

FALKTalk

Volume 12 Issue 3

December 2001



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From the Director...

There have been so many mind-numbing tragedies during the past several months that we as a world, a nation, a city, and a school community have had very little opportunity to think of anything but safety and security for ourselves, our families, and especially, our children.

I know that I have consumed a great deal of my energy trying to revisit our procedures here at the school to ensure that our students, parents, faculty, and staff feel comfortable and confident while at school.

Faculty have been absolutely wonderful with the children, and the negative reactions have been minimal.

I read in the news that nine out of ten adults have been negatively affected by these occurrences. I am happy to say that the psyches of the adults here at the school

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From the PTA President...

With the holiday season upon us, thoughts turn toward family rituals, religious observances, and reflection on the joys and sorrows of this past year. More secular thoughts are on safety throughout the holidays and, of course, shopping!

There has been a lot of discussion in and around the PTA concerning safety issues at Falk School. By now you have received the revised school security policy and bus safety procedures.

I have been asked by the teachers to discuss another safety concern, playground safety. As you may know, our playground equipment is under constant evaluation with modifications or removal if necessary.

Nevertheless, not all playground equipment is appropriate for all age

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Winter Calendar

DECEMBER

December 7 — Grade Reports issued; Picture Re-Take Day; Basketball games begin at St. Edmund's (season runs through February)

December 10 — Pittsburgh Opera artists perform for Falk students

December 15 — Last day for Sally Foster orders online

December 20 — Holiday Dance (Middle School)

December 21 — Intermediate chorus presentation; Bowling at Miracle Lanes in Monroeville (Middle School)

December — Pittsburgh Opera's "Madame Butterfly Trunk" visits

Use the holiday season to participate in family activities not usually available to the entire family. Happy holidays!

From the Director...(Continued)

have not fallen victim to the stress evidenced by so many others. We can be proud of them.

Parents have also been extraordinary during the past several months. There is so much good will, so many volunteers, and such great communication that the school has been running more smoothly than ever because of your efforts.

I have never seen so much happening in the school. What a positive for everyone! Thank you all for your continuing contributions.

By the time you read this column, we will be well into the holiday season. Field trips, assemblies, holiday breakfasts, and finally, the vacation. I know my family will enjoy being together during this time, and I urge you all to take some time to relax and enjoy each other. Use this time to participate in family activities not usually available to the entire family.

The faculty and I wish you the very best of holidays!

— William McDonald

From the PTA President...(Continued)

groups; this applies to older children as well as to the younger ones.

The teachers and assistants who supervise the playground would appreciate your taking the time to talk with your children about playground safety, especially about remaining off equipment as instructed by playground personnel.

For more information on playground safety, check out www.uni.edu/playground, the website for the National Program for Playground Safety.

On the lighter side, who would have believed that the American public has been given a presidential directive to go shopping? As a good patriot, I am doing my fair share to stimulate the economy, much of it from the comfort of home.

Did you know that Falk School can benefit by your online shopping? Simply use www.fundingfactory.com/max/

maxhome.asp as a portal to over 200 e-commerce sites, and Falk School will earn points to purchase electronic and athletic equipment.

This is a great way to help the school and there is absolutely no cost to you. For more information on this and other fundraising programs, contact Nancy Glynn at 412-825-6545 (momalix@aol.com) or Barbara Bianco at 412-624-8549 (bbianco@pitt.edu).

Also, if your family is upgrading to a DVD player this year, please consider donating your old VCR to the Middle School. Thanks!

As always, feel free to talk with me about questions or concerns regarding the Falk School PTA. Phone: 412-380-9366 or email: lbillington@superiorwells.com.

Have a safe and happy holiday!

—Lynn Billington

Contributions?

Please send any contributions to Amy Scerba at ascerba@mindspring.com. If possible, attach your article as a Microsoft Word document. Or, just send the article in the body of an email message. Your assistance is greatly appreciated!

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. A note of acknowledgement is sent to each teacher honoree and to others if an address is provided.

All Falk students, teachers, interns, and staff benefit from the continuous updating of the collection. A Holiday Gift List of suggested books is available from Ms. Herward or from the library website at www.pitt.edu/~herward. If you would like to make a donation or have questions about the Birthday/Gift Book Program, contact Ms. Herward (412-624-8010), 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: **Chris Schmidt, Derek Green, Michael Bagnato, Jim Bulsiewicz, Nicholas Zurawsky, Stephanie Pinsky, Jill Pinsky, Amy Tran, The Lincoln Family, Ms. L. Williams, Ms. L. Herward, Jessica Talley-Armstead, Angela Perfetti,**

Jeremy Malvin, Maggie Del Presto, Jeffrey Del Presto, and Emma Tulsy. More complete information concerning these gifts is published in the Library Newsletter.

LIBRARY VOLUNTEERS Volunteers will be needed to work at the Library Book Fair, April 8-11, 2002. This involves a one-time 2-3 hour time commitment. 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.

December is often a time for gifts. The Library website (www.pitt.edu/~herward) includes a description of the library's Gift Book Program, the Gift Book Form, and an updated Holiday Gift Book List. The Falk School website (www.pitt.edu/~fls) includes a link to the library website.

—Linda Herward



Apples for the Students

The Giant Eagle "Apples For The Students" program started on Sunday, November 4, 2001 and runs through Saturday, March 23, 2002.

To date, 151 advantage cardholders have pledged their purchases to the Falk School. Your spending is not retroactive to the start date, so we don't start earning until you register. So, if you haven't signed up as of yet, do not delay!

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

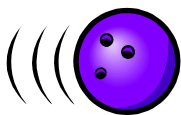
- Register at 1-800-474-4777 or www.gianteagle.com.

[gianteagle.com](http://www.gianteagle.com).

- 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, 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 this important fundraiser!

Middle School



With our school year being almost one-third completed already, we look back at events of the last three months.

By the fourth week of school, we had conducted three information sessions for parents: sixth grade orientation, the curriculum meeting, and the high schools night, featuring area public and private schools, which many of our students will be attending upon completion of their eighth grade year at Falk. We appreciate the positive response and good attendance at these meetings.

At the close of the soccer season, for which we had two teams of almost thirty students, all students attended McKeever Environmental Learning Center at Sandy Lake, PA, for four days and three nights. Students were involved in outdoor science work doing observation, water and soil analyses, tree identification, and other related activities, such as writing and art projects. The weather was rainy but warm, and behavior was very good. Everyone enjoyed the first dance of the school year.

Upon our return to campus, students joined our four basketball teams and began practices for games, which will begin December 7 at St. Edmund's and will continue until February. (A special "Thanks!!" goes to all of our volunteer soccer and basketball coaches.)

Early November also found us involved with sixth grade parent conferences, the Talent Show, a grade six science field trip, and a Theatre Arts trip to the production "We Will Remember," in honor of our nation's veterans, and an appearance by our band members at the Katz Graduate School of Business as lunchtime entertainment.

The Intermediate and Middle levels combined for a roller skating party at Ches-A-Rena,

and the sixth grade will be attending the Pittsburgh Symphony Concert on Wednesday, November 28.

In order to further enhance our image as a party school, we will have our holiday dance on Thursday night, December 20 and then go bowling the next day at Miracle Lanes in Monroeville.

Meanwhile, back in the classrooms, students are working to complete assignments for the close of the first trimester grading period (Thursday, November 29). Grade reports will be issued to students on Friday, December 7.

That same day is Picture Re-Take Day; any student who was absent on Picture Day (September 28) or who is not satisfied with his/her picture should contact Ms. Coughlin (formerly known as Ms. Corcoran) by Wednesday, December 5.

Upon return from our winter holiday break, students in grades 4 through 8 will be participating in the Geography Bee, sponsored by the National Geographic Society.

By January, if not before, our system of math tutors will be in place.

And it's not too early to reserve your place as a chaperone on the coal mine field trip in June. Also, as most of the Middle School faculty will be at Cedar Point on Thursday, June 6, we will need a few persons to assist the sixth and seventh graders. Get a life! Join us! What's the worst that could happen?

One last request... If you are up-grading to a DVD and don't know what to do with your old (but still functioning) TV/VCR, donate it to the Middle School! Contact Mr. Kramer (412-383-9615). Thanks!

Middle School Apparel Sale

The Middle School will be having their annual apparel sale. We are aiming for the 2nd or 3rd week of December to start the sale. There will be all new items, such as sports bags, lanyards, pull over hooded sweatshirts, fleece jackets for the younger crowd, and many more new things. A display and order forms will be out soon!

There are still a few items from last year that have been discounted for you to purchase.

An order form for the left over items has been sent home with the children. If you need a form, stop in to get one.

If any parents or responsible Middle School students are interested in selling Falk School apparel at basketball games, please contact Sheila E. Talley-Armstead at 412-624-8021.

—Sheila E. Talley-Armstead

Music Notes

Congratulations and thanks to all the members of our talented Falk family who performed at the Fall Luncheon at the Katz Business School. Everyone did a great job and many wonderful compliments were received.

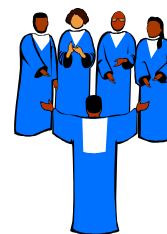
Our performers were: Alex Carmine, Cameron and Charlene Barnett, Anjali Rao, Evie Moreno, Matthew Kurs-Lasky, Cortlyn Brown, Kaitlyn Day, Sheila Talley-Armstead, and our own Steel City Jazz Band (Aaron Weidman, Ben Pashek, Greg Pashek, Ben Rafson, David Rosenberg and Peter Lambrou).

Thanks also to our Technical Assistants, Mr. Critchfield and Dr. Barnett.

December's musical events include: "Dig It;" a musical to be presented by Room 225, a visit from Pittsburgh Opera on Dec. 12th, and an Intermediate Chorus presentation on Dec. 21st.

The Madame Butterfly trunk from Pittsburgh Opera will be here for the month of December and will provide all our students with opportunities to explore music, art, history and Japanese culture.

—Lee Ann Conover



Talent Show

The annual Falk Talent show was a fun time for all involved. Students, faculty, staff, and parents participated in over forty different acts displaying musical, theatrical, vocal, and dancing talent.

The performances raised over \$600.00 for the Sunstein Scholarship through program ads, refreshments, and donations.

Next year promises to be bigger and better, to accommodate more viewers and more talent.

Thank you to all who helped get the show on the boards, especially card carriers Aveeka Vats, Sarah Hrusa, Anna Grandis,

Rebecca Greenhouse, and Molly Nace.

Many thanks to middle school students Chris Waterkotte, Matt Broadus, Daryl Jenkins, Hannah Melvin, and Jessica Talley Armstead.

Thanks to parent aids Jane Dirks, Laura Zaspel Lawson, Cindy Maddamma, Ramona Walls, and family team Jeannette and Beryl Tauth-Jurman. Of course, many thanks to Dr. Lee Ann Conover and Mr. James Critchfield.

See you next year!

—Charlene Barnett

Computer Cartridge Recycling Program

To date, our computer cartridge recycling program (ETCEP) has been a huge success. We have collected 225 cartridges, earning us 1000 points, which equals \$400 in "credit" for computer technology supplies or playground equipment. We are well on our way to this year's goal of 500 cartridges.

Special thanks to those who have already volunteered to collect cartridges at your place of business, but we need more help! Please approach your family and

friends and request that their business "adopt" the Falk School by logging onto <http://www.fundingfactory.com/Adoptreg.asp>. Falk School ID# 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).

Computer Room News



“A loving heart brings joy to all seasons!”
Happy Holidays!

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.
- Make checks payable to “Falk School,” with “computer donation” in the note area.
- Then, I will send an attractive note to that person, telling them of your contribution to Falk School.

Remember, the computer lab is used by every student in the school!

Keyboarding instruction will be introduced to your children yearly, beginning in the third grade. This is one of those life skills that gets better with time.

A keyboarding software program would make a good holiday present. Falk School is using a program titled, “Typing Tutor 10” from Davidson & Associates. The students enjoy it because it allows for individual progress reports, choice of music, and decorative backgrounds.

To reinforce this skill in your home, have your child practice about fifteen minutes per

day. The game portion could be used as a reward for completing lessons. Encourage your child to use these keyboarding skills every time they are using the computer.

When purchasing software as a present for the holiday season, keep these tips in mind:

- Purchase software that is age appropriate.
- Consult magazine or online reviews for recommended software. You can find reviews at your local library. Try these online sites to get software reviews: www.epinions.com, www.superkids.com, and www.worldvillage.com.
- Be careful to match the platform (Windows or Macintosh) with the software. Some software can be used by both platforms.
- Copy detailed information from your computer about its capacity for memory, virtual memory, etc. before you leave home, and compare it with the information on the software before purchasing.

Finally, remember to check out our wonderful school website: www.pitt.edu/~fls.

Questions? Contact Mrs. Bianco at 412-648-8459 or bbianco@pitt.edu.

—Barbara Bianco

Falk Technology

LeMieux and Falk. Imagine having one of the very best.

Sorry sports fans, we’re not talking hockey. That’s spelled “Lemieux.” This LeMieux is the second fastest supercomputer on Earth! (see <http://www.psc.edu/>), and it’s right here as part of a Pitt/CMU joint project.

So what’s that have to do with Falk? Potentially, quite a lot. I think it punctuates the commitment that Pitt has to the development and implementation of computing and information technology. It’s through such commitment that the Falk community, as a part of the Uni-

versity, might benefit.

The Falk Technology Committee was formed to help integrate advancing computer technology with the Falk experience, and parental support is needed. Interested parents are encouraged to join with the PTA to take advantage of this potential. Look for a survey questionnaire be mailed to each family. Please contact me with comments or questions, or to lend your support. PTA Technology Committee Chair, bmajor@earthlink.net or 412-247-5351.

—Dr. Michael Barnett

Falk Fundraising

USE YOUR TARGET CHARGE TO EARN CASH DONATIONS FOR THE FALK SCHOOL

During this busy holiday season (and year round!), you can earn money for the Falk School by shopping at Target Stores and www.target.com.

“Take Charge of Education” is an initiative designed by Target Stores to make cash donations to schools around the country.

Every time you use your Target Guest Card, an amount equal to 1% of your purchases is donated to a “targeted” school. Also, 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 at target.com.
- 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 target.com. The Falk School ID number is 15303.

Once registered, Target will track purchases charged to participating accounts, and donations will be distributed to the Falk School. We can allocate the fundraising dollars wherever they are needed most.

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

To date, 63 Target Guest Card holders have designated the Falk School, and we have earned \$42 since September, 2001, and over \$200 since the program’s inception.

Supporting Falk School and shopping at Target is a winning combination! Happy shopping!

ONLINE SHOPPING CAN BENEFIT FALK SCHOOL

The PTA enthusiastically requests your **free** support in our new funding alternative!

You can help us earn free equipment for the Falk School the next time you shop online by purchasing items through the “Funding Factory” Online Shopping Program!

The Online Shopping Program is an online shopping mall that hosts over 200 e-commerce stores, including Nordstrom, Lands End, LL Bean, Amazon.com, Toys R Us, just to name a few.

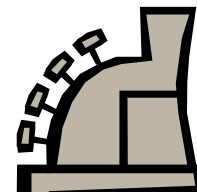
When you purchase products through the Directory of Stores, Online companies pay a commission of 5%-20% to Funding Factory just for promoting their store! 100% of those earned commissions are returned to the Falk School to be used to purchase playground or technology equipment for our school.

To participate:

- Visit www.fundingfactory.com/shopping. Enter our zip code (15261), and select the Falk School from the list of participating organizations.
- Then, start shopping! Prices, availability, and access are the same as before; the only difference with this shopping experience is that you will be helping to enhance our children’s access to much-needed playground and technology equipment.

To learn more about the Funding Factory Online Shopping Program and to view a list of e-tailers, visit www.fundingfactory.com/shopping, or call Nancy Glynn at 412-825-6545 or momalix@aol.com.

Your questions, support, and purchases are welcome and appreciated.



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FALKTalk

Falk Fundraising... (Continued)

WE NEED MORE BOXTOPS

To date, we have collected 350 BoxTops. Great Going! But, we are still well short of our goal of 2000!

By clipping Box Top logos from over 330 participating General Mills products, you can earn 10 cents from each Box Top for the Falk School.

Some General Mills products include Cheerios, Chex, Lucky Charms, Trix, Betty Crocker products, Betty Crocker fruit snacks, Yoplait multipacks, Go-gurt, Expresse, and Lloyd's barbeque products.

Money received from the Box Tops program can be used to purchase any items at the schools' discretion, not just computer technology.

Box Tops for this school year must be redeemed by March 30, 2002, but they can be saved all year (so don't throw any of them out!).

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. For more information, please contact Nancy Glynn at 412-825-6545 or malix@aol.com.

FINAL FUNDRAISING REMINDERS!!!

- Register with Giant Eagle's "Apples for the Students" program. Falk School's ID is 0335.
- Sign up with Target's "Take Charge of Education Program." Falk School's ID is 15303.
- Shop online at www.fundingfactory.com/shopping. Be sure to enter our zip code (15261) and select the Falk School from the list of participating organizations.
- Clip Box Top logos and send them to your child's homeroom.
- Visit the Falk Library website to check out the Holiday Gift List: www.pitt.edu/~herward.