



St. Francis School Monthly News

September 2006

Most St. Francis families have heard by now that our school's commitment to environmental education has received renewed emphasis in recent months. Building on the work of the school leaders whose foresight provided our extraordinary Goshen campus four decades ago, our current trustees have added an environmental plank to the school's strategic plan that will impact the school for the rest of its history.

NO CHILD LEFT INSIDE!

An outgrowth of the Year of St. Francis that we inaugurated last spring in celebration of our 40 years as a school, our renewed environmental commitment feels right for three reasons:

- Going back to the early years of the 20th century, progressive schools - then often called "fresh air schools" - have traditionally promoted the benefits of outdoor experience for personal health and growth.
- The overarching purpose of the progressive tradition has been, for more than a hundred years, the cultivation of well-informed citizens who are engaged in the public good. At this point in history, there is perhaps no greater challenge to our society than the sustainability of our planet. Simply put, our children will need more and better environmental instruction than we received to meet the needs of the twenty-first century.
- Because our community and academic program have *always* cherished nature and imparted concern for the natural world as a function of the curriculum, the faculty has embraced this emphasis as a validation of our school's historic progressive mission. We *believe* in this cause, and we know how to make it fly.

Our goal, then, as a school is that every child of every age will experience significant growth *this year* in the awareness of, appreciation for, and ability to safeguard the natural world. We expect that parents will not only be hearing of their child's experiences at school, but also be invited by their children to raise the environmental commitment at home. The process should be very interesting!

Just how is the school's environmental focus to play out in lessons and activities? Here's a very small sample, much of which has actually been in place for some time:

- At the Preschool, classroom activities will interface with the existing recycling programs (milk jugs, paper, cardboard, cans, etc). Litter walks, targeted instruction, as well as giving children more responsibility for getting items to the appropriate recycling bins will increase stewardship of natural resources.
- In addition to the impromptu "Bugs of the St. Francis Playground" unit currently underway in Goshen, the Jr. Kindergarten class will study the Arctic, trees, bats, birds, wetlands, recycling, solar system, our own backyard, and rain forest.
- Elsewhere in Lower School, nature will supply the content of math word problems, students will become "pioneers" traveling the far reaches of campus as they settle Louisville, and Science teachers will coordinate a unit on animals with Language Arts. Two lively finches continue as the subject of study in Mrs. Stevenson's class. (Continued on Page 2 —>)



**REMINDER:
NO SCHOOL THIS
MONDAY**

Enjoy your Labor Day weekend.



**OUR PARENT
ASSOCIATION'S
FALL FUNDRAISER
STARTS TODAY**

and continues through Sept. 19. See our Parent Association column, inside, for details.

LOWER SCHOOL PARENTS' NIGHT: 6:30-8:15 PM THIS THURSDAY (9/7)

Book the babysitter! Parents' Night is your chance to get an overview of curriculum from each of your child's teachers and to visit each classroom. (Individual conferences are held October 12 and 13.)

EAGLE FESTIVAL -- 1-5 PM SUNDAY, SEPT. 17 -- PROVIDES A GREAT OUTREACH OPPORTUNITY FOR SFS

Mark your calendars and invite your friends and neighbors, too, to attend our annual Eagle Festival on the afternoon of Sunday, Sept. 17, at our Goshen campus.

This day of school spirit and fun and games is the perfect opportunity to introduce prospective families to our school.

If you know anyone who might be interested in SFS for their children, please ask them to attend. We'll provide them with free tickets for games and food.

Contact Admissions Director Krista Wilson (228-1197 x118 or KWilson@StFrancisSchool.org) or parent Lori Dabney (228-0183).

ATTACHED TO THIS newsletter is a flier about our Athletic Department's **after-school instructional soccer** opportunity for students in grades 1-4.

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- The third grade will return to the Falls of the Ohio as part of their fossil unit, and second graders will do a unit on Earth Day. Once again we will celebrate Earth Day school-wide as a “buddy” activity.
- In Middle School, St. Francis students will continue to participate in the NAIS “Global Challenge,” working with a school in South Africa to explore the global clean water crisis.
- If you’re wondering how World Language and Music classes will incorporate environmental themes, our resourceful faculty are experiencing no shortage of ideas: How about a unit on the woodland flora and fauna in France, a study of the work of the Cousteau Institute, or an exploration of the shrinking rain forest in Costa Rica? Some music classes will sift the work of nature-inspired writers, such as Dickinson and Frost, for compositional inspiration.
- Our Middle School trips to Pine Mountain and Big South Fork will involve a study of the mountain top removal problem as well as the culture of Appalachia.

In truth, this list comprises the tip of an iceberg. And if the work ahead is prodigious, we also feel we are up to the task. This is our calling as a school and the fulfillment of a vision that first took shape than forty years ago. As always, we look forward to creating a dynamic partnership with parents to maximize the impact of this program.

John Delautre

LOWER SCHOOL CARPOOL UPDATE

The LS carpool routine is running a little more smoothly, thanks to your cooperation with our attempt to keep the line from extending onto HWY 42. It really helps for us to form 2 lines from the driveway entrance until the double gray doors.

Please remember that JK-K students are dismissed at 3, while students in grades 1-4 aren't dismissed until 3:05. This allows JK and K parents to pick up their little ones and be on their way quickly, making room for the 1st through 4th grade parents to arrive a little later, enter carpool line and stay off of HWY 42.

DO YOU RECEIVE OUR NEWSLETTERS BY E-MAIL?

Once a month we send home a paper newsletter -- such as today's -- but we also send home a weekly, supplemental newsletter via e-mail. (For your convenience, we also send home this monthly version via e-mail, and we post it at <http://StFrancisSchool.org>.)

If you haven't already received e-mail news from us -- or if you wish to to add, correct or a drop an e-mail address in our mailing list -- please notify us at news@StFrancisSchool.org.



FROM THE MIDDLE SCHOOL ...

by **Reed Gabhart**, head of middle school

WELCOME to our newest newsletter feature.

On a rotating, periodic basis, Sandra Tuley, head of the Lower School, and I will describe interesting things going on in the lower or middle school. We would also be happy to answer questions that may be of interest to all.

We had a great turnout for the middle school coffee hosted yesterday by Mr. Delautre. Thanks to all who attended. Here is a summary of some topics of particular interest to middle school parents:

First, many of you recently signed your child's Elective Projects brochure and hopefully had some input into your child's choice, or at least were able to see the many wonderful opportunities offered. We noted that about 95% of our kids got the brochures home, signed, and back, which is an accomplishment in the first place! We've tweaked our Elective Projects time this year and are doing projects for 60 minutes, followed by a 30 minute block designated as "Resource Time." This is flexible time where the students go back to their advisors and have several choices of how to use their time. They can work on their homework quietly, request to visit a particular teacher for additional help in a difficult area, or visit teachers to catch-up if they have been absent. All teachers will be available to help students during this time. Choosing how to use this time is part of the maturation process that takes place during the middle school years. We are confident it will prove to be of value.

We talked about how the longer class periods this year have been beneficial for everyone. The faculty has commented on having more "breathing room" and feeling less rushed. Students may get a start on their homework at the end of class, which allows the teacher to circulate and give more individual attention when needed. Students are traveling between classes less and spending more time in each class. While it takes time to adjust to a new schedule, we certainly think this is a "new and improved" schedule.

Finally, everyone commented on how positive our middle school environment is and how our kids are generally happy at school. Julie Marks, our director of Student Services, circulated some handouts pointing out the developmental characteristics of middle school kids; "moody and sensitive" made everyone nod their heads in agreement (and laugh.) It is a testimonial to our faculty and school environment that our kids feel good about school and work with their teachers. From my standpoint, I was thrilled at the end of the coffee when I realized there had not been a single question about discipline (often a "major" topic).

We hope to see you at Spirit Night on Sept. 11; and mark your calendar for Middle School Parents' Night, 6:30-8 PM Thursday, Sept. 21. Here's to a great year!

PARENT ASSOCIATION NEWS

by Deirdre Barnett, SFPA president

The PA welcomes everyone back to school for another great year at St. Francis!

We have had a good response to our call for volunteers; our committee chairs will contact all who have signed up. Thank you! Many opportunities for involvement still remain. Most importantly, we need a Spirit Committee co-chair and Auction chair (s). Please contact me (228-6958) if you can share your time and talent.

Meet our SFPA Committee Chairs:

President—Deirdre Barnett (228-6958)
VP, Middle School—Carolyn Thebert
VP, Lower School — Tracy Lattis
Treasurer — Laura Johnson
Book Fair — Amy Hanekamp, Laura Johnson
Eagle Festival — Lori Dabney

Fall Fundraiser — Ann Hendren, Katy Bade
Lunchroom Volunteers — Dianne Siciliano
Landscape and Gardening — Laurie Kinney
Spirit Committee — Rebecca Najewicz
Holiday Wish Fund — Kim Mackin, Carolyn Thebert

COMING EVENTS

Today through Tuesday, Sept. 19: Fall Fundraiser.

Please consider participating in this important Parents' Association fundraiser to benefit our school. In recent years the PA has helped purchase computers, sports uniforms, the beautiful sculpture and garden in front of our school, and many other important projects that enrich our children's learning experience.

We are working this year with a new fund-raising company, Jaxco, to offer a wider variety of items. Jaxco offers many gift items as well as wrapping paper, candies, college logo items and magazines – something for everyone! And the students can earn fun prizes while helping their school community.

Watch for the packet in your child's backpack this afternoon. Please contact Katy Bade, 895-2092, or Ann Hendren, 228-1903, with any questions.

Eagle Festival volunteers meeting: All available room parents and any other Eagle Festival volunteers should meet with Lori Dabney at 8 AM this Wednesday (9/6) in the Multipurpose Room.

Spirit Night: Monday, Sept. 11

Join us in cheering our field hockey and soccer teams to victory, and stay for dinner, too. Please contact Rebecca Najewicz, 228-7664, or Deirdre Barnett, 228-6958, if you can help grill, sell concessions, or assist in clean-up.

Eagle Festival: Sunday, September 17th, 1-5 PM

Lori Dabney and her group of volunteers are busy planning a fun-filled afternoon – including a yearbook signing celebration for last year's graduates.

THANK YOU TO ...

* Kim Mackin for her hard work and dedication as last year's PA President, and for all her sound advice!

* Dianne Siciliano for organizing all of the lunchroom volunteers

* Ann Hendren and Katy Bade for all their efforts in organizing the Fall Fundraiser

* Carolyn Thebert and Tracy Lattis for enlisting and working with this year's new Classroom Parent Reps

* **All of the following parents who have volunteered to be our children's Classroom Reps:**

Jr. Kindergarten — Beverly Lancaster

K / Rudd-Dewberry — Lynn Kirby, Jill Shiflet

K / McGraw-Dewberry — Jenifer Daunhauer, Terri Erwin,
Lisa Fleming, Tracy Lattis

1st Grade — Kay Chandler, Charlotte Stites, Abby Yelton

2nd Grade — Tracy Lattis, Christine Speck

3rd Grade — Ann Hendren, Anita Meyer, Sherry Stevens

4th Grade — Erica Curtis, Lori Dabney, Kim Mackin

5th Grade — Mary Laura Griggs White, Debbie Morgan

6th Grade — Robin Finkelstein, Levetta Perry

7th Grade — Tanya Greenberg, Holly Winebrenner

8th Grade — Kim Mackin, Carolyn Wetterer

Our heartfelt thanks go to all our generous volunteers who make St. Francis a wonderful place for our children to learn and grow!

USED BOOK SALE -- AT THE EAGLE FESTIVAL -- TO SUPPORT OUR SFS LIBRARY

Do you have piles of books that your children (or you) have outgrown? Donate your like-new or gently used books for our Used Book Sale, to be held at the Eagle Festival on Sept. 17.

We need hardbacks, paperbacks, children's books, cook books, fiction, non-fiction, just about anything!

Drop off your donations in the "Used Books" green collection bin in the Main Amp before Friday, September 15. Then come to the Eagle Festival and buy "new" used books at great prices.

All proceeds will go to the St. Francis School Library. Please contact Ann Hendren, 228-1903, or Deirdre Barnett, 228-6958, with any questions or to help with this sale.



SEPTEMBER LUNCHROOM VOLUNTEERS

NOTE TO ALL VOLUNTEERS: Please find a substitute if you are unable to work on your scheduled day. If you are unable to find someone to work for you, please call Chef Matt Gaspar at 228-1197 x112 before your scheduled date.

Monday, September 4 - Labor Day, no school
Tuesday, September 5 - Nancye Faulkner, Holly Winebrenner, Rene Prys
Wednesday, September 6 - Amy Dishman, Abby Yelton, Beverly Lancaster
Thursday, September 7 - Michelle Heit, Cynthia McAfee, Ann Hendren
Friday, September 8 - Laurie Kinney, Debbie Morgan, Terri Erwin

Monday, September 11 - Ginger Campbell, Mary Ann Pollard, Amanda Fields
Tuesday, September 12 - Lana Tyulmenkova, Kathy Baucom, Michele Monda
Wednesday, September 13 - Carolyn Wetterer, Vlasta Ross, Gretta Manni
Thursday, September 14 - Nancy Scott, Patti Adkins, Ann Hendren
Friday, September 15 - Risa Koby, Karen Siladi, Christine Speck

Monday, September 18 - Lisa Wiley, Christina Ullum, Rene Prys
Tuesday, September 19 - Robin LeMastus, Suzy Bagga, Dianne Siciliano
Wednesday, September 20 - Sherry Stevens, Kim Mackin, Risa Koby
Thursday, September 21 - Michelle Heit, Cynthia McAfee, Ann Hendren
Friday, September 22 - Laurie Kinney, Catherine Chandler, Tracy Lattis

Monday, September 25 - Mary Ann Pollard, Amanda Fields, Vi Brouillard
Tuesday, September 26 - Kathy Baucom, Steve Paradis
Wednesday, September 27 - Katy Bade, Georgette Kidwell
Thursday, September 28 - Mary Herrmann, Patti Adkins, Ann Hendren
Friday, September 29 - Amy Lavin, Carolyn Thebert, Suzy Bagga

SUMMER SUCCESSES FOR SFS STUDENTS

Congratulations to:

* Audra Kinney, 6th grader, who finished first in all three of her individual events last July in the LSA Red Division City Swimming Championships in Louisville. Audra swam the 25 meter freestyle, 25 meter backstroke and 100 meter individual medley.

* John Kinney, Class of '06 and brother of Audra, who finished first in the 50 meter freestyle at the LSA championships, breaking the previous record that was set in 1993.

* 8th graders Brianna Barnett, Claire Johnson, Lexie Lancaster and Katherine Mackin for their selection as participants in last July's Junior National Youth Leadership Alumni Conference in Boston. As a follow-up to last summer's "Legacy of Leadership" conference in Washington, DC, these students participated in educational activities designed to further their understanding of key concepts of leadership, including courage, character and perseverance. They also visited historical sites around Boston to delve deeper into fundamental aspects of leadership and connect them to events in our nation's rich history.

This just in:

Instructional Field Hockey for girls in grade 1-4 will be moved to the spring.

WATCH FOR YOUR INVITATION to join Steven and Sara Paradis at Riverfarm in Goshen for their annual BBQ featuring live music, delicious barbeque, spirits, and chance to mingle with other members of the St. Francis community.

The gathering — 6:30 PM Saturday, Sept. 23, at Riverfarm, 2801 N. Buckeye Lane — will be held at the Log Cabin farmhouse, with its spectacular panoramic view of the Ohio River.

Tickets are \$75 per couple, and all proceeds support our wonderful preschool and JK-8 programs.

Please RSVP to Cindy Wood at 228-1197 x 108 by September 19.

CHESS CLUB MAKES ITS FIRST MOVE NEXT WEEK

Our popular Chess Club begins its new season after school this Tuesday (9/5). Meetings will be 3-5 PM each Tuesday. All students are welcome to join. Starting the following week -- Tuesday, Sept. 12 -- we'll also have a Beginner's Chess group for true beginners (those just learning the pieces and moves). This group will meet from 3-4 PM Tuesdays starting Sept. 12.

LIVE AT SFS: Oldham County Studio Tour and Art Sale, Sept. 16-17

Come see the work of SFS artists Janet Britt, Nita Duechle, Neisja Yenawine and Teresa Saborsky, and new St. Francis parent Amanda Fields, along with dozens of other Oldham County professional artists.

EASY WAYS TO HELP YOUR SCHOOL

* **LET US RECYCLE YOUR USED PRINTER INKJET & LASER CARTRIDGES.** We earn money that we can re-invest in our own technology equipment. Bring your empties to the front office, and we'll take them from there.

* **GET SFS KROGER GIFT CARDS HERE.** This is cost-free, virtually effortless fundraising program. Simply request a Kroger Gift Card from our school office; the cost is \$5, but the card comes with \$5 credit. You then add more money to the card at the Kroger customer service desk or check-out. Our school receives 4% of your expenditures, and it costs you nothing extra. What's more, you can use your own credit cards to "reload" your Kroger card. We all win. Try it!