

FALKTalk

Volume 12 Issue 2
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Inside This Issue:

Page 2

- * Director's Letter, Continued
- * PTA President's Letter, Continued

Page 3

- * Library News

Page 4

- * Health News
- * 10,000 Villages
- * Talent Show

Page 5

- * Music Notes
- * Holiday Gift Shop
- * Sally Foster

Page 6

- * Computer Room News
- * Computer Cartridge Recycling Program

Page 7

- * Falk Fundraising

Page 8

- * Heartwood Books

From the Director...

The events of the past month have forced all of us to reconsider our practices at home, at work, and in school. Here at Falk we acknowledge the need for consistent security measures which are understood, implemented by, and communicated to everyone: students, teachers, staff, parents, and any others who are involved with our children during the day. We need to know where our children are at all times, and we now need to implement additional security procedures.

Last year, we implemented attendance procedures designed to verify student absences each day. We were taking roll, as always, but we also were calling each family when a child was absent with no prior excuse. This procedure worked fairly well most of the time. Perfection is a journey, and we are still on our way to our destination.

(Continued on page 2)

From the PTA President...

October was a busy month for the Falk School PTA! The Sally Foster sale was a huge success and generated revenue that will fund PTA-sponsored events throughout the year; many thanks to all who participated in this event.

All who attended the second annual multicultural picnic on a beautiful Fall Saturday were treated to expert salsa and Scottish dancing, international games, and wonderful ethnic food. The picnic was a wonderful way to celebrate our diverse community at Falk. Thanks to Jane Dirks and Sally Rafson for coordinating this affair.

The General PTA meeting, held October 11, was very informative, with the introduction the MAT's and a discussion of the functions and responsibilities of the PTA. The MAT's are indeed a very talented and dedicated group of people. For

(Continued on page 2)

Back to School Calendar

NOVEMBER

November 2 — Saxophonist James Moody performing (Middle School and Intermediate)

November 5-6 — No School; Primary/Intermediate Parent Conferences

November 7-8 — Falk School Talent Show

November 13 — Pittsburgh Symphony's "Travelin' on Water" (kindergarten)

November 16 — Falk music students perform at Katz Business School luncheon

November 19 — 10,000 Villages Shopping Night, 6:00-8:00 p.m.

November 26-December 21 — "Madame Butterfly Opera Trunk" (Intermediate)

November 28 — "Growing Pains" (6th grade)

November 29-30 — Falk Holiday Gift Shop in the Art Room

DECEMBER

December 10 — Pittsburgh Opera artists perform for Falk students

December 15 — Last day for Sally Foster orders online

From the Director...(Continued)

We need to know where our children are at all times, and we now need to implement additional security procedures.

Effective immediately, I am asking all parents and teachers to help us effect even greater measures to ensure the safety of our students. I would ask parent help in the following areas:

1) Please try to arrive on time for school. This will aid us in our attendance efforts. If your child is ill or scheduled to be late, please call Tina Mattis at 412-624-8020 or notify your child's homeroom teacher;

2) Parents taking children out of school during the day must inform the homeroom teacher personally, by note or by phone, and must also sign-out in the office (even if you are taking the child from the nurse's office).

We will continue do our part in the following ways:

1) Absentee reports will be distributed to all Falk faculty and staff early in the a.m.

each day;

2) We will continue to determine where children will go at the end of each day (bus, carpool, after-school) in the homeroom period. If plans change, please notify Tina Mattis at 412-624-8020.

Our responsibility is to monitor students arriving and leaving the school, on field trips, at athletic events, and between classes during the school day and in after-school. We hope that these measures will be sufficient. Faculty will be meeting to discuss additional concerns/possibilities during the next few weeks, and I will be talking to Health, Safety and Risk Management in order to take advantage of their expertise and resources.

Thank you for all your help in advance.

— William McDonald

From the PTA President...(Continued)

those who missed this meeting but would like to become part of the PTA, please contact Charlene Barnett or me.

Upcoming events include the ever popular Talent Show (November 7 and 8), coordinated by Charlene Barnett, and the Holiday Gift Shop at the end of November. Kim Lincoln, who started shopping for the gift shop in June (!), has selected a lot of new and unique items for this year's event. Fliers about the holiday shop will be sent home soon.

Speaking of fliers, I am amazed at the difference between the number of announcements sent out by school and the few received at home. I have been told that this is a side effect of being parent to a middle-school child! Seriously, the issue of how to best communicate with parents has been a recurrent topic at our PTA executive board meetings.

We would like to establish an email distribution list so that parents could receive announcements electronically. This idea has

been debated endlessly with concerns about privacy and security, the number of families with access and interest in receiving paperless messages, and the need for volunteers to sort through the directory database. A questionnaire regarding this issue will be sent home (oh, the irony) with your children towards the beginning of December. Any immediate ideas or suggestions on this matter can be directed to Sabina Rosenfeld or to me.

Since my last letter, I have had the opportunity to talk with many parents about a great many issues at Falk. I believe that I, along with every other PTA representative, serve as an advocate for our children, our families, and our teachers. As always, you are invited to become part of this wonderful organization and, as always, feel free to talk with me by phone (412-380-9366) or email lbillington@superiorwells.com.

—Lynn Billington

Library News

BIRTHDAY/GIFT BOOK PROGRAM The library and the PTA coordinate a Gift Book Program as a means of expanding the library collection while commemorating special times and special persons: birthdays, holidays, grandparents, teachers, interns, and sometime even pets. An appropriate bookplate is placed in each book. All Falk students, teachers, interns, and staff benefit from the continuous updating of the collection.

If you would like to make a donation or have questions about the Birthday/Gift Book Program, contact Ms. Herward (624-8010), Pam Greenhouse (412-422-2613), or Nancy Glynn (412-825-6545).

LIBRARY GIFTS Thank you to the students and families who recently donated books to the library: Jodi Lincoln, Sage Lincoln, Bobby Lincoln, Rev. K. & Dr. Lee Ann Conover, Joy & Arthur Moss, Hope Alcorn, Ellen Falk Hirsh, Ms. L. Williams, Chao Long, The Tonsor Family, and Deborah Brandon. More complete information concerning these gifts is published in the Library Newsletter.

LIBRARY VOLUNTEERS Parent volunteers provide valuable support to the library program, allowing Ms. Herward more time to work with the students and to engage in professional activities. Circulation volunteers assist when primary level classes have book circulation. Other volunteers provide clerical support. The current library volunteers are listed below. Thank you to Pam Greenhouse and Nancy Glynn for recruiting the library volunteers.

CURRENT VOLUNTEERS SCHEDULE

Tuesday Room 112

Beatriz Ochoa, Sabina Rosenfeld

Wednesday Room 115

Barb Rubinstein, Laura Zaspel Lawson

Thursday Room 111

Abhay or Kalyani Vats, Dinnie Goldring

Friday Room 116

Jenny Grandis, Kris Straub

Periodical Management

Beate Salter, Nancy Glynn

Book Fair

Ann Kelton

Volunteers will be needed to work at the Library Book Fair, April 8-11, 2002. This involves a one-time commitment of 2-3 hours. Contact Ann Kelton, Book Fair Chair, at 412-244-5722.

VISIT THE LIBRARY WEBSITE Ms. Herward maintains a website for the Falk School Library (www.pitt.edu/~herward). The site includes information about the library staff, curriculum resources, class schedules, parent volunteers, policies and procedures, the Gift Book Program, new library materials, special events, MLA Works Cited style sheet, the library catalog, and the magazine collection. The website includes two new items: Curriculum Resources and the Library Catalog.

New library software, Web Collection Plus, allows everyone to browse the library collection on the Internet. Searching can be done by title, author, subject, and keyword. The Curriculum Resources web pages list print and electronic resources for class assignments and projects. Students will find a list of library books and a list of websites suitable for their projects. The Falk School website (www.pitt.edu/~fls) includes a link to the library website.

—Linda Herward



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Contributions?

Please send any contributions to Amy Scerba at ascerba@mindspring.com. Thanks to this issue's *FALKTalk* contributors for submitting all articles electronically!

Health News

Hearing screenings took place between October 17 and 25. Height/weight and vision screenings, begun in September, were completed by the end of October. Notices were sent home with children who had difficulty with either of the screenings.

Many, many thanks to Ann Kelton and Nancy DelPresto for their assistance with the screenings, particularly the hearing screenings. The extra set of hands (feet, actually) meant that children could be escorted between classroom and screening room in small groups, freeing me to concentrate my efforts on the actual screenings.

I am always on the look-out for someone who might be interested in occasionally assisting in the Health Room. Activities, such as described above, require no

medical experience! On-the-job training is provided!

If you do have experience as an RN, LPN, or in some other area of the medical field and might be available to act as the "substitute nurse," even for a few hours now and then, let me know. I would be happy to give you a brief orientation and add you to our list of much-appreciated volunteers! My phone number is 412-624-8023.

If you have received a notice regarding those pesky but outstanding health forms for your child, please send them in as soon as possible. Those forms are not only required by the Pennsylvania School Health Act, they are invaluable in the event of an emergency. Thank you for your cooperation.

—Susan Sholtis, RN

10,000 Villages Shopping Night



The PTA along with 10,000 Villages, a unique shop on Forbes Avenue (next to National Record Mart) in Squirrel Hill, is hosting a Falk School shopping night.

From 6:00-8:00 p.m. on Monday, November 19, Falk School parents, students, and friends can shop, and 10% of the purchase price will go to the PTA. This shopping spree is not considered a major fundraiser, either in concept or in reality, by the PTA, but last year this event was well received and it was great to have the store to ourselves, buy very reasonably priced gifts,

and benefit the people who craft the items as well as Falk School. Some refreshments and coffee will be available while you browse and shop.

The store is staffed by volunteers, so two Falk adults are needed to help out. Last year we also had a few middle school students volunteer. If you are interested, call either Sheila Talley-Armstead at 412-624-8021 or Nancy DelPresto at 412-247-4129. See you there!!

Talent Show

Please plan to join us for our annual Falk School Talent Show on Wednesday November 7th (day-time only) and Thursday November 8th (night-time only).

We are expecting a wide variety of creative acts, and your presence will make it all worthwhile. Our talented students

teachers, parents, and staff look forward to seeing you in our cafeteria for a wonderfully entertaining time.

See you there!

—Charlene Barnett

Music Notes

November is going to be an exciting musical month, featuring six special events.

Saxophone great, James Moody, will be performing for the Middle School and Intermediate children on November 2nd. Mr. Moody will be a featured performer at the Annual Pitt Jazz Seminar, and we are very fortunate to have him appear at Falk.

The Falk School Talent Show will be November 7th and 8th, and promises to be as exciting as ever. Thanks Ms. Barnett!

On November 13th, our Kindergarten children will travel to Heinz Hall to hear the Pittsburgh Symphony's Tiny Tots concert, "Travelin' on Water."

On November 16th, several of Falk's musicians will be performing at a luncheon at the Katz Business School.

On November 28th, the 6th grade will go to Heinz Hall to hear "Growing Pains," a Pittsburgh Symphony Schooltime Concert.

From November 26 through December 21, the Intermediate classrooms will be participating in an outreach program from the Pittsburgh Opera. The "Madame Butterfly Opera Trunk" will be delivered to Falk on November 26th. The trunk contains costumes, props, books, music, CDs, a video, posters, photographs and maps. The classes will be immersed in opera and Japanese culture. During the week of December 10th, artists from the Pittsburgh Opera will come to Falk to perform for the students.

Stay tuned for more information in future FALKTalks.

—Lee Ann Conover

Holiday Gift Shop

This year, the annual Falk Holiday Gift Shop will be held on November 28th, 29th, and 30th (Wednesday through Friday) in the Art Room.

Teachers and parents will soon receive more information, including schedules for the date/time that classes will come to shop. This year, the gift shop will offer new items for a broader range of selection.

This Falk PTA fundraiser provides a

safe, convenient way for students to shop for the holidays. It is also a fun way for parent volunteers to get to know the students and to watch them in action!

If you have not signed up already to volunteer and would like to offer an hour or two of your time, please notify Bonnie Gorscak.

If you have craft/handmade items that you would like to donate, please notify Kim Lincoln.



Sally Foster

Thank-you for your Sally Foster orders!!! The totals are not confirmed.... however, it looks like Falk School has made more profit from this year's sale than last year (in excess of \$5000!!!).

If you would like to order additional products from Sally Foster, please remember that orders can be made on the Sally Foster Website. The web site address is - www.sallyfoster.com. The online store is open through December 15, 2001. Falk

School will receive the same 50% profit on all online sales during this period!

The online purchaser must know the child's homeroom teacher's name and our Falk School Sally Foster Account Number (0356881).

Thank you to Nancy Del Presto, Jane Dirks, Jeanne Jordan, Ann Kelton, and Deb Laurie for your help with the Sally Foster Distribution on October 17th!

Computer Room News

The leaves are falling, children are choosing Halloween costumes, and in the computer room, Kindergarten has designed, executed, and printed some very nice Halloween pictures! It's very interesting to observe the serious attention Kindergarten students give to their computer lessons. They listen attentively to instructions and are very engaged in their work! Drop by the computer/gym area and take notice of their wonderful Halloween pictures!

Primary students will be starting a new project using the software application "Kids Works Deluxe." This application will allow students to create a "book." Stories, drawings, and stamps will be included. Students will use "inventive spelling" while learning the positions of the keys, this program's "tools," and the digital camera. The theme will be "friends."

Intermediate will also be starting a new project in the very near future. Goals will include: becoming familiar with a variety of Resource CD's (Britannica, 20th-Century World History, and Grolier's Encyclopedia), researching these CD's for answers to questions, and generating their own questions for other students to answer.

Middle School (6th grade) is using half their class time Keyboarding their way through the CD "Typing Tutor 10." The

other half will involve creating a spreadsheet and graphs through Microsoft's Excel software product.

Thank you to Dr. Singh, father of Amrita Singh, who spoke to the 7th grade middle school students about "Robotics." Dr. Singh is a senior research scientist within The Field Robotics Center at Carnegie Mellon University. We never know if an interaction such as this could spark the making of a future Scientist, Computer Wiz, or Robotics expert.

Lastly, the holiday season is approaching fast. Are you one of those organized people who like to have their holiday shopping done before the crowds? Here's an idea: Our **Computer Gift Giving Program** is an easy solution to your holiday shopping.

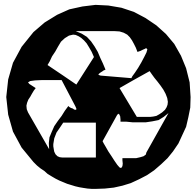
Here's how it works: You make a monetary donation to the Computer Laboratory in honor of someone you care about. I send an attractive note to that person, telling them of your contribution to Falk School. Easy!

For more information about this program, or any other questions, telephone Mrs. Bianco at 412-648-8459 or e-mail at bbianco@pitt.edu.

Remember, our website address is www.pitt.edu/~fls.

—Barbara Bianco

Computer Cartridge Recycling Program



Thus far, our computer cartridge recycling program (ETCEP) has been a resounding success. We have collected 125 cartridges, earning us nearly 600 points, which translates to approximately \$250 in "credit" for computer technology supplies. We are well on our way to this year's goal of 500 cartridges.

Special thanks to those who have already volunteered to spearhead the program in your place of business, but we need more help! Please talk to your family and friends and request that their place of business "adopt"

the Falk School by logging onto <http://www.fundingfactory.com/Adoptreg.asp>. Falk School's ID number is 13855.

We can also make arrangements to drop-off boxes and/or pick up the cartridges. Cartridges can also be dropped off at the Falk School Main Office.

For more information, please contact Nancy Glynn at 412-825-6545 (momalix@aol.com) or Barbara Bianco at 412-624-8459 (bbianco@pitt.edu).

Thank you for your support and your cartridges!

Falk Fundraising

SAVE YOUR "BOX TOPS"!

By clipping Box Top logos from over 330 participating General Mills products (such as Cheerios, Chex, Lucky Charms, Trix, Betty Crocker products, Betty Crocker fruit snacks, Yoplait multipacks, Go-gurt, Expresse, and Lloyd's barbecue products), the Falk School earns 10 cents for each Box Top we redeem. Money received from the Box Tops can be used at the school's discretion to purchase any items, not just computer technology.

Box Tops for this school year must be redeemed by March 30, 2002, although they can be saved all year (so don't throw away any of them!). We ask that you submit the Box Tops to your child's homeroom teacher on a regular basis so as to ease the burden of counting them when the deadline nears.

If you would like to volunteer to tally the Box Tops for your child's homeroom, please contact Nancy Glynn at 412-825-6545 (momalix@aol.com).

NEW "APPLES FOR STUDENTS" PROGRAM

Big changes have been made in the program this year...no more collecting and tallying receipts! Yeah! Instead of collecting receipts, you simply donate your spending electronically through the Giant Eagle Advantage Card. It has always helped you save money when shopping at Giant Eagle, and now the card can help the Falk School earn points towards much needed educational awards.

The Giant Eagle "Apples For The Students" program will run 20 weeks to give you enough time to support your school. It begins Sunday, November 4, 2001 and continues through Saturday, March 23, 2002.

The Program is easy...all you have to do is this:

- Register at www.gianteagle.com or 1-800-474-4777.
- Enter the Falk School ID # 0335.
- Shop with your Giant Eagle Advantage Card, and each scan will help our school earn FREE equipment.

Don't forget to give the Falk School ID number to your family and friends!

If you have any questions about this program, please contact Nancy Glynn at 412-825-6545 (momalix@aol.com)

TARGET "TAKES CHARGE OF EDUCATION"

"Take Charge of Education" is an initiative designed by Target Stores to make cash donations to schools around the country. Nationwide, over \$27 million has been donated to schools through the year 2000. We can invest in the future of the Falk School through this simple fundraising program, every time we use our Target Guest Card.

When you participate in this program, Target donates an amount equal to 1% of your purchases. In addition, 1/2% of qualifying Target Visa purchases outside of Target stores or www.target.com will go to Falk.

You can participate by designating the Falk School on your Target Guest Card application. You can get an application at any Target store or online. If you already have a Target Guest Card, you can sign up for the School Fundraising program by calling 1-800-316-6142 or by visiting www.target.com. The Falk School ID number is 15303.

Once registered, Target will donate to the Falk School an amount equal to 1% of your Target Guest Card purchases (minus returns, of course). Target will track purchases charged to participating accounts, and donations will be distributed to the Falk School twice a year, but funds will accumulate all year round. We can allocate the fundraising dollars wherever they are needed most.

To date, 61 Target Guest Card holders have designated the Falk School, and we have earned \$164 through September 2001. Supporting Falk School and shopping at Target are a winning combination! Happy shopping!

If you have any questions, please contact Nancy Glynn at 412-825-6545 (momalix@aol.com) or Barbara Bianco at 412-624-8459 (bbianco@pitt.edu). Thank you for your support of these important fundraisers!

To Do List

- Save Box Top logos.

- Register your Giant Eagle Advantage Card and use it regularly.

- Register your Target Guest Card and use it regularly.

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FALKTalk

The Heartwood Program... (Continued)

THE HEARTWOOD PROGRAM is a literature-based ethics curriculum for children. The program uses illustrated books from representative cultures around the world to help children understand seven attributes: courage, loyalty, justice, respect, hope, honesty and love. The stories are primarily folklore, legends and hero tales. The books are read aloud in class and then discussed. The different attributes are featured throughout the school year according to a schedule. Parents are encouraged to read the books aloud with their children. Many of the books are available at the public library. Falk School Library has most of the main books and many of the supplementary books. Stop in the

library after school Tuesday through Friday between 3:10-4:00 or before 8:30 to arrange to borrow books. Contact Ms. Herward (412-624-8010) for a complete list of the Heartwood books.

NOVEMBER Main Books for Loyalty

The Legend of the Bluebonnet, T. DePaola
The Seven Chinese Brothers, M. Mahy
Teammates, P. Golenbock
The Sailor Who Captured the Sea, D. Lattimore
Cornrows, C. Yarbough
The Nightingale, H. C. Anderson

Supplementary Books for Loyalty

Buffalo Woman, P. Goble
The Big Wave, P. Buck
Brothers: A Hebrew Legend, F. B. Freedman
Doodle Flute, D. Pinkwater
The Mousehole Cat, A. Barber
Rosie and the Yellow Ribbon, T. DePaola
Summer of My German Soldier, B. Greene
Two Pair of Shoes, P. L. Travers
The Voice of the Great Bell, Hearn, retold by M. Hodges
The Wave, M. Hodges
The Weaving of a Dream, M. Heyer
The Whipping Boy, S. Fleishman