



# Sun Times

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

Volume 6, Issue 1

Trisha Lenarz-Garmoe, Principal

September, 2004

Dear Parents,

## WELCOME!

The teachers and staff at SFS join me in welcoming our students and their families to this new school year. Special greetings to our new students and their families. Please know how blessed we feel to have your children in our school. What a blessing to see so many returning families joining us at Dedication. We shall continue our prayers throughout the year and grow in Christ's love.

## LITURGY

We love families and friends to join us for liturgy each week. You may refer to your monthly family calendar for liturgy dates and times. In general you can plan on Fridays at 8:45 AM. **Please remember that we don't photograph or film during Mass. As the Handbook says: It's a prayer not a performance.** As we grow, the homeroom liturgy rotation becomes larger. You will notice each year your child's class having fewer liturgies that they are responsible for planning and that not every child will have an assigned liturgical role each year. Regardless, he/she will continue to play an important role as a planning classmate when it is his/her homeroom's Mass. If you were able to join us Friday you noticed that the pews are getting more full of children each year! Adults should be seated around the perimeter of the pews and concentrated behind either 6th grade class for ease of Communion distribution.

## BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHTS

Please refer to the August Packet calendar and flyer for Back to School Night details. *These nights are for parents only.* We will need to move the K-5<sup>th</sup> grade night to the Assisi Hall rather than meeting in the new gym. The sound system is not ready yet in the gym.

## TRAFFIC FLOW – HERE WE GO!

Please refer to the traffic directions included in your online 2004-2005 Family Handbook, August Packets and First Day of School Letter. In other words, directions are EVERYWHERE!! Everyone must follow them or it will not be a pretty parking lot picture out there. Don't be the exception...follow the procedures and all will go well. I have told my staff that our smiles and waves in the parking lot may be the only friendly driving gesture some of you experience all day! We welcome smiles and waves back. Smiling through the process will help everyone involved. (If you have trouble smiling about it, just picture Fr. Ed in his bright orange safety patrol belt. That should help!!)

## PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT NEWS

Thank you to Home & School for four years of saving for the playground. \$25,000 of additional equipment will be installed this weekend. (That's a lot of frozen food and SCRIP, folks!!) Additionally, H & S tucked funds away for library shelving, science lab equipment, music and band room needs, and PE and art special equipment. Right away this summer, our teachers were able to begin supplying the specialized areas of the Phase III space with materials to expand instructional opportunities.

## FORGOTTEN ITEMS and VISITOR/ VOLUNTEER SIGN IN

Please note this reference on pages 23 and 24 of the Family Handbook. Students who are tardy must sign in the office before proceeding to class. Parents coming to the office with tardy students should not proceed to classrooms as class starts at 8:30.

(continued on page 2)

(continued from page 1)

At all times, parents visitors **MUST** sign in at the visitors table and wear a visitor badge if proceeding from the main atrium. This is the **SAFE** sign to students and staff who may not know you.

### **THANK YOU!**

Thank you to our terrific summer volunteers. We couldn't have had as successful a move without you. Volunteers make Catholic schools go 'round!! Unbelievable effort!!!

Thank you to my staff who put in so many extra hours this summer. Aside from coursework and preparation that all teachers do all summer anyway (the three months off thing is a **BIG** myth, folks)...Jill Westholm cut short her maternity leave to work on technology all summer. My middle school team – Jill Westholm, Joe Tallman, Chris Joslin and Jason Southward - met all summer to help get our new middle school off to a strong start. Mary Pink, our Office Manager, was absolutely outstanding the entire summer working tirelessly. And Denise Mulcahy, who came straight from Assumption in Granger on June 30<sup>th</sup>, hit the ground running on July 1<sup>st</sup> without any summer vacation at all.

Please let these people, and the other special people you meet every day, know you appreciate them and their efforts.

We are off to a super year!

Sincerely,



Trisha Lenarz-Garmoe,  
Principal



## **FACILITIES**

It seems strange to not be writing about beams, cement and paint!! But... **PHASE III IS OPEN!!!** What a wonderful new addition we have!! Thank you for your support of the Phase III project with prayer, time and treasure.

We still have a few projects going for those wanting to get in on the action...see the first day of school flyer about helping with the playground the weekend of August 27<sup>th</sup>. Let's get that wrapped up so we can get the kids back on the play equipment.

Aren't our planters nice at the new entrances? They need filled up with easy care plants, though. We could use some hosta cuttings and volunteer planters this fall when folks are doing their fall yard work at home and transplanting. Call the office to help or coordinate.

Thank you to those who spent so much time here over the summer months. We thank those who: helped us move, helped us hang things, hung a million miles of cork strip, hooked up computer after computer, stamped books, brought lunch, cleaned and vacuumed...and the list goes on. SFS volunteers are **AWESOME!!!!**



## Staffing News

In the Sun Times last spring, we welcomed several new members to the 2004-2005 St. Francis staff:

Denise Mulcahy	Administrative Team - Assistant Principal
Courtney Chapman	2 <sup>nd</sup> grade
Lynda McLuen	4 <sup>th</sup> grade
Joe Tallman	6 <sup>th</sup> grade – Language Arts, Religion
Diane Nitzel	Technology

After this summer, we are ready to welcome a few more:

Mike Hazel	Physical Education
Libby Hartlieb	Reading Resource
Lorraine Kopack	Food Service
Sue Ritz	Food Service
Debbie Bock	Food Service

Additionally, the following staff members have new roles for 2004-2005:

Andrea Storey	From 2 <sup>nd</sup> grade to kindergarten
Diana Scheve	From 4 <sup>th</sup> grade to 5 <sup>th</sup> grade
Jill Westholm	From Technology to Technology/6 <sup>th</sup> grade Math & Science
Chris Joslin	From Enrichment to Enrichment/6 <sup>th</sup> grade Social Studies
Megan Sissler	From Kids Care staff to Kids Care Assistant

We bid fond farewells and blessings to two of our original staff members:

Kristin Schaffer	Kindergarten
Erin Klein	Physical Education



### Valley West Mall Class Cash

Class Cash competition continues through September 6. Double points will be awarded on September 4, 5, and 6! So stop in to VWM and turn in your receipts to the Information Desk! Let's make SFA #1 in the Class Cash Competition again this year!!

## On Our Palettes by Ms. Patti Chong and Mr. Jason Southward

The new school year is here!!!

We have a room! Our trusty carts have moved on to greener pastures. As we prepare our new room...putting up bulleting boards, moving tables, and filling cupboards...we realize how truly blessed we are as art teachers to have such a wonderful room. But the room is still incomplete.



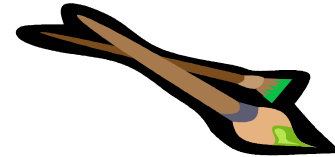
sent, while at the same time becoming closer to the one true creator, God.

Once again, we would like to thank those parent volunteers who have helped the last couple of years. You truly were a blessing.

We hope that you will continue to bless us and share in the wonderful new facilities we have this year.

Thank you very much!

We, together, will finish the room this year as we fill it with wonderful works, creative thinking, and an imaginative spirit. Each class will serve as a prayer. As we learn and create, we will strengthen our understanding of how we relate to cultures and individuals around the world, past and pre-



## Guidance Corner by Mrs. Julie Heckle

Welcome back!! I hope all of you had a peaceful and relaxing summer. I am excited to begin a new year at St. Francis. This year I will be using one of the 8<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms for Guidance class. I also now have a counseling center as well as an office and I will be at St. Francis full time this year. If you haven't had a chance to see it, stop in and check it out. I feel very blessed to have this much space.

Last year our school began Faith Based Character Education. The assemblies and classroom activities were a great success. This year we will be continuing FBC and adding to it a program entitled "I Was Only Teasing." The main goal of this program is to replace negative behaviors with skills that involve treating others kindly. To facilitate this effort we will be implementing a school-wide program against bullying.

This program is most effective when the parental community, the administration and the staff all have a shared belief that caring and kindness is of great value to our school. Bullying and aggressive behaviors do not have a place at our school. There are consequences for bullying.

As students, parents and teachers in a Catholic School environment we should be keenly aware of how are actions affect others. An article I read while putting this program together sums it up well...

### **"When Teasing Goes to Far"**

**by Jim Auer**

*"The bottom line is that Christians simply do not deliberately cause someone pain just for the sake of doing so, or stand by, watch it happen, and do nothing. That's as directly opposed to the teaching and example of Jesus as you can get.*

*In the end, Jesus and everything he stood for will win over everything evil and negative. Join the winners ahead of time; make people feel good about themselves instead of bad. It's a much better way to live."*

Take some time and talk to your child about this Christian belief. Look for more information on "I Was Only Teasing" in future newsletters. God bless!

# Musical Notes

by Mrs. Angie Murphy



Welcome back from the music room. We made it! We are in the new music room and it looks great! Please stop in if you didn't have an opportunity to during the Dedication weekend. And speaking of the Dedication weekend; a big thank you to all the choir members who sang Saturday, August 21<sup>st</sup> at the 4:30 Mass. You were great!

Students have been selected to try out for OPUS this year. All students have received their letters. This is a select choir chosen by the ICDA (Iowa Choral Directors Association). The students will practice their music and then sing for judges via a tape. If selected they will then have a day of practice at Iowa State University and then sing for the OPUS concert Thursday, November 18, 2004. Good luck to all of you!

Thank you to the all the families who sent back the music survey. Here are the results:  
 197 families returned survey.  
 The following is a break down by class:  
 Kindergarten-36  
 First grade-67  
 Second grade-54  
 Third grade-48  
 Fourth grade-47  
 Fifth grade- 42  
 Sixth grade- 25  
 Grade not indicated-25

From those surveys the following were concert time preferences:

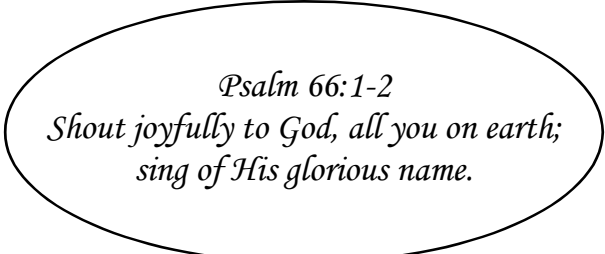
<u>Christmas concert</u>	<u>Spring concert</u>
Around lunchtime -16	Around lunchtime- 21
End of school day- 21	End of school day -33
Different nights (K-4 and 5/6)- 93	Different nights (K-4 and 5/6)- 90
Same night (K-6) 65	Same night (K-6) 52

As you can see the results are varied!

Please see the St. Francis of Assisi School web or music bulletin board outside the music room for the dates of concerts. All dates for vocal performances have been sent home with your child. **Please mark your calendars now!**

There will be an afternoon dress rehearsal the week of the concert for the whole school. Parents, this performance is for the students and **should not** be attended instead of the evening performance. If you can't make the night performance please feel free to come and watch. But again, this rehearsal is for the children only.

I know we will have a great music filled year!



## Reading Resource

We'd like to welcome Mrs. Libby Hartleib to the Reading Resource Team!

Watch for upcoming reading news from Mrs. Sarah Harmeyer and Mrs. Libby Hartleib!

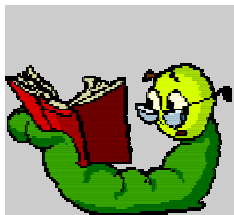


## Tech Talk

We welcome Mrs. Diane Nitzel to St. Francis School as our Technology Coordinator!

St. Francis will have two computer labs up and running soon. One will be in the new building and the other will be in what used to be Mrs. Polzin's Kindergarten class. Finishing touches are being made to the computer labs now.





*"Our new library space is so special... so beautiful...and so awesome."*

## Book Nook by Mrs. Mary Head

Saint Francis Media Center is open and ready to serve you in the 2004-2005 school year.

Our new library space is so special...so beautiful...and so awesome. It overwhelms me every time I enter it! Prison Industries have built wonderful new shelves for our ever-growing collection. We now have room for all the books and room to grow!

The "picture" books are now housed in book "bins" which accommodate browsing. There is a fabulous book sharing area with windows that give the room an "eye on the SFA world".

The computer lab is connected to the media center, which will make research more accommodating for our students.

I feel very blessed to work in this fabulous space with such wonderful children and their families!

All books in the library are checked out to students on a two-week basis; however, I encourage the students to return their books as soon as they are finished reading them. There are no fines for late books, but a student with two or more overdue books will be asked to return the overdue items before checking out any other books. Overdue notices are sent out weekly.

We are looking forward to a fantastic year in our fantastic media center!



## ENRICHMENT by Mrs. Chris Joslin

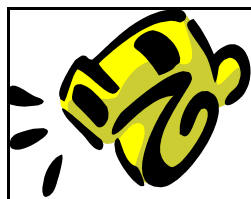
HELLO and welcome to a new year at St. Francis Of Assisi School!

I am really excited to be coming back to the Enrichment Program. There are many small bits of learning that can only come through doing and I feel that I learned a lot over the past year. You were so kind to volunteer for driving places and helping with the multicultural field day. I know many of you are also involved with other enrichment activities too. I hope that we will have other opportunities throughout the year for you to become involved in also. In fact, last spring I asked for the names of 6<sup>th</sup> grade students who would be interested in Mock Trial competition and was elated that so many signed up. Parent volunteers will be needed for this, especially lawyers and anyone in the legal field and you don't need to be a parent of a 6<sup>th</sup> grader to become involved. I will send out a note about an organizational meeting about this program soon after school starts. Please call me anytime if you are interested in helping or have experience in this program.

Last year, I really appreciated that you were very patient with our new expanding programs. The one thing I truly wish we could have completed was the magazine that so many of your children worked very hard to produce. In some ways the process of what we were doing was more important than the product BUT my goal this fall is to put the finishing touches on it and share it with the rest of the school as soon as we can. If I have students who would like to continue with the project then perhaps we can have a second volume ready by January or February and avoid competing with all the wonderful end-of-the-year activities that happen at St. Francis.

I had the opportunity to take several classes this summer and am anxious to put some of new ideas into practice. I will be working with 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> graders this fall and adding 3<sup>rd</sup> graders sometime in the second semester. Sixth grade will have the opportunity to work with me on a daily basis in social studies and through that class, I will incorporate differentiated projects that will focus on their particular strengths and interests. I will also be monitoring Mrs. Westholm's class in study hall and in 3 days of independent reading. I hope to use those times to get to know them as individuals better and to be better able to provide enriching activities and projects for them.

If you have any questions, feel free to call (457-7167 ext 412) or email me at school. Cjoslin@dowling.pvt.k12.ia.



## Gym Shorts by Mr. Mike Hazel

Hello and welcome to an exciting new school year! My name is Mike Hazel and I am very happy to be one of the new members of the St. Francis of Assisi community. It is indeed an exciting new year, with a wonderful new facility for physical education. We are very proud of our new gym and we all will have to work together to help keep it in great shape for many years to come.

A little background...my wife, Sara, and I are both graduates of the University of Northern Iowa. Sara and I moved to Des Moines from Evansdale, Iowa (Waterloo area). Sara is teaching middle school at Christ the King School. For the last two years, I taught PE and health at Blessed Sacrament School in Waterloo, and Immaculate Conception School in Charles City. For the last four years, I was the head baseball coach at Don Bosco High School in Gilbertville while coaching basketball and football at various other schools.

PE has changed a lot over the years. One thing that hasn't changed is a focus on fitness. Child obesity rates in our country have consistently escalated for a number of reasons but most notably is the lack of physical activity children are experiencing. At St. Francis, we will offer a wide variety of activities in PE and we will be emphasizing cardiovascular fitness as the key to a health heart and body. I can't wait to get started and I look forward to meeting all of you.



## Home and School News

A hearty "Welcome" as we start another great year at St. Francis of Assisi School! If you are looking for a way to become involved, SFA Home and School is the place for you. Consider volunteering your time, talent and resources. Our meetings will be held on the third Monday of each month, except in December and March at 7:00 PM in our brand new Media Center. We would love to see you at our first meeting of the year on September 20th!

Our treasurer's reports and monthly minutes are posted on the school's website ([www.saintfrancissschool.org](http://www.saintfrancissschool.org)) for your convenience so you can stay informed if you are unable to make a meeting. We invite and encourage your to make a positive difference-join SFAS Home and School Association! Mark your calendars!

### Home and School meetings, 7pm, Media Center

September 20

October 18

November 15

NO MEETING IN DECEMBER

January 10

February 21

NO MEETING IN MARCH

April 10

May 16



## The Lunch Line by Mrs. Barb Wisnieski

Greetings from the School Lunch staff!! Marilyn Blankenship and I are excited to be joined by the following staff members in the School Lunch Program this school year:

Sue Ritz – Head Cook  
 Lorraine Kopack – Baker  
 Debbie Bock – Trayline Supervisor/Support Staff  
 Joni Schnoes – Cashier/Support Staff

Both Sue and Lorraine come to us with school food service experience...we are glad to have their expertise as we start our new school lunch program. If you toured the new kitchen and cafeteria facility last weekend, you can understand how fortunate we feel to be in our new "home". The only downside is that we are still in the learning process with all new equipment and procedures...please be patient with us during this learning period. We know you and your children will enjoy the lunch menu and the new options we are offering.

\*Please remember to pay for your child(ren)s' school lunch ASAP. You may send payment with you child, or drop it off in the school office. Pay by check or cash...**please remember to put all payments in a sealed envelope with your child(ren)s' names on it, addressed: ATTN: SCHOOL LUNCH PAYMENT.** If you have more than one child at St. Francis, you may write one check and we will divide it equally between children (please specify if you want money divided otherwise).

\*If you will be joining your child for lunch, please remember to order your lunch(es) via the school office before 8:30 am. You may leave a message if you receive the school recording. Please **do not** send a note to your child's teacher...this will greatly simplify our lunch count procedure.

\*WE ARE IN DESPERATE NEED OF VOLUNTEERS TO HELP US SERVE FOOD ON OUR SERVING LINE. We need 9 more volunteers to donate approx. 45 minutes/week to our lunch program to have both traylines serving food. PLEASE call Barb at school if you can help out. (We will also need additional volunteers in the cafeteria to assist students with lunch...please sign up on the volunteer form included in this packet for these positions).

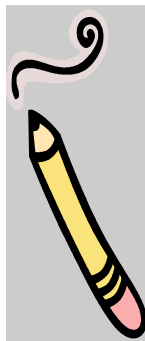
Change is good. We are excited about the opportunity to offer new menu options for students, visitors, and staff. Thanks for your patience and support. Feel free to call us with questions or concerns. We look forward to working with you and your students this school year!

Your child may bring in exact change for milk (\$.30). This will allow them to bypass the hot lunch line and go directly to the cafeteria.

## WELCOME TO OUR NEW FAMILIES!

A warm welcome to the following students and their families who are new to our St. Francis School community! We extend best wishes for a great school year! We are glad you're here!

Juan Jose Barzallo, 4/McCarthy  
 Presley Thomas, 5/Scheve  
 Kyle Snuttjer, 2/Becker  
 Matt Schiltz, 5/Weisenhorn  
 Nick Franklin, 5/Scheve



Nick Galles, 5/Scheve  
 Tycho Falk, 3/Prohs  
 Kasie Nitzel, 5/Scheve  
 Logan Heim, 1/Dante  
 Spencer Heim, 1/Murphy  
 Natalie Prevo, 4/McManus  
 Kaitlyn DiTalia, 6/Tallman  
 Isabella LaMarch, 1/Badding  
 Kristina Hagedorn, 1/Dante  
 Alex Savage, 6/Westholm  
 Mallory Parker, 2/Chapman  
 Ben McLuen, 3/Drey  
 Melissa McIlhon, 2/Berrie

## Food Allergies at SFA

Several students at St. Francis of Assisi School have severe, life threatening food allergies. We are committed to try and provide a safe environment for our students who have severe food allergies. When deciding about birthday treats and other snacks for school, please refer to the flyer enclosed in this packet and the Family Handbook, page 64 and thank you for helping to keep our students safe and healthy!

The following students have severe peanut allergies:

Kate Freeman	Kindergarten
Emily Miller	Grade 1
Tyler Lien	Grade 1
Michael Greenfield	Grade 2
Connor Freeman	Grade 3
Isabella Valencia	Grade 5
Cecilia Valencia	Grade 5
Jacob Block	Grade 6



Their parents are in the school directory and welcome your calls about safe snacks.



### Help Wanted

#### Part time lunchroom position

- job share cashier/administrative responsibilities
- Contact Barb Wisnieski for details
- 457-7167

## SHOW YOUR COLORS SHIRT DAY!

### Friday, September 10

Students may wear their favorite team shirts with dress code pants or shorts.

Students are asked to bring one pack of toilet paper to be shared with St. Joseph's Emergency Shelter and Catholic Worker House.

Thank you!

*(Go, 'Clones, Go!)*

