

FalkTalk

Volume 13, Issue 2
November, 2002



From the Director

By the time you read this column, the Kickoff Dinner for the Strategic Plan Implementation Committees will be history. Their efforts will begin on October 30, and they will continue during the year. We hope to have achieved all Tier 1 objectives before June so that we are able to connect the work of each committee during the summer.

At the same time, Falk faculty will be working on the articulation of the philosophy that will be the foundation for all committee decisions. This process is well underway and should be completed in the near future. The following statements are some of the tenets of this articulation.

The children who graduate from Falk School will:

- 1 have achieved academically to the best of their ability;
- 2 look at things in a way that acknowledges the work of others past and present;
- 3 develop a growing and deepening interest in an area that arises out of their own life;
- 4 have an understanding of nutrition and diet that will enable them to make healthy decisions;
- 5 engage in activities that will make them more physically fit;
- 6 have developed an intellectual interest of their own choosing;
- 7 understand the validity of their feelings while realizing the responsibility of their actions;
- 8 exhibit initiative toward their own learning;
- 9 have developed organizational habits;
- 10 have formed healthy social habits;

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From the PTA President

The brilliant colors of the fall foliage are a beautiful sign that a change of climate is upon us. Likewise, the vibrant activities currently in full bloom at Falk signal the annual events we all enjoy so much. Our Sally Foster wrapping paper has been delivered, and despite a small decrease in participation this year, those who know the importance of supporting one of our most profitable fundraisers are also enjoying the value of the product they have received. Keep in mind, you may still purchase wrapping paper until December through Lori McDermott, (412) 247-0397, who does a fantastic job on this fundraiser as well as so many other efforts for Falk. Thanks to Deborah Laurie and a host of other volunteers who helped distribute the orders!

Our Multicultural Picnic held Sunday October 6, 2002, was a huge success, thanks to Jane Dirks and Phyllis Scherrer, and their supportive families. The new location in Forest Hills park was a perfect spot for our children to play in, while parents mingled and enjoyed getting to know each other better. There were lovely decorations and music, and so many delicious ethnic dishes that everyone was frequently seen in line for treats. Keep those recipes handy as there is a fundraising project in the works that we would love to include your tasty dishes in. (You will be receiving information on that in November.)

We had a wonderful turn out for our first PTA General Membership meeting on October 10, 2002. PTA Vice President Pam Greenhouse put together a very informative program for us, beginning with the MAT introductions that gave us a bit of insight on our intern teachers. I look forward to this event each year, as I gain an even more secure feeling about the people that are with my children every-day, and as always, they are fascinating and diverse individuals, with so much to bring to our students. In the second portion of the meeting, Dr. McDonald provided an overview on the progress of the Falk School Vision Committee, with a presentation on the "Blueprint for the Future". Dr. Mac's program was not only informative, but the question and answer period that followed was invaluable to those who had pressing questions, suggestions, and comments.

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Calendar of Events

November 6-7	Talent Show
November 10	Family Portrait Day
November 25-27	Holiday Gift Shop
November 28-29	Thanksgiving Holidays No School

From the Director (continued)

- 11 honor the value of work, that one works for self and community;
- 12 be aware of the events of the world around them while discerning the sources of information that report these events;
- 13 have developed an aesthetic understanding of the world around them;
- 14 exhibit developmentally appropriate skill in the use of all educational tools; and

15 see how quiet and relaxation affects the quality of an experience.

The above is a partial draft which has been thoroughly discussed at faculty meetings. I am interested in hearing your feedback. Feel free to contact me at the school.

— William McDonald

From the PTA President (continued)

“Two kinds of people on earth can be seen: The people that lift and the people that lean.”

Ella Wheeler-Wilcox

Our middle school parents attended another annual event — the informative and thought provoking High School night, where our middle school teacher team leader, Mr. Gregg Wittig, invites the many high schools that our children attend after graduating from eighth grade, to present their programs. Despite my sadness that the days my eighth grader has left to enjoy Falk are growing short, the effort put into providing this evening for our parents by our middle school, heightened my appreciation for my children’s opportunity to attend Falk school.

By now you’ve received the colorful directory. As a new team this year, Jeanette Trauth and Tina Mattis did a wonderful job, and we will all enjoy using such a beautiful publication. Some of our upcoming school events include our annual October 31st Halloween party, and parent conferences for our primary and intermediate students on November 4th and 5th. Betsy Levine-Brown and Nancy Glynn have organized a great new event for Falk — Family Portrait Day! This fundraiser is such a special addition to the many activities we have at Falk, because it offers us a family remembrance, while supporting the school’s efforts to build new playground facilities. One of our most important fundraisers, the Holiday Gift Shop will be held Monday November 25th through Wednesday November 27, 2002. As usual Kim Lincoln has collected an array of wonderful gifts for students and parents to purchase for holiday gift giving. Please support this effort provided by the PTA for your children to get surprise gifts for their family and friends!

Of course, the fall season at Falk would not be complete without our annual Talent Show, held this year on November 6th, 10:00 am - 2:30 pm and the evening of November 7th at 7 pm, both at Falk School. As the coordinator of this event, I have a special appreciation of what this activity provides for

Falk. We are always amazed at what our students, parents, and staff design for their acts, and the many unique ads that parents put in the Talent Show program. The nervousness and jitters before the performances is quickly replaced by a heightened sense of accomplishment and self esteem when the children take their bows. For our daytime show this year, we are going to have the whole school together to enjoy the show simultaneously. You have received several mailings about location changes, and I apologize for the confusion. However, this situation has provided us with a wonderful example of parent involvement in our school. One of our parents, Rhonda Wasserman, was able to set up a day for us to hold our show in the moot court at the University of Pittsburgh’s School of Law, graciously offered by their Dean, David Herring, and coordinator Susan McGregor.

Unfortunately, some other details could not be ironed out in time for this year’s show, and we regrettably had to cancel the offer, but we are excited about the prospects of holding the show in our spacious gymnasium. Ms. Wasserman’s efforts brought to mind a quote by Ella Wheeler-Wilcox, “Two kinds of people on earth can be seen: The people that lift and the people that lean.” That uplifting and helpful spirit that so many Falk parents possess is what truly makes our school strong. Thank you to all of you who support the Talent Show, which funds the Sunstein Scholarship, but most importantly supports the unique talents of the Falk community.

Please join us for the shows and cheer our performers on!!!

— Charlene Barnett

From the PTA Vice President

We had a tremendous turn-out for our first General PTA meeting of the year, held October 10th — over 60 parents packed the cafetorium! Hearing from the interns (MATs) was a highlight, as it always is. They are a truly remarkable group, and it's a lot of fun hearing about their backgrounds, interests, and work with our children. Then, Dr. McDonald presented the current status of the work of the Vision Committee — a task force that has been working for over a year putting together a plan to take Falk School into the future. This is such an important initiative and is gaining momentum — with a kick-off banquet planned later this month for those who have volunteered to serve on one of the spin-off committees. If you're interested in becoming involved (there is a lot of hard work ahead!), please let us know. You will no doubt be hearing more about the Vision Committee Plan in the months ahead.

The second General PTA meeting (SAVE THE DATE - February 13, 2003 - 7:30pm) is going to be equally compelling. For the first time, the PTA will bring in a paid speaker for the meeting, given the importance of the topic. We will welcome psychologist Lori Gephart, M.A.. Ms. Gephart has over 17 years of experience in private practice & many years of experience conducting programs throughout the area for teachers, students, and parents on the topic of respect. She will provide a 90-minute program for us (parents) on identifying how to respond to disrespectful behaviors; exploring ways to help children cope with bullying or disrespect, identifying ways of helping children learn to be assertive, not aggressive, and examining ways to avoid violence. There will be time for questions and answers. We are working on some exciting plans to weave this topic into the classroom curriculum, school-wide. More on this in a later piece — stay tuned!

— Pam Greenhouse

Falk School Apparel

In about 4 weeks or less, the new Falk apparel will be arriving! Stop in the main office now to get great bargains on the items we still have from last year.

Our new apparel this year will be:

- 1 A two tone, gray and navy, full zipped and zipped pocket fleece vest
- 2 A newly designed hooded sweat shirt
- 3 A hooded sweat shirt for primary levels or small Intermediates
- 4 Navy sweat pants for men and women (will look great with past years' apparel you have or with this year's hooded sweat shirt)
- 5 Umbrellas are back
- 6 For basketball and cross country fans, there will be basketball and cross country tees.

There are some other items we will be expecting to get later, so keep your eyes on the look out for those order forms. They will be sent out as soon as the apparel arrives AND remember you can make purchases on all apparel items or a gift certificate throughout the entire year!

Any questions, you may come into the main office or call Sheila E. Talley-Armstead at (412) 624-8021.

See ya soon!

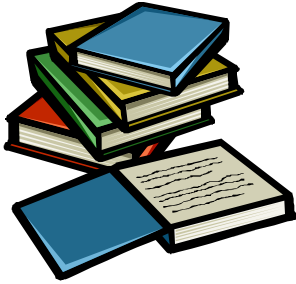
An upcoming announcement to watch for: "BINGO."

Falk Talent Show

The annual Falk Talent show will be held entirely at school, despite efforts to hold it off campus. We are excited about the opportunity for the student body to enjoy it all together. The talent show committee would like to thank all who have helped get this project rolling in a fresh new direction, and for financially supporting the Sunstein Scholarship through donations and program ads. The shows are Wednesday November 6, 2002 in the Falk School Gymnasium 10:00 am.- 2:30 pm. and Thursday November 7, 2002 beginning at 7:00 pm at Falk. Program ads are being accepted in the school office until Monday morning November 4, 2002. Donations are accepted at anytime, (please make checks out to Falk School PTA, with a notation — Sunstein Scholarship). Hope to see you there!

— Charlene Barnett





Birthdays/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).

Library Gifts

Thank you to the students and families who recently donated books to the library: **Colin S. Wilson, Uva Dayalan, Peter Lambrou, Deb Brandon, Agnes Zhu, Patrick Herward, Ms. L. Herward, Jakob Wells, Sue Schneider, Jeremy Malvin, Tilman Herbeck, Adam Somers, Joshua Somers, and Emma Tulsy.** More complete information concerning these gifts is published on the library web site, <http://tc.education.pitt.edu/library>.

Library Volunteers

The current volunteer schedule is show below. Thank you to all those who generously volunteered their time to help in the library. Those who volunteered after the places were filled are encouraged to help at the Library Book Fair.

Current Volunteers Schedule:

Tuesday	Room 112	Kalyani Vats – Lisette McCormick
Wednesday	Room 115	Martina Wells – Sharon Semenza
Thursday	Room 111	Barb Rubinstein – Laura Zaspel Lawson
Friday	Room 116	Jenny Grandis – Barb Rubinstein

Library Coordinators and Gift Book Program:

Bonnie Gorscak and Beatriz Kanterewicz

Special Projects:

Donna Taylor and Nancy Glynn

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, April 3-4, 7-8, 2003. 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, parent volunteers, 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 include a description of the project, list of print resources, and, when appropriate, links to Internet resources. Some recent projects include Mr. Kramer's U.S. History Book Reports, Ms. Bartolini's Spanish Speaking Countries, and Ms. Metcalf's Weather Around the World. Keep up with what's happening in the library by visiting the library web pages.

— Linda Herward

Fundraising Initiatives

Sally Foster

Many thanks to those volunteers who helped with the delivery and sorting of the Sally Foster orders and MOST ESPECIALLY to those of the Falk community who PARTICIPATED. Participation in this annual (and high quality) fundraiser was decidedly down this year with only 106 families participating versus 141 families from last year. Consequently, profits were also down.

This fundraiser generated \$5500 for our school this year and the PTA is grateful for those who bought and sold Sally Foster products. For those of you who perhaps forgot about ordering and would still like to do so (and help the PTA in inching toward a new playground) you can go online to www.sallyfoster.com and Falk school will still receive credit and 50% profit.

Remember, though, that Hannakah is early this year so do not delay for holiday paper.

—Lori McDermott

Ink Jet Cartridges

Throughout the year the PTA is asking for your help in collecting ink jet cartridges. This is a very lucrative fundraiser that requires ONLY THAT YOU SAVE OR COLLECT the cartridges. This notice is especially for those Falk parents who work in an area that uses a lot of computers and who do not already recycle them through work. There is a huge box in front of the Falk School office all the time ready to accept your cartridges and all you need to do is drop them in either in the morning before work (or ask your children to do so) or when you pick the children up in afterschool. It is that EASY.

Please make this effort. I know that some parents work in places where co-workers collect for their child's or grandchild's school but see if you can't convince them to help YOUR CHILD's school and start saving for Falk School instead. We really need everyone's help if we are ever to have a new playground.

—Nancy DelPresto

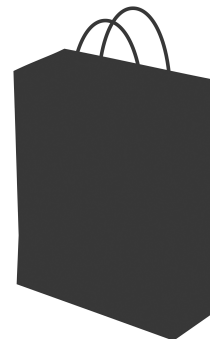
Family Portraits

Remember, Falk school family portrait day is Sunday, November 10th! Bring the family and have a wonderful photo taken. Help raise money for Falk's new playground. Please call i, Simon Photography at 412-421-4414 to schedule a sitting time. Questions? Call Betsy Levine-Brown at 412-521-9324 or Nancy Glynn at 412-825-6545. Family photos make great holiday cards and gifts!

— Betsy Levine-Brown

Holiday Gift Shop

The Holiday Gift Shop will be held Monday, November 25th through Wednesday November 27, 2002. As usual, there will be an array of wonderful gifts for students and parents to purchase for holiday gift giving. Please support this effort provided by the PTA for your children to get surprise gifts for their family and friends!



FYI

The TeleFalk, the year end yearbook/literary mag that is produced by the middle school and Mr. Wittig and has been underwritten by the PTA for years and years, will change its funding source. In order to save all PTA monies for the playground, the TeleFalk will now be sold to all those wish to order one. Forms will be sent home that require pre-ordering and pre-payment.

Although it has historically been the Falk School way to wait until the last minute before ordering, signing up, contributing, this can not work at the last minute. Change is hard and never smooth but this FYI will help at least give you a heads up. Look for the preorder form soon and do not toss it or stack it away or June may find some unhappy TeleFalk-less children.

—Nancy DelPresto

Music Notes

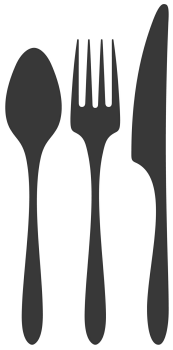
November 1st was a “Musical day to remember” at Falk. 29 members of our Intermediate Chorus performed at the opening meeting of the University Council of Educational Administration’s International Conference at the Hilton Towers in Pittsburgh. That afternoon, our Intermediate and Middle School students were treated to a Jazz concert featuring Bassist Bob Magnussen. Mr. Magnussen was on

campus performing for the annual Pitt Jazz Symposium. Falk is fortunate to have the top names in jazz performing on our stage for our students each year.

On November 22, some of our Falk family will travel to the Katz Business School where we will perform for their annual Thanksgiving luncheon.

— Lee Ann Conover

Attention all Cooks!



The Falk School PTA has sponsored a multicultural picnic the past three years. The music and games at these picnics have been great but even greater, has been the variety and outstanding quality of the food brought to the picnic. Remember the chicken and corn casserole, the pot stickers, roasted vegetables, and three-milk cake - yum! With this in mind, the Excellence in Teaching committee would like to compile a cookbook which will celebrate the diversity of our Falk family.

A flyer asking for your favorite recipes will be sent to you soon. Please do your part as a member of the Falk community and submit your recipes. The results will be a fabulous collection of recipes that we can all share and potentially, a major fundraiser for our school.

Ready, set, doff your toques and let’s get cooking!

— Lynn Billington

Technology Committee

The committee has grown from a single member to over a dozen since last year. Our initial effort will be aimed at three principal areas. Email, Falk Web Site, and support for the Administrative Office. Many of us have expressed the need for improved communication in the Falk Community. Developing our capability for email distributions of information, announcements, forms, etc. is a very tangible solution for much of that need. The Falk Website holds great potential and flexibility to provide fingertips access to various aspect of the Falk community. The faculty obtained new computers over the summer and the administrative staff is expecting new computers very soon. Steps are being taken to provide the office staff with the technical support to help them take full advantage of the new equipment. For questions concerning the technology committee or to join the effort contact Michael Barnett at: bmajor@earthlink.net.

— Michael Barnett

Falk Laboratory School
University of Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh, PA 15261

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FalkTalk

Editors:

Rob Kass

kass@stat.cmu.edu

412-268-8723

Sharon Berk

sharon@tatertot.ws

412-363-3798