

FalkTalk

Volume 14, Issue 2
November, 2003



It is my hope that this inconvenience is rare, not only for the parents who must arrange for childcare, but also for those of us who are concerned with the consistency of the educational process.

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From the Director

All employees of the university received the University Policy, Extreme Weather Conditions in the mail this morning. Of course this document reminds us of the possibility of the very inclement conditions that will soon arrive (hopefully only occasionally) to greet us as we awake during the winter months. I know many of you are experienced in the matters of delays and closings, but I feel it is necessary to once again remind the community of the procedures we follow on those wonderfully snowy days.

Because we rely on the Pittsburgh Board of Education busses for much of our transportation, our decision to delay or close is based solely on the decision of the Director of Transportation at that level. It is my responsibility to be aware of impending storms, and to begin watching newscasts as early as 5 AM on mornings when conditions could be deemed treacherous. Whenever there is a decision broadcast which modifies usual transportation patterns, I immediately call my leadership team and the two PTA homeroom parent reps. Lines of communication (telephone) start to hum immediately, and within the next hour everyone should hear about the closing or delay. Our decision is also broadcast on all three major tv channels and several radio stations. It is our hope that this procedure reaches everyone in time. Like the university, it is my hope that this inconvenience is rare, not only for the parents who must arrange for childcare, but also for those of us who are concerned with the consistency of the educational process.

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From the PTA President

The year is off to a great start, and there has been a lot of PTA activity over the past month to tell you about.

On October 10th, the first General PTA meeting of the year started off with self-introductions of the MAT's, which helped set a fun & relaxed tone for the evening. The teaching interns do an incredible job talking about themselves, their backgrounds, interests, and life aspirations, and hearing from them is always a highlight of the year; this year was no

exception. Following the MAT's, Dr. McDonald and Falk parent Dr. Keith Somers provided an interesting presentation about the current status of strategic planning activities and the kinds of challenges and opportunities they foresee for Falk School. It was an interactive session, with lots of thoughtful comments and excellent ideas put forward by parents in the audience. Thanks to Laura Zaspel Lawson for coordinating and hosting the meeting.

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Calendar of Events

November 21	End of 1st Trimester (M)	January 5	Classes Resume
November 27- 28	Thanksgiving Holiday	January 16	No School
December 22	No School	January 19	No School
	Teacher In-service Day	January 23	End of 2nd Quarter (P,I)
Dec 23-Jan 2	No School – Winter Holiday	February 12	PTA Meeting 7:30pm

From the Director (continued from page 1)

I want to thank all of you in advance for participating cheerfully when that ominous ring occurs early in the morning. I hope that all the dire forecasts I have read about are untrue (at least the usual 50% of the time), and that we are blessed with a mild winter. If we are unlucky, I can assure you that we operate with the best intentions for your student.

Thanks again for your continuing support.

– Dr. Mac

From the PTA President (cont. from page 1)

The Falk Directory was finalized and distributed in mid-October – and looks great. The colorful artwork and easy to copy pages are a pleasure. Tina Mathis and Jeanette Trauth did a wonderful job.

The Sally Foster gift wrap campaign was also “wrapped up” over the last month, and I’m pleased to say that it generated a healthy profit for Falk School – close to \$7,000 (and still counting, as the on-line portion of the sale hasn’t closed out yet). Sally Foster provides 50% of all sales back to the school, a rarity among fundraisers. A huge thank you to Debbie Laurie, who did an excellent job organizing the campaign and to all of the parents who volunteered to help Debbie with distribution day!

We got lucky with the weather on October 12th, and had a warm, fun and tasty afternoon in Forest Hills at the Multicultural Picnic. The children had a great time playing in the park, the parents & teachers enjoyed catching up with each other, and everyone enjoyed the delicious international food spread. Jane Dirks deserves a big round of applause for heading up this Fall Falk event for the past 5 (!) years, assisted so well this year by Phyllis Scherrer.

Last, but not least, October 31st brought the annual Falk Halloween party with the traditional costume parade, games in the gym, and the Intermediate Chorus performance for the Primary children, coordinated by Ms. Barbara Bianco, Dr. Conover, Sharon Semenza and Martina Wells, and more than a dozen parent volunteers. The day brought a lot of smiles to the children’s (and grown-ups’) faces.

Wow, a lot is going on. As we head into the late fall and early winter, there is much more in store. As always, if you have any questions, concerns or suggestions please feel free to contact me at any time – greenhousepk@upmc.edu or 412-422-2613.

– Pam Greenhouse

A Letter from Room 115

During the month of October, Room 115 did a science unit on the Earth. For our final Earth lesson we had an Earth celebration where we discussed ways to take care of our Earth. We decided that one very important way to take care of the Earth is not to pollute it with litter, and we talked about what we could do to instead of littering. Our class decided to encourage the rest of the Falk School Community not to litter by writing letters. Students and teachers at Falk will receive letters from us. We also wrote this letter so that Falk School Parents could read it in Falktalk. We have four sections of desks in our class, and each section brainstormed one sentence together. Then we put our sentences together to make this letter.

October 30, 2003

Dear Falk School Parents,

We are writing this letter to try and save our Earth. Please don’t litter or pollute because it hurts the Earth. Please throw your garbage in the trash. Pass it on to your family and friends not to litter or pollute. Thank you for listening!

Sincerely,
The Children of Room 115



From the Strategic Planning Committee

I would like to thank all of you who attended the PTA meeting last month and the opportunity for Bill and me to present the Falk School strategic plan. The key to our plan is the united focus the parents and faculty have demonstrated in pursuing the Falk School's future. Our committees have prioritized our needs that include enhancing our relationship with the University of Pittsburgh and the School of Education, evaluating our facility needs and proposing possible solutions, establishing an Annual Giving fund and developing our Falk School Web site.

A highlight this month is the first Falk School Annual Fund campaign. You have all received this letter recently and we're hoping to establish and grow this fund to support the many needs and programs at the Falk School. Many thanks to the hard work of the fundraising committee, Nancy Del Presto, Jeff Abramovitz, Nancy Glynn, Charlene Barnett and Betsy Levine-Brown. With the establishment of this fund we are building the foundation for our future. Our next opportunity will be an Alumni campaign that we hope to kick-off in the spring.

If there are any questions regarding the strategic plan, feel free to contact us. We will continue to keep you updated with our progress.

– Keith Somers



A highlight this month is the first Falk School Annual Fund campaign.

Attention Falk School Families and Friends!!!!

We need your help in identifying a candidate for a **part time position** that will support the Falk School's strategic planning work. Please pass on the notice to people who may be interested. Extra copies are available in the office.

Resumes should be sent to keith.somers@verizon.net immediately.

Questions?

Call Steering Committee members: Keith Somers, Nancy Delpresto, Linda Metropulos, Cheryl Kubelick, Charlene Barnett or Dr. MacDonald.

Position Title:

Communications Coordinator

Hours:

This is a part-time consultant position for up to 20 hours a week.

Responsibilities include:

Support the development of a communications plan that lays the groundwork for a comprehensive identity campaign for Falk. This will include print and web-based communications. Work with a web designer to create, design, install and maintain a new Falk website which is a vibrant source of infor-

mation on the school and its philosophy, alumni materials, fund raising opportunities and events

Assist in the development of an annual fund-raising campaign. Responsibilities will include coordinating all aspects of this campaign including the development and maintenance of a data base of past and present Falk students and their families, drafting letters, mailing solicitations, acknowledging contributions and overseeing all other communications and financial reports necessary to this campaign.

Coordinate the logistics for all committee meetings (Steering, Fund-raising, Model/Research, Facility, and Governance), compile master file of all committee meeting minutes, communicate between committees via e-mail, phone or snail mail, provide support functions for the committees including typing, mailings, copying. Coordinate activities of the Falk School steering planning committees in cooperation with the Falk School PTA president and identify linkages.

A Bachelors degree and computer skills (Excel) desired along with experience in communications, public relations, education, and/or fund-raising.

Family Portrait Day

Family Portrait day is Sunday, November 16th. Don't forget to sign up! It's a fast and easy way to get a great family picture and holiday card. Call Mary at I.Simon Photography at 412-421-4414 to schedule your appointment for a sitting time. Pictures will be taken from 12:00-4:00. Falk will receive the \$10 sitting fee charge. Further questions? Call Betsy Levine-Brown at 412-521-9324.

Apples for Students



Help our computer program earn needed equipment!

Who do you know that would register to support our school? (Synagogues, Churches, Clubs, Bowling Leagues, Businesses)

Giant Eagle Apples for the Students

Sunday, November 2, 2003 through Saturday, March 20, 2003

The Program is easy...follow these three easy steps:

NOTE: Supporters who previously registered are automatically registered for this year's program. If you are unsure, please register again.

1. Log on to www.gianteagle.com or call 1-800-474-4777. Have your Advantage Card available.
2. Enter the Falk School ID # **0335**.
3. Shop with your Giant Eagle Advantage Card!

Each scan of your Advantage Card will help our school earn FREE equipment!

This year we are asking each family to sign up at least 1 new supporter. By doing so, we will DOUBLE the rewards for our children's school!

For your convenience, information cards are enclosed to pass on to our supporters. 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 supporting this important endeavor!

Sally Foster Sale

Our Sally Foster Fundraising efforts were greatly rewarded this year thanks to everyone who participated!! With only 50% of families participating this year our profits exceeded \$6800. This is one of our highest profits ever!! GIVE YOURSELVES A HAND!

Your participation in this fundraiser has enabled the PTA to support many efforts throughout the school year including field trips at all levels, New Family Welcome Meeting, the printing of this and all other Falk Talks, graduation dinner-dance, the Library's visiting author events (remember Jack Gantos' visit?), our annual teacher luncheon and many, many, many other yearly needs and wants.

A HUGE THANK YOU TO ALL THE FAMILIES WHO PARTICIPATED – YOU WERE THE HEART OF IT ALL!

More thanks include..... All of the Falk Teachers who allowed me to interrupt their already whirlwind days by passing out flyer after flyer and taking in order after order. Our sale wouldn't have run as smoothly without you!!

Thanks to Linda Spotts and Tina Mattis for all of their suggestions, time, energy and patience with all my questions.

Thanks to Lori McDermott and Nancy DelPresto for their bottomless cup of guidance and support. You guys are the best!! I'll miss you, Lori.

Thanks to all of the parents and teachers who donated their valuable time by pitching in on delivery day to carry, count, check, sort, stuff, haul boxes up the steps, haul boxes down the steps and all the while laughing and smiling!! These people were Nancy DelPresto, Ann Kelton, Janis Pinsky, Laurie Williams, Helen Vlachos, Marina Lasko, Jane Dirks, Betsy Levin-Brown and Peg Schmidt. (I apologize if I left anyone out!)

Thanks to all the families who sold over \$100, \$200, \$300, \$400, \$500 and even more per family!! You really gave it that extra-special effort!

Thanks to Dr. Vollmer for my new nickname, "Sally".

I will be looking for two assistants for next year's sale. The preparations start in August. Tasks will include prepping and sending catalogs, creating flyers, collecting orders, decorating a display board and collection box with sample paper and other tasks. Please call me (412-331-2897h/412-624-5046w) and let me know if you're interested, otherwise I will be calling you!!! Thanks again to everyone. Looking forward to next year's sale.

– Debbie "Sally" Laurie

News from the Health Room

The beginning of the new school year means new and exciting challenges for our students. Unfortunately, it also means the not-so-exciting task for parents of completing medical forms. Many of you have recently received a request for those forms which are required but still outstanding. Please take a few minutes today to complete the forms (or send to your child's physician and/or dentist for completion) and return them to the school as soon as possible.

Falk School is looking for one or more parents who would be willing to volunteer part or all of a day in the event of my absence. Because medication administration is involved, we need someone who is a LPN, RN, or who has other comparable medical experience. Our current faithful parent volunteers - Diane Lambrou, Nancy DelPresto, Ann Kelton, and Janice Anderson -- are all parents of middle school students who will be moving on in the next year or two. If you think you might be interested, please call me at 412-624-8023. On-the-job training is provided! Even if you don't have this type of background but would be available to help in the office one or two days a year during health screenings, I would love to hear from you!

With the onset of cold and flu season comes a reminder about our policies regarding sick children and medication use at school.

PLEASE DO NOT SEND your child to school if he/she has any of the following symptoms within 12 hours of the start of school: vomiting, diarrhea, a temperature of 100 degrees or greater, continuous coughing and/or sneezing, unexplained and/or contagious rash, or inflamed or bloodshot eye(s) with yellow drainage (pink eye). Regardless of symptoms and temperature, a child who is too ill to participate and learn should be kept home.

Falk School follows the Allegheny County Health Department policies regarding management of contagious illnesses. An important feature of these policies is the exclusion of children from school for at least 24 hours after the first dose of an antibiotic for such illnesses as strep throat. Please phone my office for specific questions.

Has your child ever been sent home from school due to illness? If not, consider yourself lucky. While there is no inconvenience like having a child get sick in the middle of the day, it happens to every parent from time to time. Please consider BEFORE this happens how you will manage it. Due to staff and space limitations, children must be picked up within one hour of notification. Now is the time to line up neighbors, relatives, or a babysitter to help out in these unanticipated times. There is a child care center in Pittsburgh that caters to ill children, but you must contact them before you need them. Let me know if you would like more information.

The Medication Policy is mailed to every family every summer. It pertains to ALL medication, over-the-counter and prescription. In short, medications MUST be sent to the Health Room in the original container with a signed medication administration form or similar note. Children are NOT permitted to carry their own medications unless prior arrangements have been made with me. Please contact me for an additional copy of the policy, medication forms, or if you have any questions.

– Susan Sholtis RN
School Nurse
412-624-8023



Now is the time to line up neighbors, relatives, or a babysitter to help out in these unanticipated times.

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 if you have any questions about the Birthday/Gift Book Program contact Ms. Herward (412-624-8010), Bonnie Gorscak (412-243-3672), or Beatriz Kanterewicz (412-521-7168).



*Visit the
Library Website:
<http://tc.education.pitt.edu/library>*

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Library Gifts

Thank you to the students and families who recently donated books to the library: Joy & Arthur Moss, Dr. Deborah Moss, Adam Somers, Joshua Somers, Yoni Krupski, Adi Krupski, Ms. L. Herward, Sean Edward Metcalf, Harsha & Kanchan Rao, Sue Curran, Jeremy Malvin, Peter & Alexia Lambrou, Michael S. Bagnato, and Jakob Wells. More complete information concerning these gifts is published on the library web site, <http://tc.education.pitt.edu/library>.

Library Volunteers

The focus of the library volunteers will shift this year from assistance with primary level book circulation to read aloud activities. Ms. Herward is initiating a parent volunteer read aloud program. Read aloud volunteers will observe in the library one read aloud session with Ms. Herward, choose a book from the Read Aloud Book List, and schedule a read aloud session with a primary or intermediate level class or classes. Please contact Ms. Herward if you have questions or if you would like to volunteer for this new program (Email: herward@pitt.edu or Phone: 412-624-8010).

Other library volunteers include Library Coordinators and Gift Book Program Bonnie Gorscak and Beatriz Kanterewicz and Book Fair Ann Kelton and Mary Tolomeo.

Volunteers will be needed for the Library Book Fair. Contact Ann Kelton, Book Fair Chair at 412-244-5722 for more information. Volunteers will be needed to work at the Library Book Fair, Thursday & Friday, April 22-23, Monday & Tuesday, April 26-27, 2004. This involves a one-time 2-3 hour time commitment.

Visit the Library Website

<http://tc.education.pitt.edu/library/>

Ms. Herward maintains a website for the Falk School Library. The site includes information about the library staff, curriculum resources, class schedule, policies and procedures, the Gift Book Program, new library materials, special events, MLA Work Cited stylesheet, the library catalog, and magazine collection.

Go to the Curriculum Resources links to see web pages for class projects and assignments. Ms. Herward and the classroom teachers collaborate to provide students with easy access to the resources needed for their projects. Each project's web page is unique but most includes a description of the project, list of print resources, and, when

appropriate, links to Internet resources. Some recent projects are Ms. Bianco's Computer History project, Mr. Resek's The Ultimate Survivor Creature, and Ms. Coughlin's Water and Soil Project. Keep up with what's happening in the library by visiting the library web pages.

The Heartwood Program

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 according to a schedule throughout the school year. 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 9:00 to arrange to borrow books. Contact Ms. Herward (624-8010) for a complete list of the Heartwood books.

November – Main Books for Loyalty

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

Heartwood – Supplementary Books

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

– Linda Herward



The Heartwood program is a literature-based ethics curriculum for children.

Girls Basketball Schedule

Falk School Middle School Girls Basketball Schedule 2003-2004

Date	School	Location	Team	Game Time	Leave Class	Leave School	Return Time
12/5/03	Valley	Away	Girls A/B	3:30/4:30	1:35	1:45	7:00
12/10/03	St. Edmunds	Home	Girls B/A	3:30/4:30	--	--	--
12/12/03	Ellis Tournament	Away	Girls A	4:00 or 5:00	--	TBA	TBA
12/13/03	Ellis Tournament	Away	Girls A	6:00 or 7:00	--	Parents Drive	Parents Drive
12/15/03	Winchester	Home	Girls B/A	3:30/4:30	--	--	--
12/17/03	Comm Day	Home	Girls B/A	3:30/4:30	--	--	--
1/7/04	Comm. Day	Away	Girls A/B	4:00/5:00	--	3:15	6:30
1/8/04	Shadyside	Home	Girls B/A	3:30/4:30	--	--	--
1/9/04	Ellis	Home	Girls B/A	3:30/4:30	--	--	--
1/12/04	St. Edmunds	Away	Girls B/A	3:30/4:30	2:35	2:45	6:00
1/15/04	Shadyside	Away	Girls B/A	3:30/4:30	2:10	2:20	6:15
1/22/04	Sewickley	Away	Girls A/B	3:30/4:30	2:10	2:20	6:15
1/24/04	Falk Tournament	Home	Girls A	10:00-2:00	--	Parents Drive	Parents Drive
1/29/04	Ellis	Away	Girls A/B	4:00/5:00	--	3:15	6:30
2/2/04	Winchester	Away	Girls A/B	4:00/5:00	--	3:15	6:30
2/9/04	Sewickley	Home	Girls B/A	3:30/4:30	--	--	--

Coaches:

Athletic Director:
Laura Hunt (412) 624-8017

Juliann Jaumotte-
Girls A Team Head Coach

Donnie Wallace-
Girls A Team Assistant
Coach

Danae Clark-
Girls B Team Head Coach

Important Note to Parents/ Guardians:

Please note the return time to Falk. You should be at Falk ready to pick-up your child prior to the arrival of the bus at Falk from the game. In addition, if your child will not be riding the bus back to Falk a written note signed by his or her parent/guardian must be given to the coach before boarding the bus to go to the game.

Boys Basketball Schedule

Falk School Middle School Boys Basketball Schedule 2003-2004

Date	School	Location	Team	Game Time	Leave Class	Leave School	Return Time
12/5/03	Valley	Home	Boys B/A	3:30/4:30	--	--	--
12/08/03	Sewickley	Home	Boys B/A	3:30/4:30	--	--	--
12/10/03	St. Edmunds	Away	Boys B/A	3:30/4:30	2:35	2:45	6:00
12/15/03	Winchester	Away	Boys A/B	4:00/5:00	--	3:15	6:30
12/17/03	Comm. Day	Away	Boys A/B	4:00/5:00	--	3:15	6:30
1/7/04	Comm. Day	Home	Boys B/A	3:30/4:30	--	--	--
1/8/04	Shadyside	Away	Boys B/A	3:30/4:30	2:10	2:20	6:15
1/10/04	Falk Tournament	Home	Boys A	10:00-2:00	--	Parents Drive	Parents Pickup
1/12/04	St. Edmunds	Home	Boys B/A	3:30/4:30	--	--	--
1/15/04	Shadyside	Home	Boys B/A	3:30/4:30	--	--	--
2/2/04	Winchester	Home	Boys B/A	3:30/4:30	--	--	--
2/5/04	Sewickley	Away	Boys A/B	3:30/4:30	2:10	2:20	6:15
2/7/04	St. Edmunds Tournament	Away	Boys A	TBA	--	Parents Drive	Parents Pickup

Coaches:

Mark Rubenstein-
Boys A Head Coach

John Nauhaus-
Boys B Head Coach

Rob Hall-
Boys B Assistant Coach

Athletic Director:
Laura Hunt (412) 624-8017

Important Note to Parents/ Guardians:

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FalkTalk

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Music Notes

Congratulations to all the Falk musicians who participated in a variety of musical events on October 31st. The Primary and Intermediate classes did a wonderful job with their parade; complete with costumes, poems and songs. Immediately after the parade, the Intermediate Chorus presented their first concert of the year to a very appreciative Primary audience. The concert was followed by Intermediate and Primary sing-alongs. Everyone sang, danced and enjoyed being together. In the afternoon, the Intermediate and Middle School students were treated to a Jazz concert featuring Mr. Pat Martino, guitarist. Mr. Martino was in Pittsburgh attending the Annual Pitt Jazz Symposium. He really enjoyed playing for, and talking to, the Falk students. He is at the top of the Jazz guitar world and Falk is very fortunate to have had the opportunity to hear him.

Looking ahead to December, we find our first trip to Heinz Hall. The fourth grade students will be attending a Pittsburgh Symphony Concert, "Musical Inspirations" on Monday, Dec. 8th.

– Lee Ann Conover