

# FalkTalk



*Forty-eight students identified their homes as places where a language other than English was commonly spoken.*

Volume 17, Issue 6  
 May 2007

### Inside this Issue:

Building Expansion/ Renovation Update. . . . .	3
PTA Meeting/ 2007-08 Officers. . . . .	3
75th Anniversary Weekend Events. . . . .	4
Alumni Coffee. . . . .	4
Kennywood Day. . . . .	4
Excellence in Teaching. . . . .	4
From the School Nurse. . . . .	5
From the Food Committee. . . . .	5
Spanish. . . . .	5
Intermediate News. . . . .	6
From the Computer Room. . . . .	7
Music Notes. . . . .	8
Library News. . . . .	9
Playbook Ads for "The Wiz". . . . .	10
Heartwood Books for May. . . . .	11
Eighth Grade Fundraising for Cedar Point. . . . .	12

### From the Director

*Dear Falk School Family Members,*

This will again be one of my now famous "three-part" messages. I want to talk with you about my discovery of the international flavor of our student population, a mention regarding the school calendars, and some exciting news regarding Mary Hamilton.

Earlier this term, we were approached by a doctoral student who wanted to collect information on our English Language Learner (ELL) population as part of her dissertation study. She is working with several of our MAT Interns to establish the effectiveness of various approaches to teaching students who are classified as ELL. Even as an educator, ELL is one of those terms that I often hear, but never fully understand. For purposes of this study, we asked students to self-identify those homes in which a language other than English is spoken. If the student learned

*continued on page 2*

### From the PTA President

As I'm writing this column on a rainy, soon to be snowy Sunday afternoon in April, I'm determined to think spring and look ahead at the promising schedule of events just around the corner. We're certainly in the last stretch of the school year and Falk has been and continues to be buzzing with activities.

The EIT fundraiser at Romp 'n Roll in March was very well attended and a great success. Parents and children alike enjoyed being in the rink, skating and chatting together. Of course, the alluring gift baskets were quite an attraction, and many students crowded around their favorite basket in the hopes of 'winning' it. Some were tempted into a bidding war for the most desirable one. At the end of the day, Annette Chiang, Sharon Semenza and Charlene Barnett were pleased to tally up the numbers and deposit the checks into the EIT account. If you were unable to come and support this important scholarship fund, rest assured that it's never too late to add to that

number. Thank you to the organizers, Annette, Sharon and Charlene for a job well done.

Just after our return from spring break, PTA Vice President Karen Goldman hosted the very informative second general PTA meeting. Many parents and teachers made it to Falk defying horrific traffic in and around Oakland. Dr. McConnaha gave a detailed update on the plans for the new addition and renovation and competently answered the numerous questions following the presentation. Having witnessed the various stages of planning over the past months, I've come to understand the complexity and difficulty of the project. It's a long road to reaching the point of construction, a dynamic process, but the prospect of a beautiful new and newly renovated facility for our children is well worth the wait. I feel particularly confident in Dr. McConnaha's leadership and experience in guiding us through these years of

*continued on page 2*

### Calendar of Events

May 8	Middle School Chorus, 7pm; PTA Meeting, 8pm	May 21-24	Middle School Musical - The Wiz
May 17	Falk Band Concert, 7pm	May 28	No School; Memorial Day Holiday
May 18	Middle School Dance	June 6-7	8th Grade at Cedar Point
May 19	Alumni Coffee, 11am; Falk 75th Ann. Dinner, 6:30pm	June 8	Graduation Dinner & Dance
May 20	Falk School Carnival, 12-4pm	June 13	Falk School Graduation, 8pm
		June 13	Last day of Classes
		June 14	Kennywood Day

## From the Director (continued)

English prior to, or at the same time as she/he learned the other language, they are considered bi-lingual. If the student first learned a language other than English, he/she is considered ELL.

We had no sooner started collecting these data when our local Service Unit asked for the same information. Their reason for wanting these students identified is based on special consideration for standardized testing. If a student is identified as ELL, they are first given the standardized test (in our case the TerraNova) without any accommodations. The second time they would take the test with an "extended time" option. The two scores would be compared. If there were to be a significant difference when provided the extended time option, this student would be given that option for future standardized testing situations through his/her high school program. If the difference is not significant, the student would go back to the standard timing for future tests.

Now here are my discoveries. First, forty-eight students identified their homes as places where a language other than English was commonly spoken. This represents nearly 20% of our population. Second, the following languages were listed: Italian, Spanish, Korean, French, Mandarin, German, Russian, Cantonese, Hungarian, Tswana, Hindi, Greek, Turkish, and Portuguese. I know we probably missed some homes, and we probably identified some homes where "spoken" could be interpreted as generous. However, I find it really cool that we have yet another description of the diversity present in Falk.

Again, I am out of space and have the next two things still to discuss. Here they are quickly. Several of you have asked about purchasing additional Falk Anniversary Calendars for friends and family members. The PTA has collected the extras (maybe 100) and will be selling them in the office for \$5 each. This is slightly over cost and the difference will go into the Anniversary/Building Fund.

Finally, many of you are the proud owners of "The Falk School" print created especially for us by Mary Hamilton. Based on a request by the PTA, Ms. Hamilton has created a new design commemorating the seventy-fifth anniversary. We took delivery of the limited (140) edition print last week. Dr. Armstrong is working with the PTA to establish the prices (unframed, matted, or matted and framed) and will be taking orders soon. Meanwhile, the print is on display outside my office.

– Wendell McConaha,  
Director

## From the PTA President (continued)

change. Please, mark you calendars for the next general PTA meeting and more on this topic: May 8th, after the Middle School Chorus concert.

Currently, much of our attention focuses around the 75th birthday weekend in May. The activities will begin on Friday, May 18th with a tour of our school for alums and the traditional middle school dance in the evening. Saturday night, we hope to see you at the festive party at the Concordia Club. The goal is to enjoy the company of the Falk community and to have a good time celebrating our school. The evening will include the unveiling and auctioning off of the first print of artist Mary Hamilton's rendition of Falk. Sunday morning we'll be serving bagels and coffee for a 'homecoming' visit of our alumni, followed by the Carnival activities. We're extending an invitation to attend the fun carnival to all our former

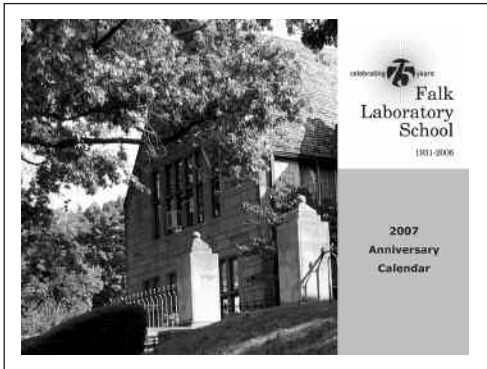
and current Falk students and their families – the more the merrier, we'd like to think.

Not too long after this birthday bash, we'll be getting together again at Kennywood, this year held the day after the last day of school. The PTA will again sponsor the very popular and delicious ice cream sundae bar at the Logjammer Pavilion. More information will follow soon.

Also, if you'd like another copy of the fabulous Falk memorial calendar of 2007, you can purchase additional ones for \$5 each.

Please, feel free to contact me with your questions and ideas. See you soon,

– Martina Wells  
martinawells@verizon.net



*Several of you have asked about purchasing additional Falk Anniversary Calendars for friends and family members. The PTA has collected the extras (maybe 100) and will be selling them in the office for \$5 each.*

*We're extending an invitation to attend the fun carnival to all our former and current Falk students and their families – the more the merrier, we'd like to think.*

## Building Expansion/Renovation Update

This represents the second installment regarding the progress on the expansion and renovation of Falk School. Since my last writing, a number of events have transpired. The architects from Perkins Eastman have been joined by construction supervisors from the P.J. Dick Corporation. Project cost estimates from each of these two companies were initially miles apart and the last few weeks have been taken up with an attempt to reconcile the differences in their respective proposals. This has now been completed and the construction budget is now close to the original proposal.

The final "steering committee" comprised of teachers, parents, representatives of the University of Pittsburgh's Facility Planning, personnel from P.J. Dick, and architects from Perkins Eastman is scheduled for the first week in May. At that meeting, a final concept drawing and final cost estimate will be presented to the group. The schedule is still calling for a ground breaking on the new addition to correspond with our Spring Carnival in May.

More details regarding the groundbreaking have also been resolved. The ceremony will take place at 1:00PM on Sunday, May 20th. Participants will include Vice-Provost Pack, Dean Lesgold, the three previous Falk School Directors, personnel from P.J. Dick and from Perkins Eastman, and student representatives from each of the three grade levels. Members of the public are cordially invited to the ceremony.

We are also looking at the option of moving off site during the construction phase. If we were able to move out during the building/renovation, it is estimated that the project could be reduced from 24 months to 14 months. Not only would this represent a savings in dollars, it would also address the safety concerns raised at past meetings. To that end, contact has been made with the Pittsburgh Public Schools, the Pittsburgh Catholic Diocese and area charter schools. Two PPS buildings (Madison and Miller) have been visited. We are waiting for a formal proposal regarding leasing arrangements. The Catholic School option has proven to be a non-starter. The only buildings that will be available during the next school year are in Carnegie and Duquesne. However, the charter school company that has purchased the Regents Square School has indicated an interest in leasing the facility while their charter appeal is being processed. Our next step is to have a group of parents and teachers visit the school to see if it will accommodate our needs.

This will continue to be a long and involved process that will be both rewarding and trying. I continue to value your ongoing support and will keep you apprised as we move through the schedule.

– Wendell McConaha, Director



*We are also looking at the option of moving off site during the construction phase. If we were able to move out during the building/renovation, it is estimated that the project could be reduced from 24 months to 14 months.*

## Final PTA Meeting

The final PTA meeting of the school year will be held on Tuesday May 8th, immediately following the Middle School Chorus Performance (about 8:00) in the Cafetorium. Childcare will be provided for Falk Students

Dr. McConaha will give an update on construction plans and we are hoping to have a representative from the architectural firm and/or the contractors there to answer your questions. The slate of officers for the 2007-08 PTA will also be introduced and you will have the opportunity to vote.

– Karen Goldman

## 2007-08 PTA Officers

- Karen Goldman - President
- Betsy Levine-Brown - Vice President
- Andy Pugh - Treasurer
- Kristen Tsapis - Secretary



PTA Meeting  
**TUESDAY**  
**MAY 8**  
8PM



Falk Carnival  
**SUNDAY**  
**MAY 20**  
 Noon-4pm

## Falk 75th Anniversary Weekend Events

### FRIDAY, MAY 18TH

- **Early dismissal**
- **Alumni tours** of the building  
2:00PM - 5:00PM

### SATURDAY, MAY 19TH

- **Dinner and Dancing**  
Concordia Club  
4024 O'Hara Street  
6:30PM, \$75 per ticket

### SUNDAY, MAY 20TH

- **Alumni Coffee** at Falk School  
11:00AM - 12:00PM
- **School Carnival** at Falk School  
12:00PM - 4:00PM
- **Ground Breaking** for new building  
addition  
Dr. McDonald Playground  
1:00PM - 1:30PM.
- **Free parking** at the OC Lot with  
free shuttle service between the  
Lot and Falk  
10:30AM - 5:00PM

## Excellence in Teaching

### Many Thanks from Excellence in Teaching!

Thank you to all of you who joined us for the annual Roy J. CreeK Excellence in Teaching roller skating event, held on March 24th at Romp N' Roll Rink. As usual, everyone had a great time, skating, visiting, and bidding on the auction items. This year the event raised over \$3000 for the Scholarship. The committee wishes to thank Annette Chiang, Sharon Semenza, Karen Goldman, Sheila Talley-Armstead, Tina Mattis, Kelly DeGroot, and of course, Dr. Wendell McConnaha, for their hard work and support. Thank you to all the classrooms and families that provided auction items for the fund.

Next year promises to be even bigger and better!

– Charlene Barnett  
 EIT Trustee

*This year the event  
 raised over \$3000 for  
 the Scholarship.*

## Alumni Coffee

### LOOKING FOR ALUMNI

Are you a Falk School Alumna/us or do you know any? Please let them know about ...

**FALK SCHOOL ALUMNI COFFEE**  
**SUNDAY, MAY 20, 11AM**  
**FALK CAFETERIA**

Following brief comments by Dr. McConnaha, and a tour of the school (as it has been for 75 years), all alumni and their families are invited to enjoy the Annual Carnival.

If you have any leads on alumni or wish to help, please call the Alumni Coffee Committee:

Cheryl Kubelick, 412 441-3943, or Maureen McClelland, 412-371-3894. You may also e-mail [cheryl\\_kubelick@yahoo.com](mailto:cheryl_kubelick@yahoo.com)

Looking forward to hearing from you!

– Cheryl Kubelick

## Falk School Kennywood Picnic Day

### KENNYWOOD PICNIC DAY

**\*\*THURSDAY, JUNE 14, 2007\*\***

(Please note the change in scheduling  
 this year- this is the day AFTER school ends.)

This is an early invitation to join Falk families and friends throughout the day in our "usual" spot at Pavilion #23 across from the Log Jammer, and to enjoy the all-you-can-eat ice cream sundae bar from 4 to 6 pm.

Discounted tickets will be available to order within the next several weeks – flyers with detailed information will be sent home with your children, as well as sent via email, in mid-May.

Feel free to contact Laura Zaspel Lawson, 412.661.4856 or [ljayne@verizon.net](mailto:ljayne@verizon.net) with any questions.

– Laura Zaspel Lawson



## From the Food Committee

"Before going (to serve fruit) I thought, 'How will I stand there for an hour and 45 minutes. Time will pass so slowly.' But once I got there, time flew! An added benefit is that it gave me a chance to see my son in his school environment." (Parent quote.)

The lunchtime, fresh fruit program continues to grow. We had daily coverage by parent volunteers in both March and April – Thank You! The children are eager to eat the freshly cut fruit and parents are enjoying the opportunity to spend the time with the students. I receive regular feedback from parents saying how much fun they had.

The children have also enjoyed the international and ethnic food days that have been added to the monthly menus, including the smoothies served by "a real Hawaiian" that one student believed was sent to ensure the authenticity of the Hawaiian pizza. Sushi Day was a huge success, with primary through middle schoolers taking advantage of the sushi option. Be on the lookout for Greek Day, Salad Day, Italian Day, and more in May and June.

In April we tried introducing grilled cheese on whole wheat bread, which disappointed a number of students. Brown rice served on Asian Day, however, was well received. The Food Committee contacted Turner Dairy Farms Inc., Falk's provider of snack and lunchtime milk, and learned that 100% of Turner Dairy's milk will be recombinant Bovine Growth Hormone-free as of May 1. We will continue to introduce more healthy choices to the menu.

To volunteer for serve fruit in May or June, please e-mail or call: Kristen Tsapis at [tsapis@cs.pitt.edu](mailto:tsapis@cs.pitt.edu) or 412/661-8389

If you have any questions please contact anyone on the Falk Food Committee: Lori Wertz (Chair), Lindsay O'Sullivan, David Ross, Laura Hunt, Megan O'Brien, Graham Evans, Bertie Pozviak, Joyce O'Dell, Wendell McConnaha, Kim Cuddy Crawford, or Kristen Tsapis.

– Kristen Tsapis



*Be on the lookout for Greek Day, Salad Day, Italian Day, and more in May and June.*

## From the School Nurse

You may know that April 23-29, 2007, was designated as "Turn Off Your TV Week." This is a great precursor to May, which is "National Physical Fitness and Sports Month."

Check out the list of "101 Things to do Instead of Watching TV," hanging in the Health Room. In addition, the Dairy Council Mid East offers the following "10 Tips to Get Kids Moving!"

- Enroll children in sports. Participation can boost self-esteem and keep them active.
- Save video games and board games for rainy days. Encourage children to play outdoors.
- Make it the child's responsibility to walk the dog so they both get exercise.
- Make exercise a family thing. Go for walks or bike rides together or learn new activities together.
- Have children help with chores such as raking leaves, stacking firewood or washing the car.
- Enroll children in tap, ballet or jazz classes. Dancing can improve balance, coordination, flexibility and stamina.
- Hang up a basketball hoop or keep a net set-up in the yard for volleyball or badminton.
- Ride bikes or walk to places within a mile or two, such as a friend's house, the store or the library.
- Schedule family trips that involve activity, such as trips to the beach for swimming or to a state park for hiking.
- Be a role model and be physically active.

– Susan Sholtis RN,  
School Nurse

## Spanish

The students are having a lot of fun in Spanish this semester. As we continue to study the Mexican market in the primary classes, students have become quite the chefs. We have made guacamole and Mexican hot chocolate, as well as "silver" bracelets. Students also tasted papaya and mango and surveyed their classmates to find out which was preferred. The students have all done so well this year. They are quickly becoming experts on the market and have learned so much new vocabulary.

We have also been hard at work at the intermediate level. Since the last Falk Talk, students traveled from Lima to Cuzco to Machu Picchu, and will soon travel to Iquitos. We have recently been studying the Inca. Students learned how to read a quipu and made their own. They also learned an Incan legend. Soon students will make their own arpilleras to present to the class and describe in writing.

– Kristen Davin



*Make exercise a family thing. Go for walks or bike rides together or learn new activities together.*

*The students have all done so well this year. They are quickly becoming experts on the market and have learned so much new vocabulary.*

### Latin Dance Fiesta

Rooms 224 and 225 went to the Soldiers and Sailors memorial on Thursday, March 29 from 9:15 to 12:30. We went to watch Latin dancing and to listen to Latin music as a celebration on a successful Falk School/Heartwood CD. We would love to thank Dr. Vollmer and Dr. Conover for giving us the chance to see this great performance.

-Zachary Ettensohn and Joshua Somers

### 224 and 225 Art Classes

In art class, 224 and 225 are making statues, or models, of made-up animals. We have art class on Monday or Thursday, depending on which class we are in. Dr. Armstrong has been teaching us new names and methods. We have art in the basement of the school. 224 and 225 have already finished clay pictures and drawings of the made-up animals. We have art because it allows us to use creativity as well as new methods.

-Anna Swarts

### 224 Social Studies

224 just finished learning about Pennsylvania government. We split up into a few groups: the Senate, Committee and House of Representatives. The Senate was made up of the veterans, or the people who have spent 2 years in Ms. Ridge's room, and 2 committee members. They were responsible for writing the laws. The House of Representatives also had 2 committee members. First, each of the groups wrote a bill proposing new ideas for our classes. Then, they send it the other side. If they pass it, both of them get together and compromise on a bill. If it passes, it is proposed to the Governor, (Ms. Ridge). The bill we are proposing is to have classes outside. This class takes place before lunch, at 12:00, and takes place for 45 minutes. We are doing this to study Pennsylvania government.

-Bani Randhawa

### 224 and 225 Math

In Ms. Metcalf's math group we are learning about proportions, percents, and ratios. Ms. Metcalf's math is always in room 225. Usually our math begins at 9:00 am. Math is fun for many reasons, after a test we might have a game day and sometimes before a weekend we might not have any homework at all.

-Liam O'Donnell

### 224 and 225 Language Arts

The 224 and 225 classrooms learned about hink-pinks, hinky-pinkies, and hinkety-pinketies. Hink-pinks are one syllable rhyming words, Hinky-Pinkies are two syllable rhyming words, and Hinkety-Pinketies are three syllable rhyming words.

We are going to make riddles with answers of hink-pinks, hinky-pinkies, and hinkety-pinketies. An example of a riddle is: What do you call a silly rabbit? And the answer is: a funny bunny! We work on our riddles at the end of the day in room 224. We make the riddles have more fun with words and to practice with rhyming.

-Olivia Perfetti

### 221 and 222 Native American Unit

222 and 221 are doing a Native American unit in Social Studies. We are split in to groups in the classroom. We are doing it so we can learn more about the Native Americans and to be able to share our information with others. In our final project, we will share different facts and artifacts from each Native American tribe. We will be creating museum exhibits in the intermediate hallway.

Some of the things that we researched were houses, clothing and games for each tribe. Did you know that the Seminole tribes lived in houses called chickees they were made of leaves and had no sides and that the Navajos lived in houses called hogans made of wood and mud? Be sure to visit our wonderful exhibits to learn more!

-Eija Kent and Emily Nace

### 222 Physical Education

Our P.E. teacher is Ms. Hunt. Right now we are playing 20-20 and the point is to capture all of the balls. We play in the gym on Mondays and Thursdays at 10:45am. I think that Ms. Hunt teaches this game so that we can learn teamwork, have fun and get some exercise.

-Sam Falk

### Harris Burdick Stories

221 and 222 are doing Harris Burdick stories. We write our stories in classrooms 221 and 222 at SSR (silent sustained reading) or SSW (silent sustained writing) times. Harris Burdick stories start with a picture and a caption that Harris Burdick did and each student takes a picture and a caption and makes a story from it. We have to use the caption in the story. We are doing this because it helps us be creative and to help us with story writing.

-Gabe Zuckerman and Jason Brar

*Harris Burdick stories start with a picture and a caption that Harris Burdick did and each student takes a picture and a caption and makes a story from it.*

## Intermediate News (continued)

### Desmond Tutu

For the past six weeks, rooms 221 and 222 have been studying Africa and African heroes in social studies. Desmond Tutu is an African hero because he helped people forgive each other after the Apartheid (a period where people were grouped and separated by race in South Africa) and promoted world peace. Room 221 wrote letters to Mr. Tutu and he replied with three beautiful, descriptive letters of his own and we have displayed these letters in the intermediate hallway. He told us that we need to share with those who do not have enough. I thought this was very exciting because somebody as helpful as Desmond Tutu took the time to write us three amazing letters.

-Juliet Supowitz

### Intermediate News

The Intermediate team will be going on a field trip to Meadowcroft Rock Shelter and Museum of Rural Life on May 2nd. Rooms 221 and 222 will be participating in the "First on the Land" program. This coincides with their Social Studies unit on American Indians. Rooms 224 and 225 will be participating in the "Village Life" program as an addition to what they learned about early settlers in Pennsylvania.



## From the Computer Room

Congratulations! With the conclusion of the 2006-07 Giant Eagle's Apple for the Students program, I am pleased to announce that through your efforts, Falk School earned 1086 points. As this is the only fundraiser that is directly used for the computer lab, I chose to purchase an Apple iMac computer for the lab. An apple computer will allow for more flexibility with the editing of videos and choice of application programs. Thank you for your effort in using Giant Eagle during this critical time period.

Current middle school students are busy writing, creating, directing, and editing Podcasts (videos played on MP3 players like the iPod). First period 6th graders have created, "A day in the life of Falk middle school students." In this very cute video, Aveeka Vats walks down the middle school hallway opening various doors as Alex Kent shoots the video. Behind each door is a different scenario that includes: students practicing tongue twisters, students learning about the different regions of the United States, and a science project gone wrong that ends in a digital explosion. Each student's script was joined together for this production. Students are memorizing lines, creating props, researching information about various states' climates and capital cities, downloading sounds and short clips, and learning how to edit the film. Everyone is involved and everyone has an opinion. The best lessons are often learned through mistakes. That's how we felt as the first version of this video moved at a rocky pace back and forth from person to person. We all felt our stomachs turn over. 2nd period, 7th and 8th grade students are also in the process of creating their own podcast. Juyhe Kim and others re-wrote most of this script based on the book, *Do Fish Drink Water?* By Bill McLain. His book poses, "Puzzling and Improbable Questions" such

as, "Is it true you can't teach an old dog new tricks?" and "Do fish drink water?" Directors are: Juyhe Kim, Rachel Weingart and Sadie Sweet. Julian Einhorn and Angela Perfetti share responsibility for shooting the digital camera, while Graham Evans, Colin Rutenbar, and Sophia Rosenfeld will edit the work. Ben Grace, Conor O'Donnell, Muguel Comach-Horvitz, and Allison Myer are willing actors. Let's hope they "break a leg."

As stated in last month's column, our Intermediate students are working with the on-line multi-media platform, Think.com. Their most recent project involved writing a story about waking up in the morning and finding nobody is home. What would you do? Students will peer edit each other's work on the internet and offer constructive feedback.

Primary students are learning how to safely search and save pictures of Pittsburgh. The project continues as students import these pictures into Kid Pix software for further editing. Students can draw or make comments directly on top of the pictures. Finally, an attractive and educational picture is printed to take home.

Lastly, Kindergarten is continuing to become familiar with the software, Kid Pix as they draw their own tic-tac-toe boards and draw the traditional line through three matching decorative stamps. In addition, they are exploring the five senses as they choose, group, and organize stamps within large ovals.

Educational and creative fun will see us through the last months of this school year!

As always, thank you for the privilege of working with your children.

You can contact me: [bbianco@pitt.edu](mailto:bbianco@pitt.edu) or 412-648-8459.

- Mrs. Barbara Bianco



*I chose to purchase an Apple iMac computer for the lab. An apple computer will allow for more flexibility with the editing of videos and choice of application programs.*

## Music Notes

### MAY PERFORMANCES

**Middle School Chorus and  
Falk String Ensemble**  
Tuesday, May 8, 7:00pm

**Band Concert**  
Thursday, May 17, 7:00pm

**Middle School  
Musical "The Wiz"**  
May 22, 23 and 24, 7:00pm

Many thanks to all the wonderful performers who have attended (and will be attending) a Falk Music class as part of our celebration of "Music in Our School". We have heard a wide variety of excellent performers and have been made aware of the importance of music in the lives of our families and friends.

The Falk Primary and Intermediate students had a special musical treat on March 13th. Falk parents Brenda Jordan (Erika Nara's mom) and Andrew Weintraub (Noah's dad), invited us to a concert given by the University of Pittsburgh Gamelan Ensemble—under the direction of Prof. Weintraub.

By the time you read this, the Intermediate Chorus will have presented their Spring Concert—"The Decades of Falk".

We hope you were able to attend it. You won't want to miss the remaining Spring concerts, so mark your calendars now.

— Lee Ann Conover



### 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 letter, Gift Form, and suggested Book List are available on the library web site at

<http://tc.education.pitt.edu/library>. If you would like to donate a book/s and do not have the necessary information please contact Ms. Herward (412-624-8010 or [herward@pitt.edu](mailto:herward@pitt.edu)). Look for the Library Table at the Spring Carnival. Letters and book lists will be sent to families with students who have birthdays in May, June, July, and August. If you have any questions contact please Ms. Herward.

THANK YOU to those who recently made donations to the library:

- **Zion Thomas**, *Traction Man is Here!* by Mini Grey in honor of his birthday January 12, 2007; *Bad Baby* by Ross MacDonald in honor of Ms L. Williams and Mr. S. Patrick; *Just in Case* by Judith Viorst in honor of Ms. L. Hunt and Mr. O. Furtado
- **Lucas Johnson**, *Larklight* by Philip Reeve in honor of The Humanities Teachers and *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak in honor of the Middle School Teachers, both on his birthday March 21, 2007
- **Madeline Schatten**, *Library Lion* by Michelle Knudsen in honor of her birthday February 14, 2007
- **Julia Roberson**, *5000 Miles to Freedom: Ellen & William Craft's Flight from Slavery* by Judith Boom Fradin and Dennis Brindell Fradin in honor of her birthday February 26, 2007
- **Franklin Duffy**, *Dooby, Dooby Moo* by Doreen Cronin & Betsy Lewin in honor of his birthday December 18, 2007
- **Gabriel Zuckerman**, *Three of Diamonds* by Anthony Horowitz in honor of his birthday May 27, 2007
- **Odelia Zuckerman**, *Chimpanzee* by Jinny Johnson in honor of her birthday February 24, 2007
- **Gabriel and Odelia Zuckerman**, *Pyramid* by Peter Crisp, March 2007
- **Sabina & Peter Rosenfeld**, *Yellow Star* by Jennifer Roy in honor of their daughter Sophia Rosenfeld's Bat Mitzvah, December 9, 2007
- **The Grandis Family**, a cash donation, April 2007 – books purchased will be announced at later date

### Building Project & The Library

Unfortunately, the library program will be affected by the upcoming building project. Some end of the year activities will need to be modified. The final date due for all library books will be earlier than usual – perhaps mid May. This is necessary to allow time to inventory and pack up the library collection. Students will be aware of the exact date once it is set. Letters and overdue book lists will be sent home in the mail. Please make every effort to return all library materials at that time.

### Library Book Fair

Thank you to all those who supported Library Book Fair. The new books should keep students, parents, and teachers busy reading for some time. The sales figures are not available but will be published at a later date. Last year the library made a profit of about \$1,900 and there is every reason to believe the proceeds will be similar this year. All profits are used to purchase books for the library.

Many families participate in the Classroom Wish List Program by purchasing books selected from the Book Fair by the teachers for their classrooms. Their generosity allows teachers to enrich their classroom book collections. Thank you to all who have supported the Book Fair in this way.

Donations to the One-for-Books program are used to purchase books for the library from the Book Fair. Scholastic matches the One-for-Books dollar amount with a book donation to non-profit programs devoted to improving literacy in children: Kids in Distressed Situations, National Center for Family Literacy and Toys for Tots. Thank you to all who supported this literacy program.

Undertakings such as the Book Fair cannot happen without the support and labor of many. As always, the Falk parents volunteered the needed help. Thank you to those who took time from their busy schedules to work at the Book Fair. Special thanks to Book Fair Chair Shelley Ross who worked with Ms. Herward on all aspects of running the Book Fair. Her efforts began in January by attending a Scholastic sponsored planning workshop and continued with recruiting and scheduling the volunteers, preparing the Teacher Wish List display, refining publicity flyers, making bank deposits, training volunteer cashiers, and many other activities to support the project.

### Spring Reading Initiative

The Spring Reading Initiative activities extend from April through May. Book Badges will be collected and counted up until May 31. A Read-In, a school wide SSR (sustained silent reading) will be held in the

*continued on page 10*



*The final date due for all library books will be earlier than usual – perhaps mid May. This is necessary to allow time to inventory and pack up the library collection.*

## Library News (continued)

gym at the end of May or early June. The entire Falk School community is invited to participate. Parents are encouraged to bring something to read and join in the fun. The Reading Chain is currently "snaking" its way around the library ceiling. The Chain will be moved to the gym for the Read-In. Thank you to all who have supported the library's reading activities.

As of April 20, one thousand ninety three (1,093) books have been read (or listened to) totaling 91,675 pages. Last year the total pages read at the end of May was 348,834. Watch the numbers get higher and paper Reading Chain grow. Remember everyone in the Falk community (parents, siblings included) is encouraged to participate by sending in Book Badges for books they have read or heard read aloud. Additional Book Badges are available in the K-5 homerooms, B13, the cafeteria, Ms. Priore's room and the library.

### Falk Carnival

Falk School Library will have a table at the carnival. Books will be on display for selection as Gift or Birthday Books for the library. These books will all become part of the library collection. If a book is chosen as a gift book, an appropriate bookplate will be placed in the book. The money donated will be used to purchase more books for the library.

Each year about 30% of the books added to collection are purchased with donated funds. Thanks to the generous support of Falk families, the library has a wide selection of new books. Even if you are not making a donation, stop by the Library table and look over the newest additions to the library collection.

### Thank You PTA

Special thanks to the PTA for their support of the library program. This year PTA funds made it possible for 8 "Back Jack" floor chairs to be purchased for the library. These "chairs" provide comfortable back support for floor seating. The Back Jack chairs will be used during read aloud sessions along with regular chairs. The remainder of the library PTA funds was used to purchase specially priced reference books from Thomson Gale.

— Linda Herward

## Support "The Wiz" with a Playbill Ad

Rehearsals have started, sets are being designed, voices are ringing out throughout the school...the excitement is building once again for the Falk Middle School spring musical! Dr. Conover, Ms. Gregory, and a team of dedicated faculty and parents, along with our talented and enthusiastic middle schoolers, are working tirelessly to bring The Wiz to the Falk Cafetorium stage on May 21st through 24th - it promises to be another memorable production!

In anticipation of the show, ad space can be purchased in the program to allow the Falk community to acknowledge the hard work, talent and dedication of all those who are involved in The Wiz this year. Along with recognizing the achievements of our children and their teachers, the purchase of ad space helps to defray some of the costs of the production, including scripts, costumes, sets and props.

Flyers with detailed information, including ad size templates and prices, came home recently with your children. Your hard copy ad(s), along with your donation, must be submitted to the main office NO LATER THAN WEDNESDAY, MAY 9th. You may also submit your ad in Microsoft Word format via email to Laura Zaspel Lawson at [ljayne@verizon.net](mailto:ljayne@verizon.net). Ads received after the 9th may not appear in the playbill.

Questions? Contact Laura Zaspel Lawson at 412.661.4856/ [ljayne@verizon.net](mailto:ljayne@verizon.net), or Barb Bianco at 412.648.8459/ [bbianco@pitt.edu](mailto:bbianco@pitt.edu).

Thank you for your support of the musical – this wonderful Falk experience continues to allow our children to live Glinda's words in The Wiz - "Believe in yourself, right from the start, believe in the magic that's inside your heart".

— Laura Zaspel Lawson



*Along with recognizing the achievements of our children and their teachers, the purchase of ad space helps to defray some of the costs of the production, including scripts, costumes, sets and props.*



*This year PTA funds made it possible for 8 "Back Jack" floor chairs to be purchased for the library. These "chairs" provide comfortable back support for floor seating.*

## Heartwood Curriculum Books

### Love is the attribute for May.

#### Main Books:

*The Rag Coat* by L. Mills  
*The Seeing Stick* by J. Yolen  
*Honey, I Love* by E. Greenfield  
*Magical Hands* by M. Barker  
*Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters* by J. Steptoe  
*Annie and the Old One* by M. Miles

#### Supplementary Books:

*Blackberries in the Dark* by M. Jukes  
*Grandma Didn't Wave Back* by R. Blue  
*The Hundred Penny Box* by S. B. Mathis  
*The Keeping Quilt* by P. Palocco  
*The Legend of Scarface* by R. San Souci  
*Love You Forever* R. Munsch  
*My Mother is the Most Beautiful Woman in the World* by R. Rehyer  
*Nana Upstairs and Nana Downstairs* by T. DePaola  
*Now One Foot, Now the Other* by T. DePaola  
*Sachiko Means Happiness* by K. Sakai  
*Saying Good-bye to Grandma* by R. R. Thomas  
*The Wednesday Surprise* by E. Bunting



Published by the Falk School PTA

# FalkTalk

Editors:

*Sharon Berk*

sharon@cake-creative.com

412-363-3798

*Rob Kass*

kass@stat.cmu.edu

412-268-8723



*Hire an  
8th Grader  
Today!*



## 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