



St. Francis School

JK-8 News

May 2008

Our most recent Parents

Association forum was dedicated to the impact of media and technology on young people today, and I have to say there was as much parental interest and intensity apparent in our discussion as in any I've witnessed over the past couple of decades.

Part of the urgency we feel about this subject is doubtless due to the fact that so little research is available in this area of our culture. The work has simply not yet been done, at least to any reliable extent, to measure or predict the influence on children's lives, thinking, and value systems of such omnipresent phenomena as the Internet. And what about video games? And what about the new multipurpose cell phones? And Web-based social networking?! We had a lot to talk about.

St. Francis wants to work with parents in this area to ensure the health of the children in our community. Our counseling department has explored the resources that are available to help schools cope with this challenge, and we have already employed some of the help that is available locally to guide our students to become good cyber citizens. But we also recognize that, as this part of our national - and personal - culture grows, we will have to enhance the role that this topic plays in our curriculum.

One of the leading national resources that we rely on, and which we featured in our forum, is the media-watch group Common Sense Media, whose resources are available at <http://www.commonsense.com>. Based in the Bay Area and associated with Stanford University, Common Sense gets credit for being one of the first groups to explore the impact of technology on young people.

Here are some of the guidelines that Common Sense recommends for parents. You may not agree with them, and the school is certainly not requiring that you comply with them, but it's important that we recognize them as reference points.

- * Not even high school students (not to mention elementary-age children) should be allowed Internet access in their own rooms.
- * Rather, Internet access should always be located in a "public" space at home.
- * Young people do not need cell phones until they are old enough to use them responsibly, and this kind of maturity comes in high school. The prevalence of cell phones among younger children helps explain why 70% of bullying is cyber based, usually involving text-messaging.
- * Since the great majority of American preteens and teens are active on social networking sites, such as Facebook, MySpace, Webkinz and Club Penguin, parents should insist that they be made one of their child's "friends" and thus have access to their networking pages.

CHILDREN & TECHNOLOGY continued on Page 3 —>

OUR CHILDREN & TECHNOLOGY - by Mr. Delautre

CALENDAR HEADS-UP



Our final day of school — Wednesday, May 28 — brings a 2:15 PM dismissal (not an earlier dismissal as was incorrectly printed on some early calendars).

SFS PAIR EARNS PRIZE AT STATE SCIENCE OLYMPIAD

Eighth-graders Paul Lacher and Eli Beard participated last Saturday in the Science Olympiad state competition at Western Kentucky University. Competing in the Trajectory event, Paul and Eli earned 2nd Place among more than 25 other teams.

Congratulations to both students, who devoted many hours this winter and spring preparing for the competition. Paul and Eli qualified for the state event by winning 1st Place at regional competition in March.

EIGHTH-GRADE CAR WASH CLEANS UP

Our Student Council Car Wash last Saturday raised nearly \$500 for the annual 8th Grade gift to the school. A BIG thanks to:

- * the parents who stayed to oversee the washers and even to help wash vehicles
- * SFS teachers and staff Kristan Murphy, Kelly Stevenson, Michael "double-shift" Mahoney, Reed Gabhart and Sue Holloway for volunteering their time to help oversee the event
- * the drivers who arrived riding dirty and left clean and purty

SF SCHOOL JOINS IN SF CHURCH CLOTHING DRIVE

St. Francis in the Fields Episcopal Church (home of our preschool) is collecting summer clothing and shoes for children in the Dominican Republic. We want to help. Please bring in donations of children's T-shirts, shorts, skirts, shoes, etc., to be given to a rural community outside of San Domingo. The deadline is May 28. If you have any questions, please contact Lizzie Cullen in our Advancement Office, 228-1197 x101.

HAVE YOU CONTRIBUTED TO THE SFS ANNUAL FUND?

If you did, you'll soon receive a "proof" sheet listing the names of all who contributed to St. Francis School between July 1, 2007, and May 2, 2008. This list will appear in the next SFS Annual Report. Please review the list for your data and report any discrepancies to the Advancement Office: 228.1197 x101 or x108 or cwood@stfrancissschool.org.

Remember, your name won't appear on the final list until your pledge is fulfilled, which must be prior to June 30. Thanks to all who have contributed so far to our current total of \$115,543.

FROM THE MIDDLE SCHOOL ...

by Reed Gabhart, head of Middle School

On Monday through Wednesday last week, our 7th Graders took their previously postponed trip to Hoosier National Forest. It was a jam-packed two days of camping, hiking, teamwork, meaningful conversation and a connection with nature.

On our long hike Tuesday, it was readily apparent that we had made a prudent decision to postpone our trip last month. We could tell that the creek had previously washed over the trail and would have been a torrent we couldn't have crossed or hiked around. Now, however, our weather was excellent, with no rain, lows in the 50s and warm days in the mid-70s. Sometimes things work out....



Olivia works at starting a fire

The boys and girls set up their tents in separate campsites, gathered firewood of all sizes and were responsible for building and maintaining the fires and cooking for the group. They were conscientious and did a great job. Bratwursts never tasted so good! The students hiked an interpretative trail on Monday and read about a pioneer home that once housed a tannery, and had the wonderful experience of trying to make fire by friction (a feat no one completely accomplished, but we did get wisps of smoke!) led by St. Francis alum Eric Holt

On Tuesday, we hiked a demanding 15.7 miles around two lakes. At night, everyone assembled around a campfire near an amphitheatre in the woods (a wonderful setting!) and discussed the trip, its challenges and their feelings, and looked towards the future as the Class of 2009. The conversation was overwhelmingly positive. Our camping specialist, retired SFS teacher Mike Black, shared a wonderful history lesson with the whole group that he had read to the boys on Monday night. Upon our return to school, Mr. Black shared this report with the rest of the faculty:

"The ultimate question becomes, 'Is it worth it?' During the evening gathering, many of the students confessed that this had been the most difficult day of their lives but also the best day of their lives – seemingly a contradiction until one remembers that a price has to be paid for achievement. Let me share with you one of my favorite quotes, from 'Panther in the Sky' by James Alexander Thom, who used the words of Black Fish, the adopted father of Tecumseh, when he said to this 8-year-old Indian boy: 'There is no short or easy way to get anything of great importance.' As teachers, I hope we always understand that our students grow the most when the challenge is difficult and real."

Vintage Mr. Black, and it was easy to see that the kids connected with this lesson and appreciate Mike's reverence for the natural world. They also grew as a class, and many talked about this around the fire.

I thoroughly enjoyed this precursor to the 8th Grade's Big South Fork trip next year and would like to dearly thank Mike Black, Nita Duechle, Rosanne Conlan and Eric Holt for being such effective watch-group leaders and being willing to spend 2½ days with 7th graders in the woods! We learned as well and already are making plans to make next year's 7th grade trip even better.

EXCERPTS FROM ESSAYS OUR 7TH GRADERS WROTE AFTER CAMPING IN HOOSIER NATIONAL FOREST

"Hoosier National Forest is one of the most challenging things you will encounter in seventh grade. When it comes to friends, you will meet and learn about so many people. You walk out with at least three new best friends. You grow in many ways, and every second of the trip is worth it in the long run." - **Kendall Malone**

"The entire experience made me realize water is an amazing thing. We worshipped the spigot after the long hike. We now appreciate so many more things that we took for granted before. We all have gotten to know each other better and have learned to work as a group better." - **Megan Schrader**

"The camping trip was hard and showed us who we really were." - **Ryan Thebert**

"My favorite part was swimming in the creek. We did a really long hike, it was hard, but we all did it! I can't wait until BSF." - **Clayton Russell**

"The seventh grade trip was a challenging yet rewarding trip. It was mainly focused around teamwork the first day, gathering firewood, setting up tents and cooking. You really learned about people's work ethic and what they were willing to do. The next day was all about friendship. This trip was amazing and you really felt a sense of accomplishment...." - **James Manni**

"On the 15 mile hike, I learned that my teachers are awesome and that we all (the girls) helped one another." - **Olivia Loeffler**

"It was fun when we hiked and very challenging. I was so happy I went." - **Ashley Haupt**

"You overcome many obstacles and challenges. When you get to the end, it is like you have conquered the world and all of its glories."
- **Emily Lacher**

"This trip has changed how the girls work together. We made new friends and learned to cooperate. The hike was the hardest part of the trip and was the hardest day of my life. This trip will help us get ready for Big South Fork. The hike might have been hard, but it felt great when we were finished." - **Ellie Najewicz**

"The camping trip was ... a great experience. I feel prepared for BSF. I feel proud of myself after hiking 15 miles. I had a lot of fun." - **Sharon Greene**

"The most important thing I learned was the art of endurance. This is to say, "I can do it." The real world can make people very uptight. Nature gets us away from the real world, yet you can still learn things in nature that help you with the real world." - **Max Abner**



PARENTS ASSOCIATION NEWS by Tracy Lattis, PA president

Blue and White Day will be here soon. Attached to this newsletter is a Spirit Wear order form so you can stock up on blue or white SFS T-shirts or shorts for the big day. Submit orders to the office by this Monday (5/5) to ensure timely delivery.

This week you will receive volunteer sign-up forms for the 2008-09 school year. Summer brings a lot of Parents Association planning, so we need this information before school ends. Please carefully review the many areas where help is needed. It takes everyone to make the year a success! The forms are due back to school by Monday, May 19.

A very big THANK YOU to all who helped volunteer for our many activities this year. I believe we had a successful year due to our many wonderful volunteers! I hope we can build on this and make next year even better.

Our PA fundraisers enabled us to help provide for a number of SFS "wants" this school year, including:

- * inventory and start-up for the new St. Francis Bookstore
- * \$9,000 towards the planned greenhouse (the school also has a \$6,500 grant for the project)
- * \$2,500 towards 150 new black chairs for events such as Fine Arts Evening, drama, etc. We previously had to rent chairs for events.
- * \$1,000 towards the new sandbox being built on the playground and the installation of the outside mosaic hopscotch board.
- * \$500 towards a new video camera to be used by faculty and students.

The selling of wrapping paper, cookie dough and coupon books made these "wants" become reality! Thank you to all who participated to make this happen.

Coming Event: May 14 - Skating Party

SIGN UP FOR SFS SUMMER CAMPS Our five-day camps run from 9 AM-2 PM the week of July 21-25. Here is a summary:

Girls' Leadership: Open to girls 10-15. Topics include fitness, nutrition, dating, peers, skin care, public speaking, fashion, college prep and decision-making. Guest speakers are top leaders in the Louisville Community. \$250.

Discovery Outdoors: Open to boys and girls grades 5-8. Limit 15. Taught by outdoor educators; plus, the Louisville Zoo will bring live Kentucky animals and teach about what's in our own backyard. What would one need to survive in the wild? How can we take care of our Earth? What is all the hype about being green? Campers will make birdhouses/bat boxes with instruction from a craftsman. \$250

Soccer: Open to boys and girls grades 5-8. Limit 15. Learn techniques from Clarkson University player and SFS alum Brody Boomer. Brody is working with Gregory Moss-Brown, Trinity's soccer coach, to develop a superior, innovative program. Open for both beginners and experienced players. \$250

In the studio: Open to boys and girls grades 5-8. Limit 12. This week will focus on ceramics but will also teach various media. We will use the kiln on-site and end up with exciting keepsakes. Taught by an advanced art instructor. \$250

Drama: Open to boys and girls grades 5-8. Limit 15. Taught by Lyn Gregory, playwright, producer and actress. Learn techniques to foster future performances as well as self-esteem and general communication. \$250

Computer: Open to boys and girls grades 5-8. Limit 12. Led by the Geek Squad, this "Build Your Own PC" camp features all materials, and campers will leave with a useable computer and expert knowledge to go with it. \$350

Creative writing: Open to boys and girls grades 5-8. Limit 15. Taught by Fredrick Smock, Bellarmine University poet-in-residence, English professor and director of the Creative Writing Program. Learn writing techniques to foster better writing in school and independent writing pleasure. Low-stress, and fun! \$250

ALL MATERIALS ARE INCLUDED CAMP COSTS. Bring your own lunch, which will be refrigerated. There will be breaks during camp, and snacks will be provided. **For more information and registration,** contact camp director Brigitte Muennich at BMuennich@Stfrancissschool.org. Registration will be confirmed followed by camp payment to St Francis School.

OUR CHILDREN & TECHNOLOGY continued from Page One ...

* Video-gaming time as well as TV watching should be explicitly controlled. Video games in particular need to be reserved for weekends only, and even then tightly monitored.

Clearly, the pertinence of these and the other recommendations that you will find at Common Sense need to be discussed in light of your own family's needs. It is also clear that those of us who inhabit the adult world need to do some homework to explore our children's cyber world. The universal experience there seems to be that you will be challenged and surprised.

As the school continues to define its role in this area, we invite your input, and in particular your ideas on how we can aid you in meeting the needs of your family. As you ponder, here's a link to a very compelling "Frontline" video stream on teens and the Internet, which we also discussed at the forum: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/kidsonline/view/main.html>

And in case you missed this very valuable Parents Association event, we hope to see you next time.



NOVELIST-SFS PARENT LIZ BEVARLY IN PRINT AGAIN

Check out Tuesday's Courier-Journal for a Features section interview with Elizabeth Bevarly, novelist, mother of 8th-grader Eli Beard and spouse of preschool teacher David Beard.

The interview spotlights Liz's "Fast and Loose," the latest of her more than 60 contemporary romance works. Her novels regularly appear on USA Today and Waldenbooks bestseller lists, and her "The Thing About Men" was a New York Times Extended List bestseller.

"Fast and Loose" takes place in Louisville and is the first of a three-part series featuring Louisville locales and the Kentucky Derby. Find the C-J story at:

<http://www.courier-journal.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080429/DERBYFUN03/804290310/1010/FEATURES>



MAY LUNCHROOM VOLUNTEERS

Please find a substitute if you can't work on your scheduled day. If you can't find a sub, call Chef Matt Gasper (228-1197 x112) AND parent Dianne Siciliano (292-3295) before your scheduled date.

Monday, May 5 - Michelle Monda, Michelle Jurige, Laurie Kinney
Tuesday, May 6 - Carolyn Thebert, Shannon Jones, Sherry Stevens
Wednesday, May 7 - Denise Waggener, Ellen Thalacker, Lisa Fleming
Thursday, May 8 - Ann Hendren, Pam Smith, Karen Smith
Friday, May 9 - Julie Eckert, Kristin Donovan, Tess Krebs

Monday, May 12 - Liz Bevarly/David Beard, Margaret Bond, Joe Malone
Tuesday, May 13 - Karen Riley, Holly Winebrenner, Katey Stone
Wednesday, May 14 - Jill Shiflet, Dena Wilson, Suzy Bagga
Thursday, May 15 - Ann Hendren, Holly Cooper, Eliana D. Brunner
Friday, May 16 - Liz Cole, Weasy Middleton, Courtney Foster

Monday, May 19 - Joe Malone, Betsi Faulkner, Suzy Bagga
Tuesday, May 20 - Lisa Fleming, Kathy Baucom, Sherry Stevens
Wednesday, May 21 - Diane Fowler, Katy Bade, Dace Maki
Thursday, May 22 - Nancy Scott, Ann Hendren, Shannon Jones
Friday, May 23 - Tracy Lattis, Kay Chandler, Laurie Kinney

Monday, May 26 - NO SCHOOL; Memorial Day
Tuesday, May 27 - Suzanne Gorman, Robin LeMastus, Amy Lavin
Wednesday, May 28 - to be announced

COUNSELOR'S CORNER - by Julie Marks, director of Student Services

Congratulations to our three 7th graders who qualified for State Recognition on the Duke University Talent Identification Program (Duke TIP):

* Max Abner * Teddy Finkelstein * Audra Kinney

Each earned this recognition by scoring at or above the national average on a least one part of the SAT or ACT. A student qualifying for State Recognition is in the top 30% of the Talent Search pool. Way to go!

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IN ADDITION TO the great camps being offered by SFS this summer (see page 3), here are some other camps around town:

Cool Tech Camps is for students just completing grades 6 & 7. Three one-week camps will feature "cutting edge technology" during the first 3 weeks of June. Visit <http://www.cooltechcamps.org>.

Kentucky Museum of Art & Craft's Summer in the City is open to all elementary students and will feature art projects plus behind-the-scenes tours of downtown art galleries. **Another camp**, open to students ages 10-13, will be held June 23-27 at Blackacre State Nature Preserve in eastern Jefferson County. Participants will take part in four different workshops taught by some of Kentucky's finest artists. Contact Dane Waters at 589-0155 x208.

Summer Camp for Academically Talented Students (SCATS) is for students just completing grades 6-8. The camp runs June 8-20 at WKU, and applicants must meet certain criteria. Visit <http://www.wku.edu/gifted>.

Meredith Dunn School Summer Connections offers students completing grades K-7 remedial help in all academic skills. The program runs June 16-July 11. From June 16-27, Meredith Dunn School also offers various middle school workshop options such as study skills/organization, reading comprehension and writing skills. Call the school at 456-5819.

TAKING A VACATION? A pet-loving St. Francis faculty member is available for **house- and pet-sitting** throughout spring and summer. Also available for child care. Please call the main office, 228-1197, for details.

NEED A NANNY? If you need help with your children this summer, we know of a staff member's relative who is available. She is 22, has worked as a nanny for the past 4 summers and is a student at U of L majoring in English and Theatre. For more information, contact Cindy Wood in our school office at 228-1197 x108.

KUDOS AGAIN to our seven winners in the Oldham County Division of this year's Courier-Journal Young Authors competition. The students' names are now posted on a C-J Web site: www.kentuckianamoms.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=200770918008

As we reported last month, our winners were Elizabeth Carrigan, Zoe Koss, Lila Asher, Max Abner, Harrison Fowler, Eli Beard & Colton Kirby.

SFS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TRACK MEET ON MONDAY: Open to all students in 5th grade and under

This special meet, hosted by our track & field team, is open to ALL students in grade 5 and below — anyone who wants to run and have fun. Events begin at 4 PM. Participation is free. We'll have ribbons for all pre-registered participants, along with concessions for the crowd.

The events: a 50 meter dash for the youngest students plus 100 meter dash, 400 meter dash, long jump and a relay event. To pre-register, contact Coach Lou Armstrong at 228-1197 x233 or larmstrong@stfrancissschool.org. Specify student name, sex, grade & school.

GRADES 1-4 FIELD HOCKEY CLINIC WILL DISMISS AT 4 PM THIS MONDAY for the SFS Elementary School Track Meet (see above), to allow children to participate in both field hockey and the track event, if desired. If your child chooses not to participate in track, please arrive by 4 for pick-up from field hockey.

EIGHTH GRADE GRADUATION PLANNING MEETING: 8:15 AM Tuesday (5/6) at Java Brewing Company in Prospect.

"GREENHOUSE FUND" GROWS AT YEW DELL GARDENS PLANT SALE

Thank you to all who enabled us to sell food at last weekend's amazing annual plant sale at Yew Dell Gardens. We ended the weekend with about \$1,200 in gross sales. All profits from this event will go towards our greenhouse project.

Thank you to:

- * parents Holly & Robin Cooper for arranging for our school to provide the food
- * the Stone, Cote, Bagga, Hallermann, Fields, Thalacker & Cowley families for volunteering their time in service to our school
- * SFS staff member Ray Barrickman and his daughter, Taylor Rae, for supervising the grilling and serving of food

ST. FRANCIS HIGH SCHOOL "UPSCALE YARD SALE" to be Saturday, May 17: The sale will be 8 AM-5 PM at the high school, at Third Street and Broadway in downtown Louisville. For more information, call Mikell Grafton Skinner at 376-8446 or Liz Eckman at 895-8755.