



# SUN TIMES

NEWS FROM SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI SCHOOL

*"Prepare the child for the path, not the path for the child."*

Volume 8, Issue 3

Roberta Harvey, Principal

Denise Mulcahy, Assistant Principal Nov 2006

Dear Parents,

October has been a very busy month at St. Francis School. It has been highlighted with picture day, hearing screening, Cognitive Ability Tests, field trips, Red Ribbon Week, Halloween parties for K-5, and most importantly, our celebration of the Feast of St. Francis on Oct. 6<sup>th</sup>.

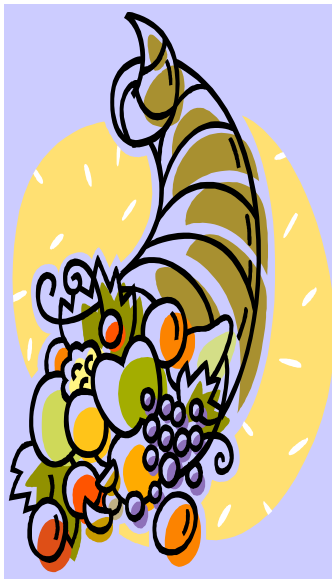
Many, many thanks to Mrs. Randall and the related arts teachers for planning such a beautiful mass for our celebration. It was a good reminder to us all that with the generous gifts God has bestowed upon us comes great responsibilities.

St. Francis walked his talk everyday and became an inspiration to others. He knew what it meant to be "the hands and feet of Christ" in service to those who were less fortunate.

As a school / parish community we are challenged everyday to guide our efforts in areas that can really make a difference for others. Ideally, the difference we make will impact many families' needs with Christ's love, as well as transform us during the process. My prayer for our community is that we be servants to Christ, in song, word, and deed.

October 6 was a memorable day at St. Francis of Assisi School for another reason. Our school, along with nine other area schools, was in the Lock-Down mode for approximately three hours. Thank you again and again for the out-

pouring of support during and after the safety operations. Thank you for your trust and calmness. That makes our job much easier when you give us the room to operate as our action plans indicate. At the end of the day, we had a debriefing time. We've discussed changes and clarified concerns within our system and with the West Des Moines Police Department. We also continued this discussion and planning on our Staff Development Day, Oct. 20. We will have our resource officer review our plans and observe one of our future drills as well. Then we will feel even better about our preparedness. We will be brief, succinct, sincere, and as relaxed as possible. Our students need to know that this is yet another necessary safety drill the school must practice. We ask for your trust on how we carry out these drills and continued prayers for the safety of all the children and personnel in our schools.



Kindest regards and peace as we approach this Thanksgiving season,

*Roberta Harvey*

Roberta Harvey,  
Principal

## ***FUNDRAISING NEWS!***

### **Sally Foster/Butterbraids**

Pick up date

**Monday, November 13 from 2:30-5:30 in the Parish Hall**

Please mark your calendar! Thanks for your participation!

### **ENTERTAINMENT BOOKS**

**Thank you** parents for your outstanding response to the Entertainment Books sold at the beginning of the year. We raised over \$6,000 with this one promotion alone, which well exceeded our expectations.

**ORIGINAL WORKS** is a program that uses your child's artwork produced in Mr. Southward's art class. You are able to purchase products from Original Works with your child's artwork imprinted on various products. (i.e.: coffee mugs, note card, tiles, magnets and much more). This promotion has run historically in the fall. This year we will be offering this program in the **spring** instead, so look for this later on in the school year.

### **SCRIP and more!**

We will continue to offer SCRIP, HY-VEE coupon books, and of course there will be the St. Francis Family Day at the Cubs next spring as well as Original Works. You make it possible for Home & School to do all that it does for this school and our children!

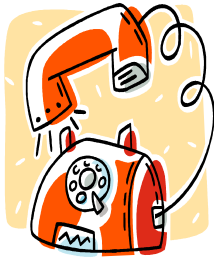
### **THANK YOU**

Parents, thanks so much for your patience and understanding as many changes are being made to fundraising this year. We are starting a couple of new fundraisers this year and will be deleting some next year depending on participation in the auction. It probably feels like you are being asked to participate in a lot of fundraisers this year, but just remember part of the reason we offer different fundraisers is so that you can choose what works for your family. Thank you!

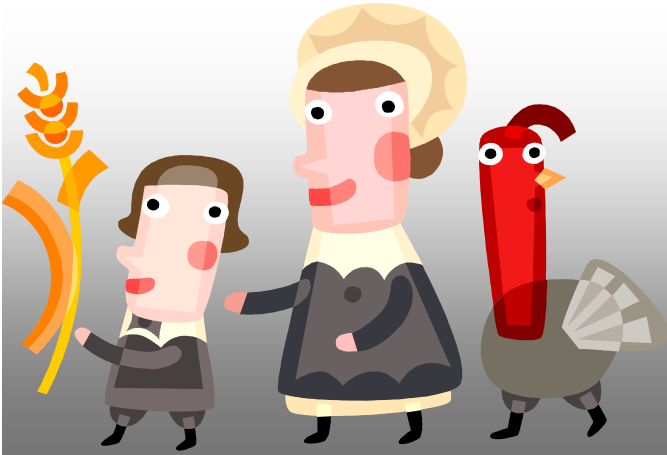
Sincerely,

Colleen Biegger  
Fundraising Co-Chair

Jill Simplot  
Fundraising Co-Chair



*Directory Corrections*  
 Tom/Jennifer Hilton  
 New phone: 834-2602  
 Michelle & Tim Weber  
 2055 Creek View Ct  
 Waukee, Iowa 50263  
 Phone 987-0585



# MUSICAL NOTES

by Mrs. Lee Randall

## Concert Attendance and Etiquette

The third, fourth, and fifth grade classes have begun preparing their Christmas concert. We will spend many hours of hard work putting together our special musical selections for presentation to family and friends. Therefore it is **very important** that as adults we remind ourselves of concert etiquette.

- ◆ Please **DO NOT** talk during the performance.
- ◆ Turn off your cell phone or set it to vibrate. If you must answer a call please leave the performance space.
- ◆ If you have younger children, please do your best to keep them seated and listening to the concert. Quiet play or coloring is acceptable, but please do not allow your children to talk, play, or run around with their friends during the concert.
- ◆ Once each class is finished with their portion of the performance they are expected to remain and listen to the concert. This meets standard 6, benchmark 2 for our third through fifth grades.

A child **WILL NOT** be excused from the performance without a doctor's note. This is the **only concert** for these students this year! It has been an expectation of the SFA Music program that students attend the concerts that we set aside for you. This is an authentic assessment of the child's performance in music class. Any student who misses will receive a lengthy assignment so that they may at least earn seventy-five percent of the total concert grade. No assignment can take the place of a performance for assessment.

Remember, we prepare this concert for you in order to show our skills as musicians. Your children will appreciate your attention and enjoy your comments on their performance. They need to see attentive, listening adults supporting them. As teachers we expect them to listen and respond to our requests. We need to provide the same.

Thank you for your support!

## *CONFERENCE NOTE*

Ms. Susan Folkerts, our AEA Speech Pathologist, will be available for conferences on the following dates/times:

Tues, Oct 31 from 4:00-8:00 PM  
 Thurs, Nov 2 from 1:00-4:00 PM



# Book Buddies!

The Enrichment Committee is once again proud to announce Book Buddies! Book Buddies is a book club for 4th and 5th graders and an adult buddy. The book club meets the first Tuesdays of November, January, February and March. Book Buddy discussions are held in the Media Center from 7:00-7:45 p.m. This year's selections have all won the Newbery Award as the best children's book published in a given year.

Each month students and their adult partner will read the pre-selected book. Students sign up to attend the discussion for the book. Participating students **MUST** have an adult who has read the book attend the session with them. One adult per student is required. The Buddy may be a parent, grandparent, godparent, older sibling, neighbor or friend. Anyone who shares your joy in reading and is high school aged or above can be a Book Buddy. You may choose a different Buddy for each book and you may choose to attend all of the discussions or only one or two.

Books may be checked out from local libraries or purchased from local book stores or online. The monthly picks and dates are listed below to help you plan ahead. The titles can also be found on the SFA web site. Simply click on Enrichment and then Book Buddies.

In order to participate, students must sign up in advance for the discussion and list their Book Buddy as well. Sign up sheets will be posted on the Media Center window two weeks before the meeting and will be taken down the Friday before the meeting so we will have time to prepare for the group.

The first discussion will be Tuesday, November 7 from 7-7:45 in the Media Center. The sign up sheets will be posted beginning October 24. Snacks will be provided. Any questions? Please call Nancy Foley at 225-0962. Happy Reading!!

## Award Winning Picks!

- ◆ November 7: *Island of the Blue Dolphins* by Scott O'Dell (1961 winner)
- ◆ January 9: *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* by Mildred D. Taylor (1977)
- ◆ February 5: *Maniac Magee* by Jerry Spinelli (1991)
- ◆ March 6: *The View from Saturday* by E. L. Konigsburg (1997)



## ENRICHMENT by Mrs. Chris Joslin

It has been a busy October. To begin the month, I attended a conference on Gifted Education in Iowa. While there, I met with many other teachers, compared programs and problems and am happy to report that SFA is right on target. The bottom line for all schools is to meet the needs of those students who are capable of accelerated education. The avenue that acceleration takes is varied and dependent upon population and needs. The most interesting or rather the most challenging part of this is that that need changes per student, per grade level. It is a constantly changing challenge!

I was happy to discover two new programs that I hope we will be able to offer to Middle School once Mock Trial is completed. One is on the stock market and the other is Sim City, a design program for futuristic cities for budding architects and engineers. These will be open to all 6-8th graders who are interested and motivated to learn more about these real-life activities. *Please see "VOLUNTEERS NEEDED" below.*

I will also be starting a photography workshop for 8th graders. The students will learn the rudiments of using a digital camera with attention to lighting and arrangement. They will need their own cameras and must be willing to bear the cost of printing a variety of photos throughout the course.

Returning programs include the Geography Bee will also begin in early November. This is open to all 4-8th graders. We will meet after school one night a week to prepare for the Bee. Mr. Shea, 6th grade geography teacher will assist with the Middle School students. I have several teams already working on National History Day and in November will meet with interested 6th graders.

Here at school we have 3 teams who will represent SFA at the Iowa Bar Association Mock Trial Competition. There is one team per grade level, 6-8th. They will compete on Wednesday, November 1st. The students and I very much appreciate the hard work of our volunteer coaches as this is a time consuming effort on their part and the knowledge shared is an incredible gift to our students.

I have been working with the 4th grade on their play, "*Because of Winn-Dixie*" which was preformed on October 12th. It was a good way to get to know the 4th graders better before forming small pull-out groups.

October is Columban Father Missions month and each grade focuses on a specific country. This year, I gave a talk on Japan to the 4th graders. The 5th grade language arts pullout group prepared a power point presentation on Chile for the 3rd graders which they will present on Oct. 26th. They researched the country, chose important bits of information to share and designed the slides as individuals. They then will explain the information as the slides are shown to the 3rd graders.

### VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:

- **Stock market program** for 6-8th. This can be during SSR time (12:45-1:15) or study hall (2:45-3:15) or after school.
- **Sim City:** needs an architect or engineer. Times are the same as above. Although this is open to 6-8, only 7-8 grade teams can participate in the competition.



## Book Nook

by Mrs. Mary Head

*The Book Fair helps us  
promote learning...*

**THE BOOK FAIR IS HERE!**

*Visit the  
Scholastic Book Fair  
during Conferences the week of  
October 30-November 2*



## MIDDLE SCHOOL DANCE for Grades 7 & 8

**Friday, December 1**  
**St. Pius X**  
**\$6.00**  
**7pm-9:30pm**

**School ID's  
required**



## ART ON OUR PALETTES

by Mr. Jason Southward

During the week of conferences there will be a display of Kindergarten, First, and Second grade work hanging in the gym hallway. Kindergarten paintings that explore line and shape (elements of art) will be on display. First grade work will consist of portraits, warm and cool color exercises, and a few "3D" artworks. Collages, paintings, and portraits from the second grade will be hanging, as well.

There will be a work from every child, so make sure you get a chance to stroll through the gym hallway and find your child's work.



## ¡Noticias en español! by Mrs. Shelly Power

Hola families! Students are learning numbers in Spanish class this year. Middle school students will learn to convert money from Spanish-speaking countries into dollars and practice the art of bartering in pretend "mercados." If you have traveled to a Spanish-speaking country recently and would be willing to donate small amounts of left-over currency, it would be appreciated.

## READING RECOVERY/READING SUPPORT

by Mrs. Mary Anne Conway

Your child has been bringing home several books to read to you each night. I appreciate your help. Please keep in mind that your child has read these books repeated times and the books should not be too difficult for him/her. I want their experiences of reading to you at home to be positive and successful.

Books are carefully chosen to be at your child's instructional level. Instructional level means that during the first readings of the book, your child can read with 90 – 94% accuracy. They will probably be reading to you with near 100% accuracy. This does not mean the book is "too easy". Reading at home is done in order to improve phrasing and fluency. Also, it may appear your child has "memorized" the text. This is an important step in the beginning reading process. If it appears your child has the words "memorized", make sure he or she is pointing at words while reading. Ask your child to point to specific words such as known words (is, the, I, at, etc.). Explain to your child that he/she knows these words and has to read them when he/she points to them.

Please do not cover up the pictures in the books. Pictures play an important part in beginning reading. Students are taught to take a "walk" through the book, looking at the pictures and talking about them.

It is so important for beginning readers to have lots of practice with materials they know well. Repeated practice with known books improves fluency and phrasing.

Focus on what your child is attempting to do. Remain loving and supportive and give lots of praise! Enjoy this experience of listening to your child read to you at home. Besides listening to your child read, please remember to continue to read aloud to your child every day!

Happy Reading & Writing!