be obtained from the Club’s storage area and placed in front of the Tea location and on the nearest corner. These should be returned to the Club’s storage area when finished.

- **Volunteers for Set Up, Clean Up and Monitoring.** About eight volunteers are needed for set up before the meeting. They should arrive an hour before the meeting starts to move furniture around, put out balloons and signs, get the drinks set up, etc. During the Tea, six to eight volunteers should be assigned to monitor food and drink tables to keep neat and filled as well as collecting cups, napkins etc. and to help the VP of Membership greet people at the door (first ½ hour only). You will need eight volunteers for cleanup which usually takes about 45 minutes. Note one person has to be willing to take the garbage home as hostess will not dispose of garbage. Email all volunteers a day or so before the Tea to confirm they’re coming. You’ll always get people cancelling at the last minute so plan accordingly.

- **VP of Membership is in charge of greeting people.** The VP of Membership will bring membership forms, clipboards and pens. The person on your committee who is taking RSVPs should make up a guest list of new and current members and make nametags for the new parents and the administrators. Have a supply of
blank nametags for current members who forget to bring their nametag. The VP Membership and a couple of volunteers will stay near the front door to greet the guests (and check them against the RSVP list), issue nametags, answer questions about Club membership and keep the flow moving past the piano and through to the back rooms and garden.

- **Locate and confirm** that the past years’ photo albums are brought to the party. The Historian keeps these albums. Guests love to look at these.
- The RSVP person should coordinate with the VP of Membership to make sure we get an accurate list of who attends, including current members, new parents and administrators.
- The Club meeting at 11:00 is usually in Stephanie’s family room. You’ll set up chairs in that room just for the meeting. After the meeting, Stephanie will show you where to put the chairs away.
- Don’t forget to give a hostess gift to Stephanie. Make sure either you, the Corresponding Secretary or the President sends Stephanie a thank you note.

### Time Line

See The Fall 2012 Tea Report for a very good step-by-step outline. It’s on our website. A brief overview outline is below.

**May.** Determine date of Tea by securing location and contacting Stanford reps. Get on agenda for June General Meeting to announce date of Tea.

**July.** Early July, contact Stanford to get list of freshman, mailing labels, etc. Update invitations and order from printer by July 25, or whatever date is necessary to get invitations by August 6.

**August.** Coordinate with Tea hostess to do walk through of home to discuss how to set up, if necessary. Have a stuffing party with Committee to stuff invitations and get them mailed. Coordinate with President to email to all Members re attending and volunteering.

**September.** Do walk through of venue, if necessary. Do Tea coordination as described above in detail.