



Published by the Falk School PTA

# FalkTalk

## From the Director

*Dear Falk School Families,*

A year ago, under the direction of Gary Pollock, the School of Education created an "Outstanding Alumni Award" for each of the various divisions within their program. Gary, who serves as Director of Development for the School of Education, included Falk School alums as one of the categories. The first awards were given last April and Henry Fisher (1950) received the initial award for Falk School. It is now time to secure nominations for this year's award.

The criteria for selection are very straight forward. Falk School and/or School of Education alumni, faculty, and staff may nominate an individual for the award. At various points in our history, Falk School ended with sixth, seventh, eighth and even ninth grade. Therefore, unlike the other School of Education awards,

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*The award will be presented at a special ceremony in April 2008. Please make your nomination today.*

## From the PTA President

*Dear All,*

Not that anyone is counting, but it occurred to me this morning that we are now about one-third of the way through the Falk school year. In spite of the continued buzz of construction activity around the school, as well as an (alarming) lack of really cold weather so far, things seem to be progressing at the school more or less as usual, and the children as well as teachers and staff are taking it all in stride. It seems like the temporary arrangements that have been put in place during construction (the Teacher's Resource Center, the "new" playground that has sprung up on the athletic field) have been there for a much longer time. Falk's annual Halloween festivities were enjoyed by all, thanks to all the teachers, students and parents who helped out. One of my favorite fall events, the Falk Talent Show, took place on November 8. We are all very grateful to Rhonda Wasserman for her hard work in putting together the event, and thanks are also due to the many parents,

students and staff volunteers, who made this year's show a smashing success. I am always impressed by the diverse and ample talent of our kids, the unbelievable ability of Dr. Conover and other adults to help it bloom, as well as the gratifying sense of community that the talent show allows us to showcase. I had watched many shows over the years at Falk, but this was the first time I had participated as a volunteer. It is amazing what a different perspective on things this can give you. Instead of just watching the children perform their acts, large and small, I had the opportunity to observe the following: a young man shooting his father an ecstatic grin as he walked back toward the off-stage area; snippets of two giggly girl's conversation as they talked themselves through a bout of stage fright, and the approving faces of the assembled students as they applauded their friends, siblings and teachers. I highly recommend this volunteer experience.

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## Calendar of Events

Dec 3 & 4	Holiday Gift Shop	Dec 24 - Jan 2	No School - Winter Break
Dec 13	Bake Sale	Jan 18	No School
Dec 18 & 19	Room 116 play	Jan 21	No School - Martin Luther King Day and Family Ice Skating
Dec 21	Holiday Breakfast		

## From the Director (continued from page 1)

the nominee does not have to have graduated from Falk. Any Falk School alumni who has been away from the school for a minimum of fifteen years is eligible for the Falk School Alumni Award.

In making the selection, three factors are considered. First, the committee will look at the area of "Professional Achievement." What has been the nominee's professional impact at the local, regional, state, national and/or international level? Second, what has been the nominee's record in "Professional and Public Service?" Have there been acknowledgements of service and/or awards conferred by professional organizations and/or societies regarding efforts contributing to the public good? And third, does the nominee have a continued record of "Interest, Service and Support" since his/her time at Falk School?

Please submit your nomination via email [wmconn@pitt.edu](mailto:wmconn@pitt.edu) or regular mail: Falk School, 4060 Allequippa Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15261. Your nomination should include the nominee's name, the years he/she attended Falk, your name as nominator and the date of the nomination. Then, in as much space as needed, address each of the three factors listed above and why you think your nominee would be a worthy recipient of this award. Nominations must be received by January 19, 2008.

An individual can only win the Falk School Outstanding Alumni Award once. Once selected for the award, the recipient will be removed from the list of eligible candidates for future consideration of this award. However, nominations received for those not selected will be automatically included among those considered during the following year. Each award recipient will receive a gift and a certificate acknowledging their recipient of the award, and The Falk School has created a plaque which lists all Falk School Outstanding Alumni Award recipients. The award will be presented at a special ceremony in April 2008. Please make your nomination today. I look forward to hearing from you.

—Wendell R. McConaha, Director

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## From the PTA President (continued from page 1)

Other issues of note: The Sally Foster Campaign is still going strong, thanks to the continued efforts of Katherine Poellnitz. So far, Sally Foster has generated \$2444.00, not including internet sales. Falk receives 50-60% of the total sales. Also, thanks to Betsy Levine-Brown and Nancy Glynn for coordinating the PTA's general fundraising efforts, organizing the photo shoot by iSimon on December 1, and, especially to Nancy for her expert work in organizing the Falk Holiday Gift shop on Monday and Tuesday December 3 and 4. We are very proud of the excellent work of Kim Lincoln and the middle school service committee in their continued dedication

to the success of the Alternative Gift Shop, which provides us with the opportunity to give gifts of donations to a diverse array of charities. After the winter break, we will, believe it or not, be gearing up for the lineup of spring events, such as the Book Bingo, the middle school play and the spring carnival. There is still plenty of time for parents to be involved in the PTA. Do you have a good fundraising idea you would like to share? Would you like to volunteer some time to help out at an event or find out what is involved in being a room parent co-chair, or another officer? Please don't hesitate to email me at [goldman@chatham.edu](mailto:goldman@chatham.edu), or phone at 412-414-7919.

—Karen Goldman, PTA President

## Primary News

The primary would like to thank the PTA for sponsoring our field trip to the Carnegie Museum of Natural History. The first and second grade rooms visited the Hall of Gems and Minerals in connection to their science unit on the Earth. The kindergarten visited the Carnival exhibit and drew their favorite costumes. These drawings are currently being made into puppets for the children to use for dramatic play.

Kindergarten enjoyed their trip to Heinz Hall for a Tiny Tots symphony production. Many thanks go to Dr. Conover for coordinating these trips for us each year.

We are looking forward to many events in December including the gift shop, 116's play, and our annual Holiday Breakfast.

We really enjoyed seeing our peers, parents and teachers share their talents with us at the talent show. Also, many wonderful connections were made at the community lunch we had that day.

Another community-building activity that we have been enjoying is the buddy reading with the intermediate. Primary children love seeing their buddies around the school and at afterschool.

Currently, the first and second graders are studying Our World in social studies and the kindergarten is focusing on Families for their social studies unit.

## Intermediate News

### Fifth Grade Math With Ms. Metcalf

Ms. Metcalf's Math is in 225 for the first period of the day. We just finished a unit on division and are moving on to place values and adding/subtracting decimals. We are doing this by learning what each number means when in a certain place. We are doing this so we can be better mathematicians and so we know how to use decimals.

—Danny Wittig

### Fifth Grade Math with Ms. Ridge

Ms. Ridge teaches me math. We never know where we are for math because we always switch places. We are learning how decimals are like fractions. We are learning about how they are like fractions to get a better understanding of decimals.

—Josh Pirl

### Reading: Dancing In The Cadillac Light

Ms. Ridge novel group includes both fourth and fifth graders from 224 and 225. The group usually has class in the hallway. Reading class takes place at 9:55 after math class. While reading this book, we discuss and learn about the book by talking about it and arguing. We do it to learn to work as a group and to get deeper into the book mind-wise.

—Emily Nace



### Language Arts

Ms. Ridge teaches us, both 224 and 225 language arts. L arts takes place after recess at 1:35 on Mondays and Wednesdays for 224 and Tuesdays and Thursdays for 225 and it takes place in 224. In L arts, we learn to spell by learning the I-E E-I rule. And we also get to make our own children books and book reports. We learn this to be able to be deeper writers.

—Sidony Ridge

Language Arts is basically English class. We do many writing and spelling activities. Almost every month we do a spelling test. We do this to increase our knowledge of spelling and writing.

—Vinay Umaphathy

### Fourth Grade Novel Group with Ms. Scherrer

Fourth graders in 222 and 221 read and talk every day about the book Boggart, in novel groups. Now we are making model castles for our final project. We do it in the halls on 221's and 222's side. We start at nine o'clock and end at ten o'clock. We are doing this because we want to learn more about, castles, Boggarts, Scotland, fantasy, working together and being cooperative. How we chose to read this book is that on the first day of novel groups we went around the room and gave our first choice and then our second.... And our first choice was Boggart and that's how we chose Boggart.

—Michael Jeong

### Art

On Monday in 222 our class goes to art. 222's art teacher's name is Dr. Armstrong. In art class we are making mini fantasy worlds out of clay. My class is having fun. My class does art class in the art room. We go from 10:45 to 12:00 noon. 222 does art class so they can improve their art skills.

—Olivia Ames

### Fourth Grade Math with Ms. Hustwit

The fourth grade math class is working on base four with Ms. Hustwit. We work with each other and use base four pieces. We have math in the stairwell of the intermediate floor. Math is from 10:00 to 10:45. Ms. Hustwit thought that all of us needed improvement on our base four.

—Haley Zuroski



## The Middle School Lending a Hand



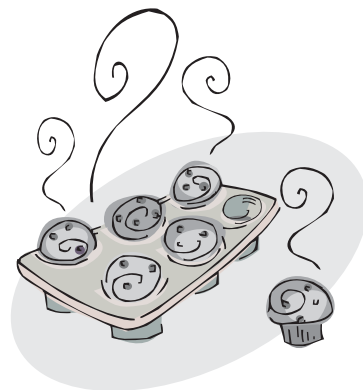
As a part of the Middle Level Team's efforts to establish a service learning component to the middle school experience, the 8th grade class volunteers every Thursday working in the EECM's food bank. Five students and one teacher work from 10:00 to 12:00 bagging groceries and providing general help as needed. Each 8th grade student will have at least five opportunities to help the EECM during this academic school year. We are currently exploring a relationship with a senior citizen center for the 7th grade. The 6th grade will be working on a service project in the new year making and donating mosquito netting. Stay tuned for further developments and accomplishments. If you have any leads or ideas, email Greg Wittig at [gvigs@aol.com](mailto:gvigs@aol.com).

### Bake Sale for Food Pantry and Soup Kitchen

The Middle School Service Committee is hosting a **bake sale** on Thursday December 13th to raise money for the EECM's food pantry and soup kitchen. The food pantry has never been barer, as is the case in food pantries all across the country. The EECM's food pantry is serving 4 times the usual number of families and is having to spend thousands of unbudgeted dollars towards food purchases at the Pittsburgh Greater Community Food Bank. The Food Bank provides many foods for free but charges for others. Their prices are low—a case of peanut butter is only \$1.50. Since money gives the food bank such great purchasing power, the Middle School Service Committee has decided to hold a bake sale to raise money rather than holding a food drive. The last Service Committee bake sale raised over \$700 for the tsunami victims. We are hoping to match that amount.

Please bring in donated items the morning of the sale to the stage area. Make sure all containers you want returned have a name and homeroom number for delivery. If you would like to send a check in with your child for purchases, checks should be made out to EECM Hunger Services. 100% of sales will be donated to the EECM so please be generous. Leftover items will be sold after school at the home basketball games and on Friday during the school day.

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## Additional Middle School Service Committee News

### Operation Bundle Up

The Coat Drive was a tremendous success. Count on it to be an annual event so hold on to any outgrown or no longer wanted coats from now until next fall. Thanks for all the support.

### Alternative Gift Shop

Everyone should have received a mailing with this year's order form for the Alternative Gift Shop. Extra order forms can be obtained at the main office. Order forms are due by December 14th.

### Girl Scout Troop 623 News



*Childcare Days*— Reporting on Childcare Days in November and Announcements of those newly scheduled.

The two conference days in early November were very lucrative for the troop thanks to the many families who took advantage of the Childcare Days. The kids were very impressive—extremely well behaved and well mannered. It was a terrific reflection on the student body of Falk. They were such a wonderful, easy group of kids that on Friday we took an adventure on the city buses to the Natural History Museum for the afternoon. The kids being watched and the kids and adults doing the watching all had a fabulous time both days. All the ages interacted beautifully.

Families who used the service in November have first dibs on the future childcare days of Friday, January 18th and Thursday, February 7th. We may also provide childcare on Good Friday, March 21st, if there is a demand. The cost is \$40 from 9am – 5pm. Additional siblings cost \$30 each. Care from 8am – 9am is \$10/family.



### Important Reminder From the Nurse

Due to long-term treatment, Sarah, a Falk School kindergarten student, has a depressed immune system. Any exposure to chicken pox could pose serious and even life-threatening complications for Sarah.

If your child develops chicken pox, please call Sarah's parents or any Falk School faculty or staff member immediately (even on a weekend or school break) so that prompt treatment (within 48 hours of exposure) may begin.

Kate (Sarah's mom) 412-818-2641 (cell)

James (Sarah's dad) 412-818-2640

Anderson-Brownlee home 412-682-0179

Please reserve your spaces for January 18th, February 7th and March 21st by contacting Kim Lincoln at [joseboma@msn.com](mailto:joseboma@msn.com) or 412 422-8234. Spaces are limited so don't wait. Previous customers have until December 21st to guarantee spots.

### Family Ice Skating

Girl Scout Troop 623 has rented Schenley Ice Skating Rink on Martin Luther King Day from 11 – 1. This is a terrific Falk family event that is loved by all, especially the Dads. The cost is \$5/person. The skate rental is additional if you don't have your own skates (I believe the rental is \$2.50). Hot chocolate and snacks will be provided. In case of heavy rain, warm weather or a blizzard contact Troop leader Kim Lincoln the day of the event to see if it is still going to happen. Hope to see you there!



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Photos from Childcare Days with Girl Scout Troup 623



*Special Note for Falk Parents and Teachers:*

*If you have photos of Falk kids enjoying "Falk" activities (field trips, classroom projects, plays, etc.) and would like those photos to appear in FalkTalk, please e-mail the photos to [gil-stearns@comcast.net](mailto:gil-stearns@comcast.net). Include a short description of subject matter. Please understand that not all photos that are submitted will be included due to space issues.*