



# Sun Times

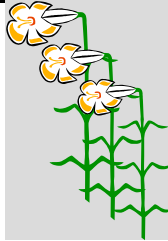
News from Saint Francis of Assisi School  
West Des Moines, Iowa

Volume 5, Issue 9

April, 2004

Dear St. Francis Families,

I hope you all had a wonderful long Easter weekend with special loved ones and enjoyed the beautiful Holy Week and Easter services here at St. Francis or at your various hometown parishes. I loved being here at St. Francis during Holy Week and Easter, but doesn't it always feel good to return home for special occasions to the parish(es) you grew up in? The old church scents are familiar and the creaky kneelers bring back all those years of memories. In the joy of the Easter season, blessings to you all!! Alleluia!!



Congratulations to our First Communicants as they come to the Lord's table this coming weekend, May 1st and 2nd. What a special time for our second graders! Congratulations also to the eighth graders who are confirmed this month, May 14th.

**May, the Month of Mary** - We invite all parents, family members and friends to join us for our May Crowning Liturgy, Friday, May 7th at 8:45. All students are asked to bring ONE flower from home to contribute to a homeroom bouquet. All of our homeroom bouquets together will form a beautiful May altar. Additionally, we will be gathering for prayer on Tuesdays in May to pray the rosary. We will be praying the Glorious Mysteries during these services.

**Calendar Notes** - As we enter the whirlwind of the final weeks of the school year, pay close attention to the calendar.

- Many grade levels have field trips planned.
- St. Francis School Night at the I-Cubs on Friday, May 14th, will be a great night for our families to gather and have fun. Third graders will open the evening by singing the National Anthem. Our pastors will join us after Confirmation.
- Our new 2004-2005 kindergartners will visit on May 13th and our current kindergartners will try their hand in the lunchroom by practicing on May 12th.
- Pastor Appreciation Day for Pastors of Catholic Schools is Sunday, May 2nd. We will offer special prayers for Fr. Ed and Fr. Pisut at our April 30th school Mass.
- All of you great volunteers throughout the year, please join us for Volunteer Appreciation on Friday, May 21st following the school liturgy. This final event of the school year is sponsored by the SFS Home & School Association.
- Our last school Mass of the year is THURSDAY, May 27th at 8:45 AM.

- *Our last day of school has been changed to Thursday, May 27th. (Please refer to the cover letter of this month's packet.)*

Please check the Lost and Found before the end of the school year. All of our lost articles will be laundered and taken to St. Vincent de Paul the first week school is out. Additionally, please check for library books at home and other school materials. All materials will need to be returned to school, all fines and/or fees paid, etc. prior to the release of report cards on the last day of school. ***It is critical that library books are returned on time this year with the HUGE move ahead for Mrs. Head and Mrs. Hardy. The inventory being completed before school is out and the packing in shelf order is critical to our library opening on time in the fall.***

The SFA Home & School By-laws state that our Home & School will be a tithing organization and that we "tithe to Catholic Education". The wisdom of implementing and the giving spirit of this tithe is a model for other such organizations. Giving to others from our vast blessings is a humble honor. This year's Home & School tithe recipient will be selected at the final Home & School meeting of the year on May 20th. Additionally, I'd like to say thank you to the SFS Home & School Association for generously continuing to send teachers to experience the great gathering of Catholic educators from all over the United States - the NCEA Convention. Three teachers who had not been to convention before attended this year in Boston. We are grateful for this professional development experience as well as the others Home & School funds for our staff. This year Home & School paid all the substitute teacher costs for our Math Literacy Team (seven teachers) to participate in six days of math leadership training. We could not have taken this excellent training without that financial support.

This year is coming quickly to a close. On behalf of our teachers and staff, thank you for all you do for all of us. It is a pleasure to work with all of you and, especially, your children. We will look so forward to seeing you all at the Phase III Dedication ceremonies on August 21st weekend. The new building will be open for the first time for all to see on that weekend. Have a safe and happy summer!

He is Risen!! Alleluia!! Alleluia!!  
He is Risen, Indeed. Alleluia!! Alleluia!!

Praying for peace,

*Trisha Lenz*



## Facilities News

Phase III continues to fly along. The “big things” may seem completed, but often times it’s the little “finely tuned” things that take so much time in a project such as this.

Like light switches!! Have you noticed when you drive by at night that the building (primarily first floor) is ablaze with light? That’s because as they drop the light fixtures into place, there are still not on/off switches on most of the walls yet so the lights just stay on. Looking through the new library windows at night from Woodland you can see how terrific our new library will be.

The gym has come so far. The acoustical tiles are up and it’s amazing how much they muffle the echo in such a large space. Acoustical material has also been sprayed on the ceiling of the bandroom for sound control and the ceiling grid in the music room has been slanted for maximum acoustical control in that, primarily vocal, space. The art room and science lab on second floor have no “ceiling” at all. The architects went for an “open” feel in those spaces with the duct work and such being spray painted.

Millwork is coming in and has been placed in the kindergarten and first grade classrooms. There is much cabinetry to go in the new building and it was fun to get a glimpse of the great color and texture of the laminates. We are so lucky to have good classroom storage space in our buildings.

## **Band Notes by Mr. Rick Purviance**

Three St. Francis band students participated in the 5th Grade Metro All-Star Honor Band at Johnston Middle School on Saturday, April 3rd. They were part of a 110-piece 5th grade band of some of the best fifth graders in the central Iowa area. There were about 1000 people in the audience, and the band did a fantastic job. Those involved from St. Francis were Courtney Logan-clarinet, Patrick Greenfield-tenor sax, and Matt Eganhouse-percussion.

The St. Francis 5th grade band will perform their Spring concert on Monday, May 24th at St. Francis. The 5th grade band will also perform a concert with the St. Pius X 5th grade band at the Merle Hay Mall on Thursday, May 20th at 11:00 p.m.

The St. Pius X Middle School Band will perform a concert for the St. Francis students on Tuesday May 25th at 1:50 p.m.

Summer band lesson information has been sent home with the band students. I would highly encourage their participation in the program. Please call Mr. Purviance at school if there are any questions about the Summer program.



## Musical Notes by Mrs. Angie Murphy

As we begin our last month at school, I want to take this opportunity to thank all the parents, children and friends who have helped out the music program this year.

### ENORMOUS THANK YOU'S TO:

- the parents who chaperoned for my musical field trips,
- Mrs. Judy Schliesman for accompanying at the Before School choir and for the Christmas concert,
- Mr. David Boyer, Elizabeth Boyer, Megan Sisler and Emily Sphile for their performing of instruments for the second grade music classes,
- Mrs. Brenda Rettenmaier for helping out at the Before School field day,
- Mrs. Renee Laughery for her accompanying the young singers at Christmas time,
- Mrs. Montgomery for writing the music survey,
- all the parents who bring their child/children to Before School choir every Tuesday and Wednesday. I know it isn't easy to come early but what a difference it makes when we can start the day together in song.
- Home and School for allowing me the privilege of going to Boston. I had a wonderful experience and attended many great classes. Thank you so much for your generosity!
- and a big thanks to all the teachers and staff who rearrange their teaching time to allow for the extra practices. YOU MAKE THE DIFFERENCE!
- all the children who have put up with "Music on a Cart". I can't wait for next year when we will be singing in the new music room! WE MADE IT!

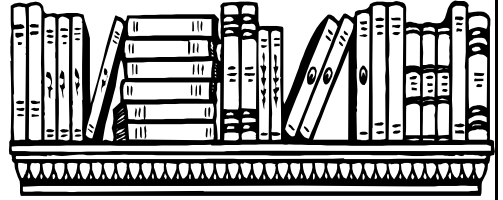
**Fourth and Fifth** grade students will be having their last concert of the year, May 24th at 7:00 pm. The concert will include, **Fourth Grade Music Class, Fifth Grade Music Class, Before School Choir and Band**. I hope you can all make it. I know spring is a very busy time of the year. The concert will be from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. in the Parish Hall. Students should dress in nice clothes. No jeans or sports clothes.

**The Third Grade** classes will be singing the National Anthem, May 14th at the I-Cubs game. Please have your child at the ballpark by 6:40 p.m. More information will be coming.

I hope you have a relaxing and musical summer. Parents, if you're interested in piano or voice lessons over the summer please call me ASAP as my schedule is filling up. Individual and group lessons are available. Classes will be held ½ hour a week.

Have a great summer!

## Book Nook by Mrs. Mary Head



In early April I joined other school librarians, classroom teachers, reading specialists, Title 1 teachers and college professors and administrators at the 2004 shared Spring Conference in Des Moines. The Iowa Reading Association, the Iowa Association of School Librarians, and the Title 1 ESEA sponsored the conference. The theme, "Thinking About Literacy: Strategies from Research," reflected the conference program of presentation on proven strategies from scientifically based research and the latest information from research on how the brain works. I came away from the two-day conference with a wealth of information and new ideas.

With the support of so many our media center has continued to grow. Here is a run down of the areas of growth since April 2003:

## SFA Track Team Results, Sunday, April 25

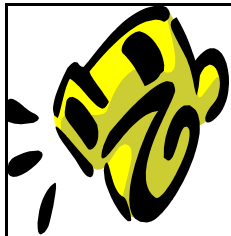
### 5th/6th Girls:

**Shot Put:** 2nd Place (Kassing), 4th Place (S. Triplett)  
**High Jump:** 1st Place (Pink and S. Triplett—tie)  
**100 Meter Dash:** 2nd Place (Hartleib), 3rd Place (Kassing)  
**200 Meter Dash:** 5th Place (Eganhouse)  
**400 Meter Dash:** 1st Place (Shedenhelm)  
**4 x 100:** 3rd Place (Shedenhelm, Wisnieski, Eganhouse, Hartleib)  
**4 x 200:** 2nd Place (S. Triplett, Kassing, Shedenhelm, Hartleib)



### 5th/6th Boys:

**Shot Put:** 4th place (Greenfield), 5th Place (Hagedorn)  
**Long Jump:** 4th Place (Harry)  
**Hurdles:** 3rd Place (Eganhouse)  
**200 Meter Dash:** 3rd Place (Harry), 6th (Eganhouse)  
**400 Meter Dash:** 6th Place (Lickteig)  
**800 Meter Run:** 6th (Bartusek)  
**4x100:** 6th Place (Lickteig, Hagedorn, Eganhouse, Harry)  
**4 x 200:** 5th Place ( Ricke, Bartusek, Greenfield, Harry)



## Gym Shorts by Mrs. Erin Klein

Last month, the kindergarteners worked on their loco-motor skills (running, skipping, hopping, galloping, etc.) by playing “Locomotor Go Fish” and earned their “Iowa Physical Education Loco-motor License”. They concluded the month with Easter themed skill review stations. The 1-5<sup>th</sup> graders participated in a cup stacking unit which involved stacking plastic cups as fast as they can in various formations. I heard there were a lot of enthusiastic students practicing at home! Students in grades 3-5 also practiced and tested out various motor skills to earn an award from P.E. Central. If they were able to complete all 6 challenges successfully, they earned a gold award, 5 challenges for a silver award and 4 challenges for a bronze award. These awards will be handed out in mid-May. Toward the end of the month, students in grades 1-5 started their fitness testing.

In May, which is National Fitness Month, we will be finishing up fitness testing (grades 1-5). Fitness testing starts in first grade (introduction & practice only in grades 1-2) and will assess the areas of aerobic endurance (PACER run), flexibility (sit-and-reach), abdominal strength (curl-ups) and upper body strength (push-ups). The 3-5<sup>th</sup> graders will be typing their scores into the computer and printing off their own fitness reports. Please take the time to go over the report with your child to reinforce what we have discussed in physical education class about the benefits of staying physically active and fit.

After fitness testing, students will be participating in a mini-golf unit and then a bike safety unit. At the end of the month, they will re-visit throwing, catching and striking with a bat. Students in grades K-3 will play “Blastball” which uses a tee and a special honking base. Students in grades 4-5 will play “Whiffleball”.

Please be sure to check out the P.E. page on our school website. There are many links to direct you to our diocesan P.E. standards and benchmarks, curriculum, fitness testing, health sites for students and parents, athletic websites, kids quotes and an online version of this “Gym Shorts” newsletter. Please help encourage your kids to make use of this site as a resource for their fitness, health and athletic interests.

**Kid Quotes** <http://www.pecentral.org/weeklyactivities/kidsay/kidsay.asp>

With my Kindergarteners, we always talk about how exercise strengthens our heart muscles and our other muscles in our bodies. One little boy was running around the perimeter of the gym during a tag game. He was sweating and breathing heavy. He held up his arm to show me his bicep, and said, "**Look, I just grew a muscle!**"



## Tech Talk By Mrs. Jill Westholm

As spring arrived the kindergarten students practiced their sentence building skills with a couple of sentences about spring and flowers. We transferred the skill of writing a sentence on paper to typing it using the computer keyboard. We practiced making the first letter of the sentence upper case by using the shift key rather than the caps lock key, which many young computer users tend to use at home. The students also practiced putting one space between words, a period at the end of the sentence, and changing the color and size of the font. These are all skills that I would encourage the kindergarten students to practice through the summer months.

The second grade students just completed their solar system PowerPoint projects. This was the first exposure to PowerPoint that these students have received at Saint Francis School. The students worked with a partner, or two, to develop a slide that included sounds, animated facts, and graphics. These are posted on the Saint Francis website for everyone to view. The students were excited and proud of their accomplishments and would love for you to view their presentations.

Please continue to visit [saintfrancisschool.org](http://saintfrancisschool.org). We would really like to utilize the site more often to decrease the number of notes and forms that are sent home from the school office. The scrip form and transportation reimbursement forms are a couple of the items that are currently posted for your convenience.



## News from the Lunchline by Mrs. Barb Wisnieski

Where has the school year gone? Wasn't it just August? It has been our pleasure to work with your children over the lunch hour again this year. One of the highlights of working at school is being able to interact with your children as they walk through the line...they will be missed this summer!

Here we go!! As we wrap up the 2003-2004 school year, we are thankful for Waukee School District allowing us to contract our food service with them for the past 4 years. We will miss the predictability of our routine next year (except for those unexpected snow days!!), but look forward to the flexibility that producing our food on site will provide. We are in the process of hiring staff for next year, and our kitchen construction will be finished soon. The fall menu is ready to go...and has passed approval with our student menu planning committee members. Over the summer, we will be training and going through "practice lunches" so that we will be ready to go in August. It will be a whole new experience for both kitchen staff and students next year!!

**NOTE: All accounts must be paid in full by the last day of school. This includes lunch accounts. Please note the following prices:** Student lunch, \$2.20; Family lunch/salad, \$3.10; Extra entrée, \$1.25; Milk: .30

**Letters are sent home with students who have negative lunch balances every Monday. Check your child's backpack for these letters and prepay lunch accounts through the end of the school year if possible. Any balance left in lunch accounts will be carried over to 2004-2005 school year.**

Thanks to all of you who help in our school lunch program. We couldn't do it without you. Make sure to sign-up to volunteer next year...we will have plenty of opportunities for you!!

Have a happy and safe summer!!



## On Our Palettes

by Ms. Patti Chong and Mr. Jason Southward

This is the last newsletter from us for this school year. It's been a good year and we look forward to bronzing our art carts when we open our new studio in the Phase Three section. Hoorah! Thank you to all of the volunteer parents who accompanied us on our treks this year, worked in the classrooms, put up displays, cut paper – helped in many ways! We are grateful for their support!

The certificates for the artists whose work was displayed in the diocesan art show have been distributed. This is a list of the St. Francis contingent. Congratulations again to all of them.

K: Katelyn Hagenbucher, Emily Heckle, James Wenman,  
 Grade 1: Lauren Bockhaus, Adam Goodman, Drew Williams  
 Grade 2: Brad Biegger, Mason Magruder, Natalie Thilges  
 Grade 3: Nick Farley, Maggie Fraizer, Dominic Muse  
 Grade 4: Zoe Goplerud, Stephanie Henscheid, Kirsten Overton  
 Grade 5: Ali Eganhouse, Andrew Pick,

The Des Moines Art Center offers classes for children all summer. If you're interested in a schedule, there are some in the school office or you may contact the Center itself.

People always ask for this resource. The frames in the hallways are from Regal Plastic. Call Valerie Smith, 223-8080. This design makes changing displays easy – you can have artwork of the week, month, even day if you're ambitious. If you prefer to frame and mat a piece more permanently, call or e-mail us and we can send you how-to information.

Enjoy yourselves this summer!



## Kids Care Corner

by Kathy Rasmussen

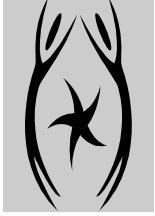
Many thanks to all our Kids Care students AND their parents for a wonderful year! This really has been a great year and a true pleasure serving such wonderful students and families.

The KC staff wishes you safe and fun-filled summer. We look forward to seeing you again in August once we have moved into our new "digs"!

Reminders: Monday, May 3: no school, Wednesday, May 19: 1:30 dismissal, Friday, May 28: last day of Kids Care. We will walk to Culvers restaurant for lunch and have a sprinkler party, weather permitting. Don't forget swim-suits, towels and sunscreen.

See you next Fall!

Mrs. Rasmussen and Kids Care staff



## Enrichment News

by Ms. Chris Joslin and Mrs. Erin Klein

Hello and good-by!

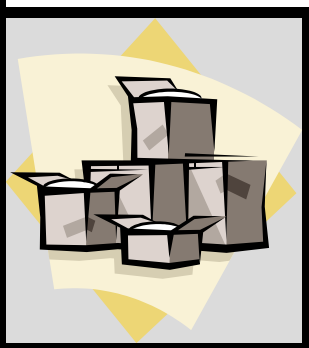
It is almost the first of May and although education is still continuing to flourish and thrive at SFA, it is also the winding down of the year and time for last minute accomplishments as well as reflection on the past year. So, before saying goodbye for the summer, I'd like to bring you up to date with what we are doing this last month and then share some reflections on enrichment at SFA and my first year here.

This April and May, Mrs. Klein and I have divided up our science groups. Mrs. Klein has done a short unit on life sciences and will work with another group of students on earth science while I will do a short unit on physiology and chemistry. All of these will be hands-on learning, beginning with identifying a question and brainstorming solutions. I am also finishing up our writing project of producing a magazine composed of student work. The editors and I are learning a new program on art/design and communications and I must say they are terrific explorers of uncharted waters in computer applications! We are discovering the planning necessary for layout as well as patience and creative problem solving. We hope that we will be able to print and distribute by May 21 or earlier.

Reflecting on the past year, I want to thank you for your kindness and patience with me and with the program as we search for the best way to help your children. SFA is blessed with so many wonderfully gifted students that it is a real challenge to serve all their needs. It is a great problem to have! I am just beginning to know their abilities and their passions and hope to build on this next year with expanded programming as well as extracurricular opportunities. Next year will also be another year of change as we settle into new rooms and new routines. The new middle school program has many possibilities for enrichment activities as well as thematic units that are crosscurricular. As none of us know where the future will lead us, it is my prayer that you all have a tremendous spring and summer.

Please contact me if you need any ideas on programs for students during the summer as the Des Moines area has many opportunities for all children at the Art Center, the Science Center and the Zoo. Just visiting the Botanical Center, Historical Building and the Capitol Complex, is a great way to enrich your child's life. The public libraries offer programs and reading is a great way to expand your child's horizons. Family vacations are also wonderful ways to see the rest of the world, whether in the US, abroad or even the wonders of Iowa and Polk County. I would also recommend books on kitchen science experiments and hands-on math that can be found at bookstores and teacher supply stores that make for good family interaction and enrichment. Again, have a great summer and I look forward to seeing you in our new building next August!

Mrs. Joslin and Mrs. Klein



## St. Francis School is Moving...

. . . into the new addition! Do you have any clean, sturdy boxes we could use to pack the contents of several classrooms as well as the Media Center? Boxes may be placed outside the school office (broken down to save space, if possible). Thank you!

## ODDS & ENDS



- Kara Pollpeter has volunteered to coordinate summer help for the school office.

Please contact Kara at 327-1254 if you would like to help out. Many hands...:)

- Second semester Transportation Reimbursement forms are due in your district public school office May 1st. Please refer to the St. Francis School website [www.saintfrancisschool.org](http://www.saintfrancisschool.org) for district office addresses and a transportation form.



## TAKE ME OUT TO THE BALLPARK!!

St. Francis School Night at the Iowa Cubs  
I-CUBS vs. Fresno Grizzlies

(AAA team of the San Francisco Giants!)

Friday, May 14

7:05 PM

Special fireworks display after the game!

Join us at the Park!



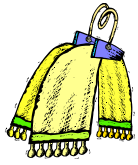
## HOME & SCHOOL SCRIP REMINDER!

Now is the time to think about summer Scrip and coupon books! Stock up now while it is convenient to order through your school Scrip folder!

ORDER NOW so you won't be without your favorite Scrip coupons for summertime!

- Hy Vee
- Dahl's
- McDonald's
- Burger King
- Culver's
- Lowe's (for those summer projects)

Scrip will be available at weekend Masses throughout the summer.



## Kitchen Needs

Our NEW school kitchen is in need of dish towels for drying dishes.

If you have any gently used towels cluttering up your drawers that you would like to donate, please send them to the attention of Barb Wisnieski or Marilyn Blankenship.

Thank you for your generosity!



## ADDRESS CHANGES!

The following families have requested that we publish their new addresses:

*Rick and Nancy Ball  
13675 Lake Shore Dr.  
Clive, Iowa 50325  
440-2332*

*Kurt and Julie Shedenhelm  
1105 S. 60th St.  
WDM, IA 50266  
(same house/new house number)*

# HOME & SCHOOL NEWS!

## *"It Takes a Village"*

This phrase definitely fits our school. As we raise our children together at St. Francis, we realize the importance of the word 'Team'. Home and School volunteers have made our Village stronger.

We would like to thank all of our Home and School volunteers who have made this school year a huge success. No matter how big or small your commitment has been, it is much appreciated. St. Francis School is blessed to have so many dedicated individuals.

In appreciation of all our volunteers, I invite parents and siblings to a thank you coffee. Mark your calendars for May 21 following the school liturgy. This is a great time to mingle with friends before our summer break.

The final Home and School meeting will be Thursday, May 20 at 7:00. At this meeting we will vote on the 2004-2005 budget and tithing proposals. Please plan on attending.

### Special Thanks Goes To:

Mrs. Murphy and her 4th/5th grade choir for a spectacular performance at our April meeting.

Kara Pollpeter for her ongoing commitment to the Scrip program. She puts in countless hours to make it successful.

We look forward to your continued support in the coming year. Hope to see you all at the Iowa Cubs game on May 14.

Peace,  
Home and School Executive Committee  
Joni Schnoes  
Linda Laughrun  
Jolene Lensing  
Linda Degen