

FalkTalk

From the Director

Dear Falk School Family Members,

Earlier this year, I wrote to you about the visit of one of our alumna. Ms. Nancy Richter Brzeski graduated from Falk School in 1938. She returned for a visit in October, meeting with faculty and students, and sharing the experiences from her time at Falk.

This initial meeting has resulted in two unexpected "gifts" to Falk School. First, Nancy selected one of her original works of art, entitled "Fear Not, Choose Love" and donated it to the school. It is not a small donation, in any sense of the word. The print, made from an original painting, measures 46" x 33." A modest person, Ms. Brzeski asked that the plaque under the painting read "Given to Falk School in fond memory of Martin P. Chorowski, Principal, and teachers Mr. Kelley, Mrs. Hammit, Miss Kirkel, Mrs. Bacon and Mr. Wingert." These are the original administrator and faculty members of the school. We will find a temporary home

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From the PTA President

Just when I thought a few weeks ago that we'd cruise through winter without the need for those room parent phone calls early in the morning, the sudden arrival of bitter cold and snow forced us to put Falk's phone tree system to the test again. In fact, we even had plenty of opportunity to perfect the calls and get accustomed to speaking to our fellow parents on the phone in the wee hours of the day: either to communicate and acknowledge the delays and cancellations, or to turn around and make more phone calls to solicit urgent help from other parents in caring for our children. This was quite a community-building exercise! I'd like to express my appreciation on behalf of all parents to Helen Vlachos and Beatriz Ochoa, the room parent co-chairs at the top of the phone tree, but also to all the room parents who were brave enough to repeatedly break the news of another day off to the rest of us. Thank you! Let's hope, however, that we won't need their services again until next winter.

Among the more enjoyable winter pleasures was the PTA-sponsored "Skate Date" on February 1st. We had a wonderful turnout, and the numerous young skaters, fearless on the ice, were joined by many of us (older) parents defying the perils of being on a slippery surface. The PTA's very own photo journalist on assignment that day, Janet Kinane, documented the event with her camera. A collage with those pictures is currently at display in the cafetorium. If you have time, look at the pictures – they speak louder than words of the great fun we all had. Thank you to Anne Scott for organizing this special event.

Another much cherished Falk happening is the annual "Book Bingo", which can always brighten a dreary February Sunday afternoon. This year, the event was held on the 11th and arranged by Pam Goldman and Maureen Mayer together with Kim Lincoln in charge of running the game. Dr. McConaha called out the numbers and proved to bring good luck to many a player. Everybody went home a winner and was

Calendar of Events

March 17	Alexander Technique Parent Workshop	May 17	Falk Band Concert, 7pm
April 5	End of 3rd Quarter - P, I	May 18	Middle School Dance
April 6-9	No School, Spring Break	May 19	Alumni Brunch; Falk 75th Anniversary Dinner
April 19-25	Achievement Testing/Parent Conferences, 1pm dismissal	May 20	Falk School Carnival, 12-4pm
		May 21-24	Middle School Musical - The Wiz

In two weeks, Nancy will return to Falk and spend the week working with Pam, Greg and our middle school students on an art/language arts project focused on dream interpretation.

From the Director (continued)

for the work of art for now. We will then find a "permanent" home when the new school is completed.

The second gift involves our students. In October, Nancy met with Dr. Armstrong and Mr. Wittig and discussed her work as an artist. Ms. Brzeski's work focuses on the interpretation of dreams as expressed in her paintings and sculptures. This prompted an interest in our teachers because the Middle School students have used dreams as a focus for some of their writing. In two weeks, Nancy will return to Falk and spend the week working with Pam, Greg and our middle school students on an art/language arts project focused on dream interpretation. Again, Nancy is supporting this project with both time and funding. All costs associated with this unit have been covered by her donation already forwarded to the school.

My father used to tell me that it was, "better to be lucky than smart." This is certainly an example of our good fortune resulting in a magnificent reconnection with one of our former students. I find it especially fitting that it's taking place during our 75th Anniversary Celebration Year.

– Wendell McConaha,
Director

From the PTA President (continued)

thrilled with the terrific and generous book prizes. Thanks to all who contributed in making this event such a success.

Our most recent event on the Falk calendar was the General PTA meeting on March 13th. Dr. McConaha gave a detailed status report. Many parents came to hear about the progress of our building project. The architects have been excellent at 'figuring us out' and at understanding our program with the goal to come up with a building plan that reflects who our culture and provides room to grow.

We know that spring has arrived when it's time for the EIT Roller Skating Party. This year it will take place on Saturday, March 24th. Make time for this family event and don't forget to bid in the silent auction. There will be some terrific baskets with lots of goodies to take home.

Well, there are more activities scheduled for later in spring, a truly exciting time at Falk. But, I'll get to those in my next letter.

– Martina Wells,
PTA President



Falk Carnival
SUNDAY
MAY 20
Noon-4pm

Falk School Carnival

The carnival is scheduled for Sunday May 20th from Noon - 4pm. We will be adding a velcro body wall to entice student alumnus and middle school students to attend. We will also be having a balloon artist. Please save the date.

– Kim Lincoln

Bake Sale to Celebrate Spring

Girl Scout Troop 623 is hosting a bake sale on Wednesday March 21st during all the lunch periods to welcome the arrival of spring. If you would like to donate baked goods for the sale they can be brought to the office Wednesday morning.

– Kim Lincoln

Girl Scout Cookies

The Falk Girl Scouts thank the Falk community for supporting their cookie sales. If you did not receive your order then please e-mail me at josaboma@msn.com as it means there was a problem in the delivery of your order form but we can get you your cookies after spring break. So far the only problem I'm aware of is with the order of the PTA's president. Go figure! For those of you who supported our Gift of Caring program by buying an extra box or more for the EECM hunger services, I have wonderful news. There is an anonymous donor who is giving the EECM \$3.50 for every Gift of Caring box we donate to the EECM.

– Kim Lincoln

Buuilding Expansion/Renovation Update

At our last PTA Executive Committee Meeting, it was suggested that a regular column regarding the progress on the expansion and renovation of Falk would be interesting to the Falk Talk readers. This is the outline of what has transpired to date and will be the first of a series of articles that will take us from concept to final construction. Please feel free to email me with additional questions that I have failed to address; those will then be incorporated into the next installment.

During the year prior to my arrival, Strada Architects was employed to do an assessment of our current site and to project possible renovation scenarios into the future. Strada developed three plans. The first looked at renovating the existing facility without any physical expansion. It was discovered that this option, because of the need to bring the building into compliance (e.g., handicap access, etc.), would allow educational space for only 180 students. Plan Two looked at what would be required to keep the present enrollment of 275, and it was determined that a renovation of the current building and a single story addition would accomplish this. Plan Three maintained the "architectural footprint" of the one-story addition, but added two additional floors. Strada anticipated this would allow us to increase to a maximum of 450 students.

The University of Pittsburgh agreed to loan the money for the addition, provided we could show a plan that would allow the school to expand and to repay the loan over a period of thirty years. At meetings with the Falk family and the School Board, details were worked out regarding the changing of the original boundary lines to accommodate the University's needs and incorporation of the addition

to the building. The project went out to bid and Perkins Eastman Architects was the firm selected.

A "steering committee" comprised of ten teachers, ten parents, representatives of the University of Pittsburgh's Facility Planning, and architects from Perkins Eastman have held a series of meetings. Initially, these meetings were to develop an understanding of what we valued in the current facility (e.g., family feeling, clustered grade levels, etc.) and how we would incorporate those features into the new building. A series of "concept drawings" were developed and we have seen those reduced in number from five, to three and at the last meeting two drawings that seemed to capture (each in different ways) a possible new design. At our next meeting these two concept drawings will "meld" into one. From that point forward, we will be working to make modifications to that drawing.

The schedule is still calling for a ground breaking on the new addition to correspond with our Spring Carnival in May. Work on the addition would continue through August 2008. At that point, we would move into the new construction (supplemented with temporary units) while the existing building undergoes renovation. We are hopeful that the newly renovated/constructed facility would be totally complete by September 2009.

In my next column, I will go into detail regarding the proposed design and perhaps include a drawing if space permits.

– Wendell McConaha,
Director



The schedule is still calling for a ground breaking on the new addition to correspond with our Spring Carnival in May.

Feed the Brain Food and Book Drive

The Falk Middle School Service Committee is currently working on a project titled "Feed the Brain." We are donating books, peanut butter, and tuna to the EECM (The East End Cooperative Ministry) for underprivileged people. Feed the Brain is part of the EECM's Have a Heart for Hunger campaign. You can put jars of peanut butter, canned tuna fish and books in the brown paper bags that were distributed to everyone in early March. Please turn the bags in for collection to either your home-room teachers, various drop-off boxes around the school, or to the Service Committee (headquartered in B-13 of the middle school). Please have the bags in as soon as possible, before the end of March. You can put as much of these items as you want in the bag.

The reason we are putting in peanut butter and tuna is because both are high-protein foods and the EECM needs cheap high-protein foods for the people that go there. We are also donating books for them to read.

These books can range from children's picture books to adult novels as long as they are in good condition (they do not have to be new, but shouldn't have things like rips or yellow pages). Our committee's goal is to collect 300 jars of peanut butter and 300 cans of tuna, in addition to HUNDREDS of books.

PLEASE HELP OUR CAUSE!!!!

Thanks!

– Middle School Service Committee

* For more on the "Feed the Brain" Food and Book Drive, see page 11

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From the School Nurse

March is National Nutrition Month. As we experience milder outdoor temperatures, opportunities for outside activities and play are increased. Whether activities must take place inside or out, check out the following list of creative ways to increase physical movement and decrease time spent watching TV or playing video games. These ideas are "Move Your Body Ideas for Kids and Adults" from the American Dietetic Association's Start Today for a Healthy Tomorrow campaign.

- Walk around the school grounds or neighborhood park. The weather is starting to get warmer—a great time to explore the outdoors whenever you get the chance.
- Take a walk through the school halls or at work. Create a walking path and map out the distances.
- Walk up and down the stairs. Stair climbing is a great way to strengthen muscles, get your heart going, and get to where you want or need to be.
- If there is snow outside, build an ice castle or snowman. Go sledding, ice skating, or skiing.
- Go on a nature tour at a local park or forest preserve. Arrange a tour with the park district in your community.
- Plan activities in the school or community gym such as rope climbing, relay races and volleyball.
- Have a sock-hop or any other kind of dancing party.
- Learn a new jump-rope routine with your friends, on your own or with your family.

- Construct an obstacle course on the playground or in the gym. Once you conquer that one, create a new one!
- Go on a scavenger hunt that takes you around the school or park.
- Stretch your muscles for 20 minutes at the beginning of the day. Include breathing exercises to relieve stress, too.
- Learn a new sport. Try tennis, yoga, or dancing.
- Plant a garden in your back yard.
- Create "instruments" as a home craft. Use common items such as dried beans or rice inside plastic containers or spoons with pots and pans. Then parade around the area!
- Coordinate an activity to clean up a park by picking up litter.

— Susan Sholtis RN
School Nurse



Whether activities must take place inside or out, check out the following list of creative ways to increase physical movement and decrease time spent watching TV or playing video games.

At \$6 or more per hour, you could have an 8th grade student help you out while also contributing towards his/her portion of the Cedar Point trip.

8th Grade Cedar Point Fundraising

Please help our 8th graders earn money toward their annual trip. At \$6 or more/hour, you could have an 8th grade student help you out while also contributing towards his/her portion of the Cedar Point trip. That student could:

- Babysit
- Clean out your garage.
- Help you move.
- Do yardwork.
- Wash and/or detail your car.
- Paint.
- Walk your dog.

If you are interested, please email or call Ms. Coughlin, and she will pass your information along to the 8th graders. 412-624-8016 or emc981@pitt.edu.

Thank you for your support.

— Eileen Coughlin

Primary News

The primary classes went to Phipps Conservatory on Feb. 21st for a program about George Washington Carver and his study of the peanut plant. We attended a class and went on a tour of the conservatory. We learned a lot and really enjoyed our tour. Many thanks to the PTA for covering the cost of this trip for us!

The students in 115's play "Silly Fairy Tales" and 111's play "The Little Red Hen" did a wonderful job!

Kindergarten is currently studying Communities in social studies. The 1st and 2nd grade rooms are finishing up Our Country and will soon begin Weather.

All the rooms would like to remind parents to please sign and return report cards.

— Jill Sarada



Intermediate News

Intermediate Gym

In gym class 224 and 225 began playing a game called Seg Ball. Ms. Hunt is still experimenting with the game but it's fun. It takes place from 10:45 to 11:55.

What you do is you have a soft puck and pass it up to 3 seconds. There are 4 goals, 2 of the goals are for 1 team and 2 for the other team. It's fun and tiring, and it gets you to really work as a team.

-Liza Plakseychuk

Wampums

Mr. Ross, the intern in 224, taught us how to make wampum belts in Social Studies. A wampum belt is a bunch of beads all tied up to make a symbol in the middle. We only used three colors; they were black, white and purple. White means peace, black means darkness, and purple means pride.

It was hard at first, and then it got easy and fun. The wampums turned out to be cool at the end.

There were two kinds of wampums we could make; one was shaped like a rectangle and the other one was shaped like a diamond, but our whole class made diamonds. It was funny! We enjoyed making the wampum belts!

-Sidony Ridge & Rachel Adelsheimer

Cold Weather and Recess Activities

Even in the cold weather, a lot of the intermediate kids are going outside for recess. 224 and 225 play in the front play ground and in order for us to go outside we have to have hats, gloves, scarves, boots and a heavy jacket. We go outside for recess right after lunch, which is at 1:10, and recess ends at 1:30. We go outside for recess because we all need some fresh air and we also need to run around. That is what we do outside at recess.

-Sara Schneier

Science 224 and 225 Rainforests Unit

In science, room 224 and 225 recently started our rainforest unit. Our teacher, Ms. Metcalf says, "It is a good follow-up to our sustainability unit." We are learning about the flora and fauna of the rainforests. Rainforests are very wet all year round and are found near the equator in tropical climates. We have started small research projects. Each student is researching one plant and one animal from the rainforest. Our science class is in 225 and it is held at the end of the day. This project is very interesting because it brings together science and world cultures.

-Joshua Grail

Ice Skating Field Trip

225, 224, 222 and 221 are going on a field trip on March 2, 2007. We have to either bring our own ice skates or rent them at the skating rink. The trip was rescheduled from February 14, 2007 because of a snow day. Everyone in intermediate will go on the ice skating field trip and everyone will have a blast!

-Madison Fisher

Think.com

In 225, computer groups A and B are working on something called Think.com. Think.com is a website for schools where you can make your own, personal website. We always have computer as our third period of the day, not including our arrival. At the beginning of this unit, Ms. Bianco told us that we would eventually do a project on the computer with kids in different countries. As of now, we are working on stories to put on our websites. We also worked on writings to put on our front pages and customizing our websites. We are still learning about Think.com and everything that you can do with it.

-Joshua Scherrer



Even in the cold weather, a lot of the intermediate kids are going outside for recess.

Intermediate News

- Clear your calendars – Rooms 221 and 222 will be performing their play based on the traditional Algonquian "Cinderella" Story, Rough Faced Girl and the traditional Sioux story, Iktomi and the Boulder. Performances will be on March 27th at 10:10am and 1:20pm and on March 28th at 10:10am. The students have been working very hard and they would love to see you there!
- March is book report month for the students in rooms 224 and 225. This year, the 4th graders from 221 and 222 are invited to participate as well!
- The intermediate team would like to thank the PTA for their generosity in paying to rent the ice skating rink on March 2, 2007 for our rescheduled Valentines Day field trip.

*Our teacher,
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up to our sustain-
ability unit."*

Music Notes

HAPPY MUSIC IN OUR SCHOOLS MONTH!

March is officially named "Music in our Schools Month", but here at Falk I like to think that every month is "Music at Falk Month". One of the highlights of Falk's observance of the importance of music has been the wonderful array of

performers who have come to Falk and performed for our Music classes. Each year, parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, brothers, sisters and friends volunteer to come to a Music class and share their music with us. This year we will be inviting performers to join us after Spring Break. A letter of invitation has already gone home. If your invitation was lost in transit—let me know and I will send you another one. If you care to share your music with an appreciative audience, please sign up. You'll have a great time and so will our students.

Congratulations to our Middle School Chorus on their performance of the National Anthem at the Pitt/DePaul Women's Basketball game on Feb. 24th.

The Chorus did a great job and received many com-

pliments. Thanks also to all the members of our Falk family who attended the game and cheered us on.

This year's Middle School musical "The Wiz" has been cast and we had our first rehearsal. This promises to be a very exciting show — so please mark your calendars and join us May 21-24. You'll be glad you did. Thanks to the parents who have already volunteered to help with this production. It is never too late to sign up — just let me know if you have an interest in helping out and we will find something for you to do!

— Lee Ann Conover



Congratulations to our Middle School Chorus on their performance of the National Anthem at the Pitt/DePaul Women's Basketball game on Feb. 24th.

The students were thoughtful and engaged in intellectual discussions about the issues boys and girls face in relation to the "ideal body image."

Sexuality Education

The Sexuality Education program has been in full swing during the month of February. Ms. O'Sullivan was honored to teach a body image unit with the 7th and 8th grade health classes during the week of February 19th-23rd.

She had a wonderful time! The students were thoughtful and engaged in intellectual discussions about the issues boys and girls face in relation to the "ideal body image."

The 7th and 8th grade health classes were also scheduled to take part in their sexuality classes with Ms. Brenda Green from February 26th-March 2nd.

UNFORTUNATELY, Ms. Green had a family emergency and she had to cancel the classes. Hopefully, we will be able to reschedule the classes for another week.

If you have any questions or concerns about the Sexuality Education program please contact Ms. Lindsay O'Sullivan at: llo2@pitt.edu.

— The Sexuality Education Curriculum Committee

Falk Tennis Team

It is official: Falk School has a Middle School Tennis Team. Approximately 40 sixth, seventh, and eighth graders signed up to be on the 1st Falk School Tennis Team. Practice starts on Monday March 12th. Students will be bused to the Pittsburgh Indoor Tennis Center (PITC) to practice where they will share the facility with Pittsburgh University's Women's Team.

Coaches will be Kristin Davin (Spanish Teacher) and Ovande Furtado (Creative Movement Teacher). Jane Famili (Falk parent) has volunteered her time to help start the team and will be assisting with some of the practices. The first game will be at Ellis on April 13th. All home matches will be played on a Fridays at PITC. If there are any questions please call 412-624-8017. Go Falk Tennis!

PITC is located all the way down Penn past Whole foods and make a right onto Stevenson Place.

— Laura Hunt

Dear Falk Family Members,

Today's column is devoted to our new Internet venture at **Think.com**. Intermediate students are the only students using the resource at this time. However, Think.com is intended for grades K-8.

You can get to Think.com by pasting http://www.think.com/en_us/ into the address bar of your browser (Internet Explorer, etc.).

What is it?

Think.com inspires students to think, connect, create, and share. They describe themselves as "a **global, collaborative, protected, and free** online learning community." Students create their own web pages which are saved and posted within the Think.com website. I have the ability and responsibility to review each student's web pages from time to time. In this beginning stage, students will participate with in Falk School only.

What are my intentions?

After the students and I are saturated with activities related to completing individual web pages, exploring the site, and a few classroom projects, it is my intention to have parents view their child's work at home and on-line. Eventually, we will become involved in an educational project with another school (in or out of the United States). Along the way, students can learn research, writing, teamwork, and technology skills.

What is your child experiencing?

As each student sits down in the computer lab, they have their own username and log-in to a Falk school computer account. Then, students click an icon (picture) to open the web site, "Internet Explorer." From there, students type "think.com" into the address bar and Think.com's homepage pops up to give general information about the site and offer an area to log in as a member.

So, once again, students enter their own unique username and press the enter key. Soon, their own creative first page appears. Their own home page looks age-appropriate with cute robotic symbols that they can choose to represent themselves. Also, on the home page is a tool area where students can write stories, poems, and thoughts. Eventually, students will be able to include copies of their other academic work. At this time, students can only communicate with other Intermediate students.

Currently, intermediate students are in the process of writing a story about our recent snow days from the perspective of someone or something else. For example, Alex's sled might be telling the story of how it finally got used and how Alex rode the sled into a tree. Upon completion, this story will be "posted" to that student's webpage. However, the only people to see the story via Think.com will be other students from Falk School in the Intermediate grade or an invited guest (like a parent).

How is my child protected?

It is my responsibility to monitor student-created content. *Outsiders cannot see or send any content to your child.*

Why do this at all? Why expose my child to the Internet? Aren't they too young?

I believe that the Internet is to today's young people what pen, paper, and an encyclopedia was in our day. Remember how fascinating it was to just look through an encyclopedia? Think.com is a safe avenue on the internet intended for young children to communicate and learn about other people around the world in an authentic way that pictures can't. "The International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) has determined that Think.com clearly supports implementation of NETS (National Educational Technology Standards) for students and teachers in specific, carefully reviewed and documented ways."

Think.com is an excellent example of how the Internet can be used to foster multi-media skills, while teaching students about world events and different cultures, in a fun-filled non-commercial way. The Think.com program illustrates how foundations and companies can produce great media for kids and families that positively impacts their lives and learning experiences.

Please note that the Parents Page is intended to facilitate communication between home and the classroom. This special page is the only public page that can be accessed from outside Think.com without a Think.com account.

Think.com's Privacy Policy and Terms of Use can be reviewed online at <http://www.think.com/support/docs/>.

Feel free to contact me with any questions. Barb Bianco 412-648-8459, or bbianco@pitt.edu

– Barbara Bianco



Eventually, we will become involved in an educational project with another school (in or out of the United States). Along the way, students can learn research, writing, teamwork, and technology skills.

Library Book Fair April 20 & 23-25, 2007

The purpose of the Library Book Fair (book sale) is to encourage the reading of quality children's books while raising additional funds to expand the library collection. A Literature Book Fair will be supplied by Scholastic, Inc. The Fair will be held in the gym and begin on Friday, April 20 and continue on Monday, Tuesday, & Wednesday April 23-25. These are parent conference days with 1:00 dismissal.

The students will be given an opportunity to shop at the book fair during the school day. The tentative schedule for the classes is given below. Arrangements will be made for the middle school students to visit the Book Fair during the first period of the day. Students may also shop during times when classes are not scheduled. Updated publicity will be sent home.

Fri.	Rm. 116 and Rm. 222
Mon.	Rm. 111 and Rm. 224
Tues.	Rm. 112 and Rm. 221
Wed.	Rm. 115 and Rm. 225

The book fair will be open until 6:00 P.M., Friday, Monday and Tuesday and until 3:00 P.M. on Wednesday. Parents are encouraged to stop in before or after conferences. *Please note the fair will close at 3:00 P.M. on the last day, Wednesday, April 25.*

Library Book Fair Volunteers Needed

Volunteers will be needed to work at the Library Book Fair setting up Thursday April 19, during the Book Fair and packing up Wednesday April 25. This involves a one-time 2-3 hour time commitment. Contact Shelley Ross, Book Fair co-chair by email at judgesbay@yahoo.com or by phone at 412-687-0503.

School Library Month — April Spring Reading Initiative

Special events are planned in April and May to celebrate "School Library Month." Detailed information about these events and the Spring Reading Initiative will be sent home in late March. These include –

1. **The Library Book Fair:** Friday April 20 and Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday April 22-25. See details above.
3. **April Reading Calendar,** Grades K-5: Families are encouraged to set aside 15 minutes daily for recreational reading, together if possible. "Reading" includes individual reading, reading aloud, and listening to reading aloud. During April use the *Reading Calendar* to record reading

times for intermediate and primary level students. Parents are asked to sign the calendar. More than one person may record times on the same calendar. Students who turn in their calendar with the requested information will receive a certificate.

3. **Book Badges:** Students, parents, teachers, interns, staff, and family members are encouraged to fill out a *Book Badge* for each book they read or that is read to them. Book Badges may be turned in to the homeroom teachers or sent to Ms. Herward by way of the school office. One sheet of Book Badges will be sent home. Cut these apart. Additional badges will be available in the library and in intermediate and primary homerooms. Note unpagged books usually have 32 pages.
4. **Reading Chain:** Badges will be attached to a paper chain strung about the library. The chain will be moved to the school for the *Read-In*. The community's total page count will be tallied and displayed each day on the library bulletin board and outside the school office.
5. **Page Tally:** A running total of pages read will be recorded and posted in the library. Total number of books read and the total number of pages read will be announced at the end of May.
6. **Read-In:** A school wide SSR Read-In will be held at the end of May or early June. The entire Falk School Community is invited to join in Sustained Silent Reading in the gym for twenty minutes. Parents are encouraged to join in. Details will follow.

Please support these activities. Information concerning the activities is available on the Library Web Site at <http://tc.education.pitt.edu/library>. The Reading Initiative activities continue through May.

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 sometimes 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.

The Gift Book Program information will be sent in April to the families of students with spring and summer birthdays. These materials explain the program and invite families to participate. Families may make donations at any time. Write notes on the Gift Form as needed or email Ms. Herward at

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Volunteers will be needed to work at the Library Book Fair. Contact Shelley Ross, Book Fair co-chair by email at judgesbay@yahoo.com or by phone at 412-687-0503.

herward@pitt.edu. Information, book lists, and forms are available on the library web site <http://tc.education.pitt.edu/library>. Please keep in mind all dollar amounts are suggested donations.

Dinnie Goldring and Kim Cuddie Crawford will coordinate this program with Ms. Herward. If you have any questions about the Birthday/Gift Book Program contact Ms. Herward (412-624-8010), Dinnie Goldring (412-363-4089), or Kim Cuddie Crawford (412-884-4487).

Library Gifts

Thank you to the students and families who recently donated books to the library:

Adam Marks, *Skeleton Key* by Anthony Horowitz in honor of his birthday, January 3, 2007

Maya Frizzell, *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane* by Kate DiCamillo, *K-I-S-S: Guide to Raising a Puppy* by Liz Palida, *Runny Babbit: A Billy Sook* by Shel Silverstein, and *Almost Gone: The World's Rarest Animals* by Steve Jenkins in honor of her birthday, February 12, 2007

Adam and Joshua Somers, *Gone Wild: An Endangered Animal Alphabet* by David McLimans in honor of Dr. Marian Vollmer, *Penny from Heaven* by Jennifer L. Holm in honor of Ms. Jackie Metcalf, *The Higher Power of Lucky* by Susan Patron in honor of Ms. Joanne Ridge, *Flotsam* by David Wiesner in honor of Dr. Pamela Armstrong, *Moses: When Harriet Tubman Led Her People to Freedom* by Carol Boston Weatherford in honor of Dr. Lee Ann Conover, *Hattie Big Sky* by Kirby Larson, and *Rules* by Cynthia Lord, January 2007

Josie Gutschow, *Sawdust Carpets* by Amelia Lau Carling in honor of her birthday February 13, 2007

Sara Liang, *Bones and the Big Yellow Mystery* by David A. Adler, *The Elves and the Shoemaker* retold from the Brothers Grim and illustrated by Jim LaMarche, *Math Potatoes: Mind-Stretching Brain Food* by Greg Tang, *Good Boy, Fergus!* By David Shannon, and *If You Decide to Go to the Moon* by Faith McNulty in honor of her birthday February 3, 2007

Sophia Pellis, *Junie B. First Grader: Dumb Bunny* by Barbara Parks in honor of her birthday August 10, 2007

Ms. Herward, *The Deaf Musicians Story* by Pete Seeger and Paul Dubois Jacobs in memory of Marlene Lynette Nowlin-Williams, February 20, 2007

Online Subscription Resources

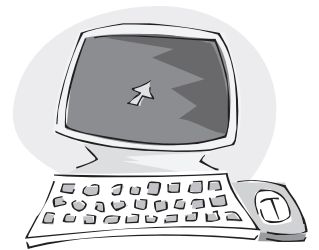
The library subscribes to *The Britannica Online School Edition* and *The Gale Virtual Reference Library*. To access these subscription information resources, go to the Falk School Library website (<http://tc.education.pitt.edu/library>) or search Google for Falk School Library. Click on the link to Online Resources. The first time you access the Britannica you will be asked for a username and password. The user name is "falk" (all lower case) and the password is "school" (all lower case). The Gale Virtual Reference Library asks for an ID or bar-code. The ID is "school." Please contact Ms. Herward by phone (412-624-8010) or email (herward@pitt.edu) if you experience difficulty accessing these online subscription services from your home computer.

The POWER Library is a collection of online resources made available through the state to school and public libraries participating in the program. These are accessible from the school computers and from home through the Carnegie Library. Use the link on the Falk School Library Online Resources webpage.

Doing research or need information? Use these information resources first before going "out" to search the Internet. Think of these databases as reference books from the library. The information in them has been evaluated by an editor, reviewed by information specialists, and selected by a librarian before being made available to you. Just as searching the Internet requires some skill, searching these databases has a learning curve. Practice and use improves the speed of results. The results will be reliable and the information valid. Explore these information resources with your child and encourage their use.

The Library Website

Need information concerning the library or information resources for class projects? Visit the library website. Go to <http://tc.education.pitt.edu/library> or search Google for Falk School Library. The site includes links to Online Resources and the Falk School Library Catalog as well as information about the library staff, curriculum resources (middle school research projects), class schedule, policies and procedures, the Gift Book Program, new library materials, special events, MLA Work Cited stylesheet, the library catalog, and magazine collection.



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Library News (continued)

Award Winning Children's Books Announced

In January the American Library Association announced the 2007 winners of the Newbery, Caldecott, and King Awards. The John Newbery Medal is given to the author of the most distinguished contribution to American literature for children published the previous year. The Randolph Caldecott Medal is awarded to the artist of the most distinguished American picture book for children published in the United States the preceding year. The Coretta Scott King Awards honor African American authors and illustrators of outstanding books for children and young adults. The 2007 winners are listed below:

- **Newbery Medal Winner** - *The Higher Power of Lucky* by Susan Patron, illustrated by Matt Phelan
- **Newbery Honor Books** – *Hattie Big Sky* by Kirly Larson, *Penny From Heaven* by Jennifer L. Holm, and *Rules* by Cynthia Lord
- **Caldecott Medal Winner** – *Flotsam* by David Wiesner

- **Caldecott Honor Books** – *Gone Wild: An Endangered Animal Alphabet* by David McLimans, *Moses: When Harriet Tubman Led Her People to Freedom* by Carole Boston Weatherford, illustrated by Kadir Nelson
- **Coretta Scott King Author Award** – *Copper Sun* by Sharon Draper
- **Coretta Scott King Author Honor** – *The Road to Paris* by Nikki Grimes
- **Coretta Scott King Illustrator Award** — *Moses: When Harriet Tubman Led Her People to Freedom* by Carole Boston Weatherford, illustrated by Kadir Nelson
- **Coretta Scott King Illustrator Honor** – *Jazz* illustrated by Christopher Myers written by Walter Dean Myers, *Langston Hughes* illustrated by Benny Andrews written by Langston Hughes

– Linda Herward

Art News

Come by and see student artwork in the following display areas around the school.



Every year this project is done, the students' ideas are increasingly more imaginative.

This year we have teapots that are mermaids, globes, superheroes, ships, penguins, the Leaning Tower of Pisa, a praying mantis, a hippee, and Rapunzel in her castle—to name a few.

Fantasy Teapots

Ceramic teapots designed by seventh and eighth graders are on display in the front hallway cases. Every year this project is done, the students' ideas are increasingly more imaginative. This year we have teapots that are mermaids, globes, superheroes, ships, penguins, the Leaning Tower of Pisa, a praying mantis, a hippee, and Rapunzel in her castle—to name a few.

Underwater Clay Creatures

Ceramic underwater animals created by third and fourth graders in room 222 are on display in the intermediate stairwell. Sculptures by students in rooms 221, 224, and 225 will be on display next, after they are fired in the kiln. All of the students worked closely from observation to create their animals.

Kindergarten Artwork

Kindergarten children brought in a wide assortment of found materials to use in their classroom art studio. With these materials, they created dolls/puppets. These are currently hanging in the front hallway accompanied by their descriptions.

As part of an exploration of the colors and textures of snow and ice, the kindergarteners created winter collages from transparent, opalescent and glittery materials. Their group collage is attached to the front office window. When the light shines through, it shines and glistens like the snow.

Also on display in the front hallway are the children's recent paper sculptures. In the early years we focus a lot on working in depth with different materials to better understand the materials' properties. Paper is one of these materials. The children have gained much understanding on how to transform flat paper into three-dimensional constructions.

Clay Fantasy Sea Creatures

Fourth and fifth grade children in rooms 224 and 225 created relief sculptures in clay of hybrid creatures—half water, half land. These are on display, along with their titles and descriptions, in the cafeteria and in the intermediate stairwells.

3-D Underwater Miniature Worlds

On display in the stairwell outside rooms 221 and 222 are 221's miniature clay underwater world dioramas based on real and imaginary sea life.

Stop by and enjoy!

– Pam Armstrong

Heartwood Program

Hope is the attribute for March.

Main Books:

Angel Child, Dragon Child by M. Surat
The Cherry Tree by D. Ikeda
We Be Warm Till Springtime Comes by L. Chaflin
Fly Away Home by E. Bunting
Knots on a Counting Rope by B. Martin, Jr.
How Many Days To America by E. Bunting

Supplementary Books:

Amigo by B. B. Schweitzer
Aurora Means Dawn by S. Sanders
Dogsong by G. Paulsen
The Jazzman by M. H. Weik
Kumi and the Pearl by P. M. Martin
The Mountain That Loved a Bird by A. McLerran
My Grandmother's Journey by J. Cech
Odette, a Springtime in Paris by K. Fender
Owl Moon by J. Yolen
Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes by E. Coerr
Sarah, Plain and Tall by P. MacLachlan
Song of the Swallows by L. Politi

Honesty is the attribute for April.

Main Books:

The Empty Pot by Demi;
Osa's Pride by A. Grifalconi;
Our King Has Horns! by R. Pevear;
Roses Sing on New Snow by P. Yee;
The King's Fountain by L. Alexander; and
The Gold Coin by A. F. Ada.

Supplementary Books:

The Dragon's Robe by D. Lattimore;
A Pair of Red Clogs by M. Matsuma,
A Penny's Worth of Character by J. Stuart;
Sam, Bangs and Moonshine by E. Ness;
Striding Slippers by M. Ginsburg;
Summer Wheels by E. Bunting;
The Talking Eggs by R. San Souci;
Taro and the Tofu by M. Matsun;
The Treasure by U. Shulevitz;
The Truthful Harp by L. Alexander; and
The Winter Wife by A.E. Crompton.

More on the "Feed the Brain" Food and Book Drive

The Falk Middle School Service Committee worked very hard the 10 days leading up to spring break to organize the Feed the Brain drive. They designed the flyer, prepared the bags, made presentations and delivered the bags to all the homerooms, made posters, brainstormed the project and its name, assigned tasks, set goals and determined what still needs to be done when we return. They are planning to have a thermometer chart tracking the progress of the donations. Mr. Wittig and I are very impressed with the hard work and dedication of this impressive group of students! Thank you committee members.

Research shows that the majority of food pantry clients do not take advantage of literacy programs offered elsewhere and have few if any books in their home. These same people are thrilled to have access and choice of free books when they come to receive their monthly food allotment. They are living under

such extreme poverty that they don't have the resources to seek out programs like afterschool tutoring programs.

By supporting EECM's food pantry, we will also be supporting the adults who eat at the soup kitchen and the men who stay at their Men's Shelter. I was delighted to learn that many of the men are avid readers and books circulate but are not plentiful. This is why we are targeting adult light reading novels (James Patterson and the like) as well as children's books.

If anyone is interested in making a cash donation instead of goods, your donation will be matched by an anonymous donor. Please make your check out to EECM and you will receive an acknowledgment in the mail.

Thank you for supporting this drive in whatever way you can manage.

– Kim Lincoln

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IT'S NOT TOO LATE

To Join In The Planning And Work

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Falk School 75th Anniversary Update

The weekend of May 19 will be Falk Homecoming Weekend. The middle school dance will still be held on Friday night (May 18), but the carnival is moving to Sunday to make it more accessible to celebrants who come from out of town and would like to participate in this event. Saturday events will include an alumni brunch in our cafetorium and a dinner at the Concordia Club. It is shaping up to be a wonderful weekend, and it's not too late to join in the planning and work – contact Laurie Williams (lwilliam@pitt.edu; 412-624-8027) or Charlene Barnett (fcharpe@verizon.net; 412-247-5351) to “sign up” for these or any other opportunities for involvement!

Dr. McConnaha and Sylvia Gil-Stearns are continuing work on a commemorative book which will include photos, some history of Falk's 75 years, and lots of input from alumni!

A major mailing to alumni, both student and faculty, went out the week of January 29. Through this we gave them advance notice of the homecoming weekend; gathered feedback for our commemorative book; created a list of alumni to include in other Falk functions, when possible; and attempted to get current information on students and teachers we've lost touch with.

A children's event committee is helping with the carnival plans and looking into having a “all school field day” sometime in the spring. They also plan to talk with Mr. Wittig and Ms. Cianflone about some ideas for the 75th anniversary edition of our yearbook, the TeleFalk.

– Laurie Williams,
75th Anniversary Co-Chair