

FALKTalk

Volume 12 Issue 4
January 2002



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From the Director...

January is the cold month, the snowy month, and the beginning of a new year. The next six months are always the busiest at Falk, and this year will be no exception. Keep your calendar and your newsletter handy at all times so you don't miss something important.

Speaking of things important, please remember that there is no school on either January 18 or January 21. Friday will be PK Orientation for next year's K applicants and a clerical/in-service day for the remainder of the faculty, and Monday is the Martin Luther King, Jr. observance.

The PTA meeting has been changed to Tuesday, February 12. Please try to attend. I have offered a challenge to the parents: if more than 50 attend, there will be a reward for each parent in attendance. But more than that, this will be a wonderful opportunity to hear from Mr. Wittig who is pre-

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From the PTA President...

We embark on a new year and the gifts of again setting resolutions, reorganizing, and planning for the upcoming months. For the PTA, this means taking care of immediate business and preparing for transitions. Mundane as this may sound, the success of these depends largely on you, the parents at Falk School.

First, I urge you to attend the February 12 General PTA meeting (page 2). Dr. Mac has issued a "challenge and reward" system for those who attend (see left). As past PTA vice-president and organizer of these meetings, I appreciate any incentive to boost parent attendance. With any luck, many of you will experience the richness of this next meeting and will attend future ones.

Two very popular events also loom in our near future: the Carnegie Science Center sleepover on March 15 and the Ex-

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Winter Calendar

JANUARY

January 18 — Classes cancelled; PK Orientation; clerical/in-service day

January 21 — Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (observed)

January 28 — Vision Committee reports to the School Board

FEBRUARY

February 12 — PTA Meeting

MARCH

March 15 — Carnegie Science Center sleepover

March 22 — Excellence in Teaching Marathon

From the Director...(Continued)

*Don't forget
the next PTA
meeting on
Tuesday,
February 12!*

*Help us meet
our 50 parent
challenge!*

senting a topic of interest to us all. How long has it been since any of us had anything left (time, energy, etc.) for our children? February 12 promises to be a wonderfully interactive evening. I hope to see many of you there.

The Vision Committee has been meeting regularly. A preliminary outline of our process and goals has been developed.

A core committee is now beginning to flesh out the alternatives for consideration by the committee of the whole, and an interim report to the Board will be presented by Dr. John Camillus on January 28. I will keep you all informed about the progress of this group in this column in the months to come.

The vision process and the future goals for this school are extremely important, and our intent is to have all of us on the same exciting page by the end of this academic year. It really will be an exciting challenge!

As always, if you need to ask a question, do not hesitate to call and ask. I seem to spend more and more time in the building each semester. I believe that effective communication is the variable that leads to our success. Communication takes time, but the results are invaluable.

— William McDonald

From the PTA President...(Continued)

cellence in Teaching Marathon on March 22. Both events are designed for you to spend time with your children in meaningful and interesting ways. I hope that you and your children will attend both events.

As PTA president, one of my current responsibilities is to begin preparing to hand over the reins to the next president and recruiting volunteers to chair next year's committees.

Please take a few minutes to look over the list of committees in the school handbook. If you find a committee that looks interesting, drop me a note at billington@superiorwells.com or give me a call (412-380-9366). I look forward to hearing from you!

—Lynn Billington

General Membership Meeting

On Tuesday February 12, 2002 our Falk School PTA will have its second General Membership Meeting of the school year at 7:30 p.m. in our Cafetorium.

As always, these meetings allow Falk parents and staff to be informed and educated on pertinent topics. This meeting will do just that, as our own middle school teacher and team leader, Greg Wittig, will discuss the topic, "Saving something for our children" and give us strategies to slow the pace of our lives so as to have more time, energy, and patience for our children, while still accomplishing the tasks that face us each day. This will be a most informative

and interactive topic, specifically designed for our Falk families.

As always, there will be refreshments and babysitting provided by our after school staff. And there is also a special gift from Dr. McDonald, *if* over fifty parents attend.

This is the perfect opportunity for parents to learn more about children, ask questions, give suggestions, and get to know Falk School even better. Please plan to join us for this wonderful evening of information to help us all be the best parents we can be for our children.

— Charlene Barnett

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, and a note of acknowledgement is sent to each teacher honoree and to others if the address is provided.

All Falk students, teachers, interns, and staff benefit from the continuous updating of the collection. A Winter Gift List of suggested gift books is available from Ms. Herward or on the library website at <http://tc.education.pitt.edu/library>. 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: **Noah Kahrs, Sophia Rosenfeld, Chris Waterkotte, Ms. L. Williams, Zachary, Leah, Chuck and Patty Ettensohn, Molly Hirtle, Yoni Krupski, Adi Krupski, Weasie Offerman, Peter Lambrou, Alexis Lambrou, Molly Nace, Katie Salter, Deborah Brandon, Cortlyn Brown, Colin Wilson, Eva Resnick-Day, Nathan Resnick-Day, Shana Leshko, and Ms. L. Herward.** 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 on April 8-11, 2002. This involves a one-time 2-3 hour time commitment. To sign up, or for more information, contact Ann Kelton, Book Fair Chair (412-244-5722).

THE LIBRARY WEBSITE The library website has been moved to a different server and can now be found at a new URL: <http://tc.education.pitt.edu/library>. The old and new websites are linked. The site includes information about the library staff, curriculum resources, class schedule, parent volunteers, policies and procedures, the Gift Book Program, new library materials, special events, MLA Works Cited style sheet, the library catalog, and magazine collection. The Falk School website (www.pitt.edu/~fls) includes a link to the library website.

LIBRARY CIRCULATION With the installation of new hardware and software, the library has been a busy place this year. Overdue lists and notices have not been sent to the classrooms or homes as frequently as before. Ms. Herward asks that parents and students look out for books that may have been misplaced at home. Please return library books to school. Grades K-5 (primary and intermediate rooms) all have boxes for library returns. Timely return of these materials is appreciated.

—Linda Herward

FALK LIBRARY WEBSITE HAS RELOCATED

You can now find the Falk Library website at <http://tc.education.pitt.edu/library>, or you can link from the Falk School's main site at <http://www.pitt.edu/~fls>.



Target "Takes Charge of Education"



Remember to use your Target Guest Card when making purchases at any Target stores or at www.target.com. Target will donate to us **1%** of your purchases. In addition, 1/2% of qualifying Target Visa purchases outside of Target stores or www.target.com will go to Falk.

You can participate by designating the Falk School on your Target Guest Card application. All you have to do is:

- Get an application at any Target store or at www.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 www.target.com.

- The Falk School ID number is **15303**.

To date, 65 Target Guest Card holders have designated the Falk School, and we have earned \$80 since September 2001. If you have any questions about this program, please contact Nancy Glynn at 412-825-6545 or momalix@aol.com. Supporting Falk School and shopping at Target is a winning combination! Happy shopping!

Apples for the Students

It's still not too late to register your Giant Eagle Advantage Card! The Giant Eagle Apples For The Students program runs through **Saturday, March 23, 2002**, so there is still time for you and your family and friends to help us earn valuable points for the Falk School.

To date, 171 Advantage Card-holders have pledged their purchases to the Falk School. 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!

Chess Team

The Falk Chess Team participated in the Tri-State Junior Chess Championship on Saturday, January 5 at Carnegie Mellon University.

The team consisted of Matthew Belenky, Jasmine Collins, Joaquin Gonzalez, Ben Grace, Lucas Johnson, Ted Permigliani, Eric & Scott Stern, and Colin & Greg Wilson.

A total of 34 schools participated. The Falk team was awarded a 6th Place Team Ribbon.

In addition, the following earned individual awards:

- Matthew Belenky, 2nd Place Trophy, Grades 6 to 12 Advanced Section
 - Scott Stern, 6th Place Ribbon, Grades K to 5 Intermediate Section
 - Colin Wilson, 6th Place Ribbon, Grades K to 5 Advanced Beginner Section.
- Congratulations to all!

Online Shopping

Thanks to many of you for supporting the online shopping program which gives the Falk School valuable points toward free equipment!

The Online Shopping Program is an online shopping mall that hosts over 200 e-commerce stores (including Nordstrom, Land's End, LL Bean, Amazon.com, Toys R Us, and others).

When you purchase products through the Directory of Stores, Online companies pay a commission of 5%-20% to FundingFactory, 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).
- Select "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 FundingFactory 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.



Computer Cartridge Recycling Program

Falk School's recycling project is a huge success; keep it up!

To date, through our computer cartridge recycling program (ETCEP), we have collected **300 cartridges**, earning us **\$600** 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!

This is a really easy way for us to earn important materials for our school. Please approach your family and friends and request that

their business "adopt" the Falk School by logging onto <http://www.fundingfactory.com/Adoptreg.asp>. The 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.

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

Thank you for your support and your cartridges!

BoxTops

To date, we have collected **500** 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 help raise money for the Falk School. **Falk School earns 10 cents** for each Box Top we redeem.

Some popular 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.

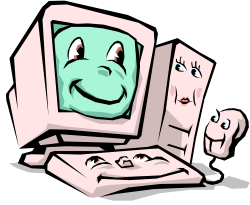
Money received from the Box Tops can be used to purchase any items at the school's discretion, not just computer technology.

Box Tops for this school year must be redeemed by **March 30, 2002**, although they can be saved all year (so don't throw 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 momalix@aol.com.

Computer Room News



Happy New Year! I'm so lucky to be teaching the greatest kids! They always come into the computer room enthusiastically, saying "Mrs. Bianco, What are we doing today?!", "Can I finish last weeks...?", and "Can we print today?."

MIDDLE SCHOOL is actively engaged in two exciting projects. One group of eighth graders is learning to create multi-media slide shows through the Microsoft program *PowerPoint*. This project, affectionately titled, "All About Me," also involves using the classroom scanner, digital camera, and Internet.

Most people have no problem talking about themselves, and our middle school students are no exception. They are required to represent the various parts of their lives that make up their whole person (family, personal interests, friends, school, etc.).

The other group of eight graders, who completed *PowerPoint* last year, are learning a different multi-media slide show software titled *Hyperstudio*. The theme for this group involves some of the different aspects that make Falk School special (teachers, students, sports, fashion, and regulations).

Groups of two students are creating one set of "cards" that make up a slide show. Eventually, these "cards" will be put together into one comprehensive presentation showcasing our beloved Falk School. In the future, I hope this presentation will be available on our web site.

INTERMEDIATE students are busy learning how to type properly using the software program *Typing Tutor 10*. Parents and caregivers: learning to type is a skill that borders on being a gift. Encourage your children to learn to type. Have them practice combinations of the "Home" keys on blank paper. Ten minutes of practice, three evenings a week, would give them the self-confidence that they need to master this skill.

PRIMARY students are almost finished with the creation of a book about "friendship" using the creative software program, *Kids-WorksDeluxe*. This project has allowed them to practice various skills, including the learning of tools, spelling, key placement, computer drawing, and printing.

Lastly, Thank You to The Rosenfeld Family (daughter Sophia) for their kind and generous donation to the computer room in honor of Mr. Critchfield, Ms. Hunt, Ms. Krakowski, and me.

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

Mrs. Bianco is available at 412-648-8459 or bbianco@pitt.edu.

Best Wishes to all of you!

—Barbara Bianco

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!

The next submission deadline is **February 15**.

Middle School Apparel Sale

The new Falk Middle School apparel sale is on! You will love the new items. See the display in the hallway outside of the front office. The quality of every item is first class. All items have either "Falk" or "Falk School" on them. Extra order forms will be available underneath the display, or you may use the form below. Remember, you can purchase anything throughout the year, as long as we have it in stock.

Apparel Sale Order Form

✂

JEANNIE TEE \$15 <i>Young adult/Adult sizes</i> • small • medium • large	FERRELL HOOD (SWEATSHIRT) \$28 <i>Young adult/Adult sizes</i> • small • medium • large
ADULT TEE \$13 <i>Includes year Falk began (1931)</i> <i>Available in two colors (poppy and denim)</i> poppy • small • medium • large denim • small • medium • large	LANYARD W/ DETACHABLE KEYCHAIN \$5.50 •
YOUTH FULL ZIP FLEECE JACKET \$30 • small • medium • large	SPORT BAG \$30 •
	ELLIOTTEE YOUTH LONG SLEEVE \$15 • small • medium • large • small/adult

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Number of Items Ordered _____ **Total Amount of Order** _____

Parent's Name _____ **Phone** _____

Child's Name _____ **Homeroom** _____

Submit your order form with cash or check made out to "**Falk Middle School Fund**" and return to the main office in an envelope marked "Apparel Sale." Orders will be filled on a first come, first served basis. Sizes and quantities of all items are limited, so place your orders quickly to ensure that you get the items you want.

We still have a few items left from last years apparel sale at an awesome discount. See you soon!

If you have any questions, contact Sheila E. Talley-Armstead at 412-624-8021. Thank you for your continued support of the Middle School.

✂

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FALKTalk

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 throughout the school year according to a schedule. Parents are encouraged to read the books aloud with their children. Many of the books are available at the public library. Falk School Library has most of the main books

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

FEBRUARY

Main Books for Respect:

Crow Boy, T. Yashima
The Wall, E. Bunting
The Great Kapok Tree, L. Cherry
Last Look from the Mountain, C. Marron
Miss Rumphlus, B. Cooney
How My Parents Learned to Eat, I. Freidman

FEBRUARY

Supplementary Books for Respect:

Dragonfly's Tale, K. Rodanas
Africa Dream, E. Greenfield
The Blind Man and the Elephant, L. Quigley
Brother Eagle, Sister Sky, Chief Seattle
I Have a Sister-My Sister Is Deaf, J.W. Peterson
Island Boy, B. Cooney
The Legend of the Whale, I. Stansfield
Masai and I, V. Kroll
The Village of Round and Square Houses, A. Grifalconi
Who Owns the Sun?, S. Chbosky