



St. Francis School

JK-8 News

April 2008



What are the basic differences between progressive education and traditional models? Are schools that attend to the "whole child" more effective and, if so, in what ways? How valuable are standardized tests in assessing a child's intellectual growth and do they predict success later in life? Are practices such as democratic classrooms, multiage instruction and cooperative learning supported by research? Is it true that traditional "academic" instruction for very young children is actually counterproductive to their learning, and that worksheets and reading from textbooks have no positive educational impact?

If progressive schools have such an edge in effective practices, then why are they so rare?!

Most St. Francis parents have wrestled with these or similar questions at some point in their child's school career, and we have worked hard to make the answers available by such means as our online progressive bibliography. Now our work in this area has been made much easier.

Last week, progressive schools in this country received an enormous vote of confidence from the flagship publication of the National Association of Independent Schools: *Independent School Magazine*. The latest edition of *ISM* explores the challenges facing American education today and **points to our tradition and educational philosophy as the most promising solution** to the current quagmire.

The lead piece, "Progressive Education: Why It's Hard to Beat, But Also Hard to Find," is by Alfie Kohn, a researcher and author well known to our community. You can find it at <http://www.alfiekohn.org/teaching/progressive.htm>.

Every St. Francis parent needs to know the contents of this article if we are to have a productive home-school partnership and maximize your children's school experience. So please read it, share it, and discuss it with your child's teachers. You may want to give particular attention to the section entitled "Why It Makes Sense," which discusses the research that supports a progressive classroom approach (and reveals the lack of support for more traditional approaches).

Happy reading. This is very good news for St. Francis.

HOMEWORK FOR PARENTS!
- by Mr. Delautre

SFS SCIENCE OLYMPIAD TEAM ADVANCES TO STATE IN ONE EVENT

Learn more on next page →

CALLING ALL PROSPECTIVE "CHILDREN'S GARDEN" VOLUNTEERS

Anyone interested in volunteering in the SFS Children's Garden is invited to a meeting at school at **2 PM this Tuesday, April 1**. We will plan the best way to use parent and grandparent volunteers to make our garden even more beautiful than last year. Please join us.

If you are unable to attend the meeting, please contact Kelly Stevenson at kstevenson@stfrancisschool.org. Thanks!

OPTIONAL CHILDCARE FOR JK-4 STUDENTS DURING SPRING BREAK

If you need childcare for your JK-4 students during Spring Break (April 7-11), please contact Janet Saborsky at jsaborsky@stfrancisschool.org no later than this Wednesday, April 2. A minimum of 8 children must sign up for us to offer care.

SFS TO OBSERVE "EARTH DAY" IN BIG WAY - by Kelly Stevenson, science teacher and environmental coordinator

Our students will commemorate Earth Day by celebrating an "Earth Week" the week of April 21.

Each day will feature a theme of ways to help the Earth. Students will learn about various topics at school, and information will be sent home allowing you to continue the discussions in your families. Friday will culminate the week with a full day of activities, including time in the Children's Garden. Stay tuned for news of the activities and learning opportunities.

NEXT WEEK'S AFTER-SCHOOL ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES will include making sun-catchers and dessert nachos.



"THE MAN WHO CAME TO DINNER," OUR SPRING PLAY, TAKES THE STAGE AT 7 PM THIS WEDNESDAY & THURSDAY

Suitable for grades 4 and up! Dessert goodies served at intermission!
Arrive early for a good seat! Tickets are \$7 for adults, \$5 for students.

This classic American play is a large-cast comedy that takes place in the heyday of American radio prior to television. Sheridan Whiteside, a larger-than-life star of radio and writing, visits a small town to do his weekly show. Disaster ensues when he slips on the ice and is bedridden, becoming the most unwanted house guest the Midwest has ever seen.

"The Man" takes over the house, and his houseguests include Hollywood legends, nutty professor, struggling newspaperman, vampy starlet and more. For good measure, throw in some convicts, female chorus and a few odd animals, and you have all the ingredients for a screwball comedy. Oh, and what's a good play be without a love angle? This epic has it all!

SFS SCIENCE OLYMPIAD TEAM FINISHES WELL IN COMPETITION, ADVANCES TO STATE IN ONE EVENT

- by Sue Holloway, science teacher and Science Olympiad coach

Our Science Olympiad team competed last Saturday at Ballard High School against four Meyzeek Middle School teams and two Oldham County Middle School teams. Representing our school in nine separate events were Paul Lacher, Griffin Cote, Duncan Cooper, Kienan McCusker and Quinn Hillerich. Eli Beard, who attended all our after-school practices and prepared for three events (Trajectory, Science Word and Metric Mastery), was unable to participate due to illness. We certainly missed his contribution on Saturday.

Thanks to all the parents who attended, cheered on our students and helped with the building events. A special thanks to the Coopers and the Lachers for supplying food and taking pictures. Our team won medals in these events:

- * 3rd Place Science Word - Paul Lacher & Duncan Cooper
- * 3rd Place - Tower Building - Quinn Hillerich & Griffin Cote
- * 2nd Place - Write It/Do It - Duncan Cooper & Paul Lacher
- * 1st Place - Trajectory - Paul Lacher & Duncan Cooper

Our Trajectory competitors will attend the State Tournament at Western Kentucky University on April 26. Congratulations to all.

PARENTS ASSOCIATION NEWS

by **Tracy Lattis**, PA president

Coming Events:

April 15 - Spring Sports Spirit Night.

Bring the whole family after school to cheer on our Track & Field athletes as they compete in the big LISC Meet, beginning at 4 PM. Enjoy delicious grilled food, reconnect with old friends and enjoy a fine spring day at SFS.

April 18 - Teacher Appreciation Luncheon

provided by JK & K parents

TO: PARENTS WHO ATTENDED YESTERDAY'S PARENT ASSOCIATION FORUM ON CHILDREN & TECHNOLOGY

Here is the link to the "FrontLine" TV production about "Kids Online": <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/kidsonline>

EIGHTH-GRADERS LEARN CULTURAL AND LIFE LESSONS FROM FILM AND VISITORS

- by Nita Duechle, humanities and art teacher

In 8th-grade Humanities, students watched a documentary entitled "God Grew Tired of Us," which explores the brave spirits of three boys from Sudan who are forced to leave their homeland due to a civil war. It is an extremely moving story that connects us to our human emotions through culturally rich and diverse relationships.

Our students led many discussions throughout the film that provoked new insight about another culture and new insight about themselves. They wrote in journals and included photographs of themselves and their families to send to the students, so they can practice their English. We hope to receive these same journals back, filled with stories and information from them.

Recently, five refugees from Rwanda and the Congo region came to visit us at school. We were enthralled with their stories of survival, but most inspiring was our guests' indomitable spirit. Tchope, Ange, Julianne, Monique and Esperenze spoke and sang of the strength we all possess and the gift of freedom. We were touched briefly by the common wants and needs of all societies: love, respect and understanding. **Our students wrote touching thank-you notes to the visitors, and I've included some excerpts:**

"I love how you can adapt to different types of lifestyles and take risks. You all are strong women and brave. I admire you." - **Alexis Perry**

"It is very nice to have a real person come to speak to us. We don't get to have many guest speakers, so I really want to thank you for taking time out of your day." - **Kienan McCusker**

"What you said was very meaningful to me. It let me understand how your life is now that you are in America, compared to how it was in Congo." - **Hanan Shandler**

"I really enjoyed the song you sang. Even though I could not understand the lyrics, I got the feeling that it was a very powerful and important song. Hearing it made me want to do something to make the situation in Africa better." - **Eli Beard**



"It must have been hard to adapt to a new place and try to learn a new way of living and learn a new language. It really showed me the importance of generosity and kindness towards others. Thank you for showing me the real meaning of courage." - **Tyler Longhofer**

SUMMER CAMPS AT SFS: SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

CAMPS FOR PRE-TEENS AND YOUNG TEENS

We offer seven diverse five-day camps that will run from 9 AM-2 PM the week of July 21-25. Choose from:

Girls' Leadership: Open to girls 10-15. Limit 15. Topics include physical fitness, nutrition, dating, peers, skin care, public speaking, fashion, college preparation and decision making, motivational speakers. Guest speakers are top leaders in the Louisville Community including the executive director of an educational and vocational organization, Maryhurst's director and CEO, outreach director from Norton, plus many others. An upscale salon will be teaching about and doing the camper's hair. A fashion expert with experience doing wardrobe and style on the Oprah show as well as other TV shows will talk about fashion with the campers. Campers will be receiving some useful samples. This will be interactive, fun, and educational. \$250.

Discovery Outdoors: Open to boys and girls grades 5-8. Limit 15. Taught by outdoor educators including Orienteering Louisville, Jefferson Memorial Forest, and the Louisville Zoo. The zoo will bring out live Kentucky animals and teach about what's in our very 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 and how can we take a step in that direction? These are all things we'll learn about through hands on activities. Bird-houses/bat boxes will be made with your child with instruction from a skilled craftsman. \$250

Soccer: Open to boys and girls grades 5-8. Limit 15. Learn techniques from Clarkson University player and SFS alum Brody Broomer. Brody is working with Gregory Moss-Brown, Trinity's soccer coach, to develop a superior, innovative program this week! This is open for both beginners and experienced players and both will learn great technique to use in the game. Self-evaluation of playing performance will also happen this week. This will be a very hands-on approach with individual attention. \$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 mediums. We will use the kiln on site and end up with some 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. The week will focus on techniques to foster future performances as well as self esteem and general communication. We'll use games & exercises to teach these techniques with a brief workshop performance. \$250

Computer: Open to boys and girls grades 5-8. Limit 12. The Geek Squad will lead another successful week. Back by popular demand is "Build Your Own PC" camp. All materials are provided and campers will leave the camp with a useable computer and expert knowledge to go with it. \$350

Creative writing: Open to boys and girls grades 5-8. Limit 15. This will be taught by Fredrick Smock, Bellarmine University's poet in residence, assistant professor of English and director of the Creative Writing Program. Mr. Smock has had many published poems, essays and stories; he will teach various writing techniques to foster better writing in school as well as independent writing pleasure. This will be a low stress fun week of writing camp. \$250

ALL MATERIALS ARE INCLUDED THE CAMP COST. 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@Stfrancisschool.org. Registration will be confirmed followed by camp payment to St Francis School.

"CAMP INVENTION" FOR CHILDREN ENTERING GRADES 1-6

Camp week will be 9 AM-3:30 PM June 16-20. These science-enrichment experiences develop creative thinking, teamwork and problem-solving skills through hands-on exploration and fun. The base price is \$210, but you can save \$25 if you register online by March 31. (Save \$20 if you register by paper form by 3/31.) **Choose from:**

Saving Sludge City -- Adults and businesses in Sludge City have polluted their town, and it's up to our campers to rebuild a cleaner, more eco-friendly city. First, children must demonstrate some of the actions that polluted the city and methods for cleaning it up -- including building a new pollution-free landfill and successfully filtering water. On Days Three through Five, children create a new, cleaner version of Sludge City and design transportation that won't pollute the air.

Art Park -- An eccentric supporter of Art Park, a local art museum, has threatened to stop donating money to the museum unless the park designs a new sculpture garden, and it is up to our campers to lead this project. Children will design different types of sculpture. They will build totem poles with meaning, mobiles with movement, and "found art" with recycled materials. Children will assemble their ultimate sculpture pieces that combine meaning, movement and materials to satisfy both the public and the museum's largest donor.

M.A.R.S. (Moving at Rocket Speed) -- Campers have been challenged to provide the first astronauts to land on Mars, and there is only one week to complete the tasks. Children experience everything from lift-off to final return, as well as preparing supplies needed for the trip. Children determine how to travel while on the planet and how to communicate with each other and friends and family back home on Earth. They also assemble spaceships for their voyage to Mars, design living quarters and rovers for traveling on the planet, and create communication devices.

I Can Invent: Fantasy Inventions & Complicated Machines -- Imaginations run wild as children take part in two different versions of the "I Can Invent" module. During the first two days, both younger and older children take apart broken household appliances that they've brought from home. Younger children continue taking apart on Day Three, while older children begin building complicated machines that will launch a water balloon at a target. On Days Four and Five, younger children build fantasy inventions using the pieces/parts of their take-apart items, as well as other supplies and items from the recycle room. Older children continue using their take-apart items and other supplies to build their complicated machines. Finally, older children set their multi-step machines in motion to launch their water balloons. All children then display their inventions at the Inventor's Showcase.

LEARN MORE AND REGISTER ONLINE AT

<http://www.CampInvention.org>. Or e-mail our camp director, Brigitte Muennich, at muennich4@insightbb.com.

CHESS CAMP AT SFS Chess Coach Emir Sefo will conduct a chess camp for St. Francis students at our Goshen Campus during the week of Aug. 11-15 (the week before classes begin). Camp hours will be 9 AM-noon. Cost will be \$100 per child. More details will be forthcoming. Questions may be sent to parent Suzy Bagga at sbagga@dhotmail.com.



LUNCHROOM 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 Gasper (228-1197 x112) AND parent Dianne Siciliano (292-3295) before your scheduled date.

Monday, March 31 - Michelle Monda, Michelle Jurige, Susan Tecktiel
Tuesday, April 1 - Carolyn Thebert, Richard Harland Bennett, Sherry Stevens
Wednesday, April 2 - Denise Waggener, Ellen Thalacker, Laurie Kinney
Thursday, April 3 - Ann Hendren, Pam Smith, Karen Smith
Friday, April 4 - Julie Eckert, Kristin Donovan, Tess Krebs

Monday-Friday, April 7-11 - NO SCHOOL; SPRING BREAK

Monday, April 14 - Liz Bevarly/David Beard, Margaret Bond, Joe Malone
Tuesday, April 15 - Karen Riley, Holly Winebrenner, Katey Stone
Wednesday, April 16 - Jill Shiflet, Dena Wilson, Kay Chandler
Thursday, April 17 - Ann Hendren, Holly Cooper, Eliana D. Brunner
Friday, April 18 - Liz Cole, Weasy Middleton, Courtney Foster

Monday, April 21 - Mary Laura Griggs, Betsi Faulkner, Christine Carrigan
Tuesday, April 22 - Lisa Fleming, Kathy Baucom, Sherry Stevens
Wednesday, April 23 - Diane Fowler, Katy Bade, Dace Maki
Thursday, April 24 - Nancy Scott, Ann Hendren, Shannon Jones
Friday, April 25 - Tracy Lattis, Kay Chandler, Catherine Forgarty

Monday, April 28 - Liz Bevarly/David Beard, Denise Ragland, Dena Wilson
Tuesday, April 29 - Amy Lavin, Suzy Bagga, Robin LeMastus
Wednesday, April 30 - Kim Mackin, John Lenihan, Walter Denham

SIGN UP NOW: DERBY CAMP ADVENTURE WEEKEND, May 2-4

This annual fundraiser provides fun for the kids while allowing their parents to engage in Oaks & Derby doings. St. Francis students in grades 1-8 are eligible. Children from other schools must be recommended by a St. Francis family. The camp is led by teacher Jane Cox. **We offer three options:**

- Option I** - full weekend, for \$400: 9 AM Friday - 9 AM Sunday
- Option II** - Friday only, for \$225: 9 AM - 11 PM Friday
- Option III** - Saturday to Sunday, for \$225: 8 AM Saturday - 9 AM Sunday

Friday brings a Louisville Adventure Day of IMAX movie, Louisville Slugger Museum, bowling, lunch, perhaps another museum, and fun and games on the waterfront. Dinner, movie and games will follow at SFS.

Saturday brings a Kings Island Adventure Day -- breakfast, departure from SFS at 8:30 AM, day at Kings Island, dinner during the return trip, movie and games back at SFS.

Camp ends Sunday morning with pick-up at 9 AM.

To sign up, see Mrs. Cox or submit this **DERBY CAMP APPLICATION FORM:**

Child's Name: _____ Age: _____

Child's Name: _____ Age: _____

Child's Name: _____ Age: _____

Parent name: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

Emergency contact & phone: _____

Child's Physician & phone: _____

Medication child takes: _____

RELEASE (must be signed by at least one parent or guardian): I understand that St. Francis School, Goshen, KY, or the Derby Camp chaperones will not be held accountable for loss of clothing or other personal belongings or any bodily injury that may be sustained by my child while in the Derby Camp chaperons' care. If my child needs medical treatment for an emergency, I grant permission to the Derby Camp or the Derby Camp chaperons to seek treatment from a physician selected by the Derby Camp. **Parent Signature:** _____

Please include check with this application.

"ONE ENCHANTED EVENING" -- THE SFS FINE ARTS EVENING AND WORLD LANGUAGE FESTIVAL, 6:30-8:30 PM THURSDAY, APRIL 17

Mark your family calendars for this special event, when our Visual Arts, Performing Arts and World Languages departments proudly present an evening highlighting the many talents of our students. You will have an opportunity to view artwork, listen to beautiful music and enjoy food and dance from around the world.

All students are required to be present for this very special presentation. Please watch the mail for your invitation, which includes the schedule for the evening. Student dress code is "nice" attire (appropriate for church, synagogue ...). No jeans allowed! We look forward to seeing you there!

Sincerely,

Janet Britt, Nita Duechle, Neisja Yenawine, Angela Clark, Kim Aberle, Ed Gupton, Jane Cox, Kelly Stevenson, Alex Taylor & Nicole Denosky

SFS "PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION/PARENTING GROUP" to meet next at 8:15 AM, Friday, April 25

Meetings are open to all. The group was formed to discuss selected readings on progressive education and parenting. For more information, contact parent Shelly Ward at shellyward@msn.com.

EIGHTH GRADE GRADUATION PLANNING MEETING: 8:15 AM Tuesday, May 6, at Java Brewing Company in Prospect. All parents of 8th graders are invited.

TURN OFF YOUR LIGHTS FOR AN HOUR SATURDAY NIGHT - by the SFS Science Department

Last year on March 31, Australians turned off their lights for one hour. This year, the movement is going global, and our SFS Science Department encourages your family to join in.

Your family can join with people worldwide by turning off the lights for one hour at 8 PM this Saturday, March 29. Help reduce energy use and make a powerful statement about turning the tide of global warming. See www.earthhour.org for details.

OUR SUMMER "CAMP INVENTION" WANTS THE FOLLOWING RECYCLABLE ITEMS: paper towel rolls, buttons, yarn, shoe boxes, interesting food containers and similar, cleaned items. NO glass products please. Deposit your items in the front office or Teachers' Lounge. Thank you!

St. Francis School Instructional Field Hockey Program

This Spring, the St. Francis athletic department will offer after-school instructional field hockey for girls in **grades 1-4**.

Students who are interested in participating need to bring shin guards, water bottle, a mouth guard, a field hockey stick and a snack. Cleats are optional.

The sessions will be **3:05-4:50 PM Mondays on April 14, 21 & 28 and May 5, 12 & 19**.

The program instructor will be Brigette Muenich.

If you have questions, please contact **Rosanne Conlan** at 228-1197 x116 or rconlan@stfrancisschool.org.



Student's Name:

Parent's Signature and contact number:

Please return to Rosanne Conlan

NEW WEB LINK TO SFS "ANNUAL FUND"

Our new-look Web site also has a new link for giving to our SFS Annual Fund: <http://www.stfrancisschool.org/advancement/default.asp>

THIRD-GRADE BROWNIES meet next from 3-5 PM on April 24.

ST. FRANCIS HIGH SCHOOL TO HOLD "UPSCALE" YARD SALE

Our friends at St. Francis High School are planning an "Upscale Resale" on Saturday, May 17. The sale will be 8 AM-5 PM at the high school, at Third Street and Broadway in downtown Louisville. The high school's Athletic Committee, which is organizing the event, describes it as "kind of like a yard sale without empty mayonnaise jars." For more information, call former SFS parents Mikell Grafton Skinner at 376-8446 and Liz Eckman at 895-8755.

AFTER-SCHOOL MUSIC PROGRAM HAS OPENINGS

Piano lessons are offered at SFS on Tuesdays, and guitar is taught on Wednesdays. Tuition will be pro-rated for any students who sign up now until the end of the semester. If your child is thinking about trying piano or guitar but not sure about the level of commitment required, now would be the time to try. Contact SFS music teacher Angela Clark at 228-1197 x202 or aclark@stfrancisschool.org, or Eleanor Boris, the program's business manager, at 228-1157.

"THEATRE IN NATURE" CAMP

Parents, the following Web link will take you to a summer opportunity for your child that expresses an important St. Francis core value. We thought you might be interested. Visit: <http://www.theatreinnaturecamp.com>

NANNY POSITION SOUGHT

If you are looking for 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.