



SUN TIMES

NEWS FROM SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI SCHOOL

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

Volume 8, Issue 2

Roberta Harvey, Principal

Denise Mulcahy, Assistant Principal Oct 2006

Dear Parents,

As we begin the month of October, we look back over September and the beginning of the school year. We have had a wonderful start to the year! Just a few of the events or happenings that have led to a positive start are:

- The Back-to-School Nights were both well attended. Packed houses came to meet the teachers and hear about what is in store this year.
- Our school Masses have been times for prayer for our community. The students and teachers who have planned and led our Masses have done a great job.
- The first Home and School meeting was very well attended! Check the calendar for the October meeting date and time.
- New life is all around us at St. Francis. Welcome to Jack Wallace, son of Ed and Jen Wallace – our 7th-8th grade Social Studies teacher!
- We hosted our first Middle School dance Friday, September 15. Thanks to the organization and planning that went into the dance, the near 600 students who came had a great time!
- Professional development for our teachers has begun with work in the areas of developing good teams and differentiation in the classroom.
- Our 8th grade state accreditation visit went very well and we have now been accredited as a K-8 building by the state of Iowa.

We now look ahead to October and what is in store for us during the coming month. Some of the highlights are:


- Weekly gatherings for rosary as we celebrate the Month of the Rosary. (What a great idea to do at home too!)
- We will celebrate the feast day of St. Francis at Mass on October 6.
- Conferences are scheduled for the end of the month of October. Be looking for those schedules to come home and planning ahead to be sure to be in attendance!

- Professional development continues for the teachers on October 20. We will continue talking about good team practices and the concept of differentiation in the classroom.
- The parish staff will attend a Ministry workshop in October as well.

We appreciate how hard everyone is working to make this a good start and a positive school year. Thank you for working with your students to remember what they need in the morning. It is hard not to bring items to school when you know the students left them at home, but this is one way we are building responsibility in our students.

Enjoy this month of October with the falling leaves, beautiful colors, and joy in God's creation!

God's blessings!



Denise E. Mulcahy

Denise E. Mulcahy,
Assistant Principal

DRESS CODE REMINDER!

BEGINNING OCTOBER 1
SHORTS AND SANDALS
(INCLUDING CROCS)
ARE NO LONGER PERMITTED.
THANK YOU!

Thank You!

To the entire community of Saint Francis of Assisi School:

As Matthew Wharff's parents, we want to thank each and every one of you for taking part in Matthew's bottle and can drive. We have been so touched by the outpouring response from all of you. We never anticipated such overwhelming support!

We knew we picked the right school for Matthew academically, and we have found Saint Francis offers so much more than we could ever have anticipated. Both my husband and I were raised Catholic and over the years we have been members of many different parishes, but never have we experienced the joy, support, spirituality and sense of family offered here at Saint Francis. Even as large as our congregation is, the caring and nurturing support extends to all.

To every child who took part in this bottle and can drive, we offer a very special thank you! By your actions you are truly making a difference. It is our hope that through this experience, you will realize that each of you can make a difference for others by your caring actions.

With your bottle and can donations last week, Matthew raised **\$490.10** for the **Susan G. Komen Foundation**, to help them find a cure for cancer. It is so helpful to Matthew to be able to do something personally to find a cure for me and for so many others facing this disease. As his parents, we are so proud of him for taking on this kind of responsibility at such a young age.

My personal medical condition is steadily improving, thanks to the outpouring of prayers. It is so true that with God all things are possible, and continued prayers are the greatest gift of all!

We are proud to be members of our Saint Francis Church, school and community, and know in our hearts there isn't any other like it! From the bottom of our hearts, we sincerely thank each and every one of you for all you are doing to help Matthew's cause.

God bless all of you.

Debbie & Michael Wharff



EMAIL MESSAGES?



Are you receiving the all-school family emails? If you are not, then we may not have your correct email address. Also, be sure that the school email is included in your own address book: stfrancis@dowling.pvt.k12.ia.us

Please contact the school office with any changes with your address, phone, or email. Thank you!



PLEASE NOTE

This correction to the Directory!

Bob / Lori Tigges' phone: 223-9480

HOME & SCHOOL NEWS!

Campbell's has changed their requirements for the **Labels for Education** program.

Effective December 2006, labels from jars and cans will no longer be accepted.

Please continue to save and submit UPC's and lids from appropriate products starting in January.

Thank you!

Valley West Mall Class Cash !

Thanks to all of you who participated in this year's Class Cash contest!

We are pleased to announce that St. Francis School is the 2nd Place Winner in this year's contest!

As the Second Place winner, St. Francis School was rewarded a check for \$2,000!

Class Cash is Valley West Mall's way to assist in providing school in our community with funds they can use to benefit in the education of our children.





MUSICAL NOTES by Mrs. Lee Randall

Greetings to Everyone! It has been so wonderful to hear from so many of you welcoming me to your school community. As a new teacher, it is always reassuring to have such understanding and supportive responses.

Here is a brief overview of some of the things that your students are working on.

- K, 1, 2 – Steady beat, rhythm, high and low sounds
- 3, 4 – Differences between steady beat and rhythm, melodic contour, vocal techniques
- 5, 6 – Vocal techniques, listening skills, various scales, note reading
- 7, 8 – Guitar chords, styles of music, writing music

Each group is also preparing the liturgy for Mass. We have been blessed with the addition of our new music director Rachel Mohr's wonderful piano playing. Judy Schliesman has also been playing for us, as well as filling me in on many of the songs and traditions here at the school. Both of these ladies deserve a big thank-you for their hard work and flexibility with our six-day schedule.

Many of our 5-8th grade students have just finished their taped auditions for Iowa's OPUS honor choir. We will receive the results on October 12. These students worked very hard and if selected will be great representatives to our school. Let's pray for them to be recognized at this great festival!

St. Francis Angels

We would like to thank Mr. Joe Tallman for coordinating the playground U. S. map painting project this year.

A big thank you, too, to all the parent volunteers and 8th grade students that helped paint and spread mulch in the playground equipment area. The playground looks great!





ENRICHMENT by Mrs. Chris Joslin

Middle School: September brings major activity with the establishment of Mock Trial Teams. This year we will have three teams representing SFA, one from each of the grade levels. I am very appreciative of all the volunteers who are coaching the teams. Jim Sinclair, Sandra Montgomery, and Tom Leon are leading the **6th** grade team. Eileen Wixted Havekost and a variety of helpers are leading the **7th** grade team and a new parishioner, Meggan Guns is leading the **8th** grade team. They will practice throughout October with competition on the 25th.

In **7th** grade, I am meeting with a pilot program for Language Arts. We are developing critical thinking skills through vocabulary growth and reading a novel. The students also are involved in journal writing with Mrs. Head about the novel we are reading in class, *Pride and Prejudice*. I am also pleased that we have 2 teams that have chosen their topic for National History Day and that 2 other groups are in the process of developing one; all from 7th grade this year. Several **7th** grade students are also working with Ms. Krzywicki on Odyssey of the Mind.

This fall I have also been working with Dr. Dowdle at DCHS to initiate a reading program for **8th** graders at SFA that will be extended to all 8th graders in the Diocese. Many of you know that in order to graduate from Dowling, each student must read a total of 16 extra or "Reading Across the Curriculum" books. It is designed that each quarter they should read one book and have a conference with at teacher about the book. In order to encourage 8th graders to prepare for the future, Dr. Dowdle, Peter Ause and I are working on program that would allow them to begin reading from the designated RAC book list. When they are finished reading the book, they may set up a conference with myself or another authorized member of the faculty. This will be recorded and sent to Dowling where they will receive credit for each book that they read and hold a conference, up to 8 books, or ½ of their total DCHS requirement.

GRADES 4 and 5:

I have started several small pull-out groups. In **5th** grade, we are piloting a program which parallels the math curriculum. Students will be taking pretests and from those scores as well as teacher observation, I will work with a small group of students to expand that curriculum. This group has the possibility of changing every 4-6 weeks depending on the unit. I have also started a small pull-out group for **5th** grade language arts that will work on a project in conjunction with technology. I will be working with the **4th** grade on their production of *Because of Winn Dixie*, a play that is fast becoming an annual tradition for them. After the play is finished I will begin some pull-out groups in 4th grade also.

GRADES 1 and 2:

I am beginning pull-out groups with top readers. These groups will change over the course of the year as children of this age tend to accelerate at varying speeds. This gives the students an opportunity to work on language arts skills besides reading.

Grades Kindergarten-3: I will be scheduling several whole class enrichment opportunities later this fall.





The Book Fair helps us promote learning...

Book Nook

by Mrs. Mary Head

Would you encourage your child's love of reading if you could? Of course, what's more — you can!

Scholastic Book Fairs comes to our school on October 30 – November 2 to share exciting books and learning products with our young readers. Parents and teachers will find plenty of items to interest them too. The fair will be set up the week of October 30th when classes will visit. Parents may shop during the school day but are especially welcome during parent/teacher conference times on Tuesday, October 31st from 4:30 – 7 pm and Thursday, November 2 from 1:00 to 8:00 pm.

When you visit the fair, look for the Classroom Wish List display to see how you can help build your child's classroom library.

The Book Fair helps us promote learning while raising money to continue to build our library collection. To preview some of the titles that will be at our Book Fair go to www.scholastic.com/bookfairs.

MIDDLE SCHOOL DANCE

for Grades 7 & 8

Friday, October 20

HOLY TRINITY SCHOOL

\$6.00

7pm-9:30pm

School ID's required

News from the Lunchline

by Mrs. Barb Wisnieski

It's October...time for seasonal comfort foods like warm apple crisp and pumpkin cake! Check out the October menu for these items, and maybe join your child(ren) for lunch one day!!

A big thank-you to Dan Buscher, Greg Clausen, Jim Wanek, and Dave Wisnieski for helping unload our government commodity truck last month. As we continue to grow, our shipments get larger and larger, and the extra help and muscles were much appreciated!!

Our middle school salad program has taken off: middle school students apparently LOVE salad!! Check out the menu schedule on the website....salads will also be changing seasonally.

The response to changing over to milk in plastic bottles has been very positive! We are the only school in Central Iowa to have milk in plastic bottles, and we are very fortunate that Roberts Dairy is piloting this program with our school. In just a month, we have noticed less milk in the trash, and an increase in milk purchased. The Midwest Dairy Council has provided us with grant money to use for recycling, equipment, or other areas which promote milk consumption. We hope to partner with our student council in a recycling project this school year.

Thanks again to all of our serving and cafeteria volunteers who donate many hours to the School Lunch Program!!

Happy Fall!!



¡BIENVENIDOS! by Mrs. Shelly Power

Learning a second language at an early age . . .

- Has a positive effect on intellectual growth and enriches and enhances a child's mental development
- Leaves students with more flexibility in thinking, greater sensitivity to language, and a better ear for listening
- Improves a child's understanding of his/her native language
- Gives a child the ability to communicate with people s/he would otherwise not have the chance to know
- Opens the door to other cultures and helps a child understand and appreciate people from other countries
- Gives a student a head start in language requirements for college
- Increases job opportunities in many careers where knowing another language is a real asset.

READING & WRITING

by Mrs. Mary Anne Conway

Recent research says that the more your child writes, the better he/she will write AND read. Reading and writing strategies are intertwined and growth in one area is always reflected in the other.

In writing, the child is required to give special attention to letter detail, a sequence of sounds, a sequence of letters and the connections between messages in oral language and messages in printed language. Writing requires that the child organize his/her thoughts into understandable communication. This process strengthens the writer's understanding of language usage and also his/her grasp of the chosen topic.

The following simple message reminds us how reading and writing work together:

Read!

The more you read
the better you read.
The more you write
the better you write.

The more you read
the better you write.
The more you write
the better you read.

And all the time you are thinking!

- Anonymous

Happy Reading & Writing!

