



Sun Times

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

Volume 8, Issue 1

Roberta Harvey, Principal

Denise Mulcahy, Assistant Principal

Sep, 2006

Dear Parents,



And so another year begins!

It has been a busy, yet enjoyable time returning to

St. Francis of Assisi School in preparation for positive

learning experiences in 2006-2007. I want to personally thank the entire staff, both parish and school, for the warm welcome and support, as I serve as interim principal this year. Everyone has been helpful, encouraging, and patient. Lastly, I cannot forget the many calls and cards received from our school families as a welcome to this service. Bless you all!

St. Francis School is happy to welcome the following new faculty/staff members for the upcoming year. Audra Crandell, KAM/KPM; Carol Gaul, first grade; Katie Neugent, second grade; Lacy Sprung, sixth grade, Andrew Shea, sixth grade; Cory Wenthe, seventh grade; Jennifer Wallace, seventh grade; Lee Randall, Music; Shelly Power, Spanish; Mary Anne Conway, Student Support; Kristin Williams, first grade associate; Molly Myers, KAM associate. They bring with them many gifts and talents. I have no doubt they will add greatly to our one body in service to the school and its children.

A big thanks goes to our Home and School Association for welcoming all staff for in-service week with a delicious lunch. We en-

joyed the tasty meal and community time greatly.

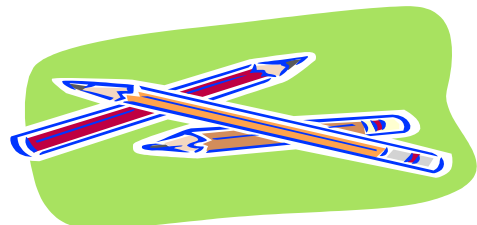
When you enter the building, you'll see that it is spic'n span clean!. Our hardworking maintenance staff of Jadran, Hamdo, and Cam gets a note of praise and thanks. The thorough cleaning and maintenance of this large complex is no small task. It takes many hands.

Mother Teresa said, "If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other." Let us remember how important our Catholic Christian community is to the growth of our children and families. May we bear witness to the Gospel kingdom by lifting up Him and each other with love and gratitude.

Kindest regards and peace—

Roberta Harvey

Roberta Harvey,
Principal



Welcome Newcomers!!

We welcome the following students and their families to the St. Francis School community!

Bryce B., Gr. 1

Isabella D. Gr. 1

Nick W., Gr. 2

Hank W., Gr. 2

Michael K., Gr. 3

Steve L., Gr. 3

Matthew M., Gr. 3

Alexa D., Gr. 4

Kristen B., Gr. 5

Jacque L., Gr. 5

Salem W., Gr. 5

Cassandra C., Gr. 6

Alex C., Gr. 6

Kelsey K., Gr. 6

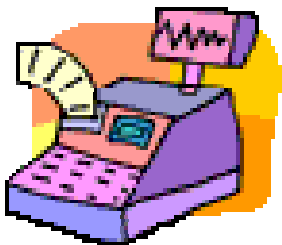
Andrew C., Gr. 7

Tommy E., Gr. 7

Alex W., Gr. 7

Angelina C., Gr. 8

We Welcome You!



Valley West Mall Class Cash

Class Cash competition continues through September 2. Double points will be awarded on September 1 and 2!

Be sure to 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 Mr. Jason Southward

As we begin the year, I again would just like to thank you, the parents, for valuing the arts as a vital part of your child's education. St. Francis truly is blessed by the parental support of and involvement in the fine arts programs. Whether it is volunteering in the classrooms, attending a concert, or teaching a Talking Canvas lesson...**your actions speak loudly.** Thank you!



Guidance Corner by Mrs. Julie Heckle

Welcome back! I hope all of you had a relaxing summer vacation. This year's related arts schedule will look a little different as we move to a 6-day schedule. I thought it might be helpful for you to know which day your child has Guidance class. M-Day stands for the days we have Mass, which is usually Friday. Letter days will be marked on the family calendar.

C- Day: 3rd

E-Day: 4th & 2nd

D-Day: 5th & A.M. Kindergarten

M-Day: 1st & P.M. Kindergarten

I will be collaborating with the Middle School teachers this year and integrating the Guidance standards and benchmarks into the core curriculum areas. I look forward to team teaching with our Middle School staff.

Kindergarten and first grade will begin with a unit on listening. Second graders will focus on building friendships and 3rd-5th grade will be exploring personal growth and self esteem.

My role as a school counselor includes teaching guidance class, providing individual and group counseling, and consulting with parents and teachers. I encourage you to call and set up an appointment with me if you feel your child is struggling academically, socially or emotionally. I am here to help, so please don't hesitate to utilize my services.

I am looking forward to a wonderful school year.



ENRICHMENT by Mrs. Chris Joslin

It is wonderful to be starting the first year at SFA with K-8 students! It means we are almost at our full capacity and it means that I will have more students to enrich! I have been busy organizing a variety of whole class enrichment themes/presentations and opportunities as well as small pull-out groups.

- I am planning to continue several programs this year such as National History Day, Geography Bee and Mock Trial. Some are limited to Middle School and others are open to a variety of grade levels. I will keep you aware of the opportunities as they come due.
- Thank you for all your support in the past and I look forward to working with all the students at SFA in some form over the next school year.

WANTED:

Mock Trial coaches for 6-8 grade teams.

Great Middle Schoolers need YOU

to coach them in the finer points of trial law AND in acting.

If interested, please contact Ms. Joslin at St. Francis
(cjoslin@dowling.pvt.k12.ia.us OR 457-7167)

We want to get teams organized and practicing
as soon as possible.

THANK YOU, so much!



Food Allergies at SFA

Several students at St. Francis of Assisi School have severe, life threatening food allergies. We are committed to try to 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 Family Handbook and thank you for helping to keep our students safe and healthy!

The following students have severe peanut and other food allergies:

Connor I., K; Matthew M., K;
Eli A., Grade 1; Kate F., Grade 2;
Tyler L., Grade 3; Michael G., Grade 4;
Connor F., Grade 5; Isabella V., Grade 7;
Cecilia V., Grade 7; Jacob B., Grade 8

Book Nook

by Mrs. Mary Head

The Media Center welcomes all students to the Saint Francis of Assisi Library. Saint Francis has a library to be proud of and I am anxious for all students to come in and browse the shelves,

Library books are checked out for a two-week period; however, students are encouraged to return their library books as soon as they have finished reading them. Books may be returned any day of the week. There are no overdue fines, but if a student has a number of overdue books, he/she will be asked to wait until those books are returned before checking out another. Overdue notices are sent to the students on a weekly basis.

Grades kindergarten through third visit the library with their homeroom class on their assigned letter day (Kindergarten comes on "D" days, 1st grade on "B" days, 2nd grade on "E" days, and 3rd grade on "C" days). Their visits include a story and a chance to select and checkout books. I have a tremendous love of reading and truly enjoy sharing literature with the students.

Please continue reading to your children – even when they become independent readers themselves. The benefits of reading aloud are many. It increases vocabulary, widens background experiences, extends listening and comprehending abilities, and expands their capacity to relate to the environment. Reading together can be a very special time for both parents and children.

I am honored to have had a number of students donate books to our library in lieu of receiving gifts at their birthday parties. I cherish these book donations and it is delightful to see each gift "opened again and again" with each person who checks them out. If you haven't seen our Media Center, please stop by soon.



SHOW YOUR COLORS SHIRT DAY!

Friday, September 15th

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



MIDDLE SCHOOL DANCES

for Grades 7 & 8

Friday, August 25
St. Augustin's School

\$6.00

7pm-9:30pm

Friday, September 15
St. Francis of Assisi School

\$6.00

7pm-9:30 pm

**School ID's
required**



MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWS!

Attention 8th Grade Parents: Our first middle school dance will be held on Friday, Sept. 15 from 7-9:30. We need people to help in many areas. If you missed the sign up sheet at back to school night, but would like to volunteer, please call or e-mail Mrs. Mistry ASAP. We will be hosting all the Diocese schools (about 300 kids) and would love to have your help. Thanks!

Student Council: Student Council information will go out on Monday, August 28. Please read carefully and call if you have questions. We are excited about the new year! If your child is interested, please make sure they meet all the required deadlines. E-mail or call Mrs. Mistry with questions.



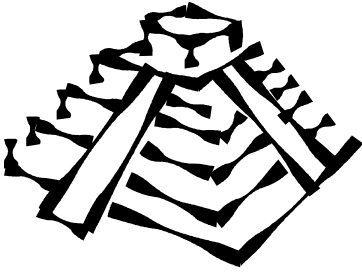
GYM SHORTS by Mr. Mike Hazel

Welcome back students! As the school year gets underway, just a few things to keep in mind for PE and Athletics. For PE, each student needs a separate pair of tennis shoes for indoors. They do not need to be a new pair, just clean and different from those they might wear outdoors. This will help keep our gym floor in good shape and help keep heavy maintenance costs down. Many of our students may find it difficult to adjust to the new 6-day schedule for Related Arts classes. Students in grades 1-5 a year ago were used to having Music and PE twice per week. This year, it is more likely to have those classes meet once per week, and occasionally twice. We have grown quickly since 2000! Please do your best to help your students stay on top of their schedules so they know when to be prepared for class.

Suns Softball and Volleyball are already underway for the 2006 seasons. We are pleased to report we have 2 SB teams and 7 VB teams! Be sure to come out and support Suns athletics! Softball games are held at the Urbandale complex off 100th, and they are played at 6:00 or 7:30, primarily on Tuesdays and Wednesdays in September. Our VB teams will begin game play on September 9 at Dowling. We will host Saturday games through October 14.

Please remember to have your child's physical up to date if they are planning on participating in Suns athletics this school year. If not up to date and on file in the Nurse's office, students will not be allowed to practice or play games.

Good to see everyone back! Let's all have a great school year!



Welcome to Spanish

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Does your child
know this song yet?

*¡Adiós mis amigos,
adiós!*

*¡Adiós mis amigos,
adiós!*

*Adiós, adiós,
adiós, adiós-*

*¡Adiós mis amigos,
adiós!*

Grade Level Contact

Time for Spanish

2006-2007:

First to Third Grade
30 minutes once a week

Forth to Fifth Grades
30 minutes twice a
week

Sixth to Eighth Grades
45 minutes 2-3 times
per week during a
semester

About our new program

The St. Francis School Spanish program incorporates an innovative and communicative teaching methodology and curriculum. It is built upon the theory that children learn a second language best when fully immersed in the language, just as a child learns their first language. Students in grades one through eight will receive Spanish in-

struction. Most classroom instruction is in Spanish. Pictures, songs, games, rhymes, and gestures will be used to help students understand.

The Spanish curriculum is interdisciplinary and based on the regular classroom curriculum, so that students have the opportunity to learn about science, math, language arts, relig-

ion, and social studies topics in their Spanish class. The main focus of the curriculum, however, is communication. Students will learn to communicate in a practical, conversational manner. As students progress in language comprehension, reading and writing skills are introduced in a content-based manner.

About your new teacher

¡Hola! My name is Shelly Power and I'm excited to be the Spanish teacher at St. Francis School. I have experience teaching all levels of Spanish and am

happy to be teaching at the elementary and middle school levels once again. Also, Katie Almeida will be student teaching with me this fall.



News from the Lunch line...by Mrs. Barb Wisnieski

Welcome to the 2006-2007 school year from the SFA School Lunch Staff!! We are glad to be back in the kitchen and are ready to go for another great year with your students.

This year, we have again added staff to accommodate a growing student and staff population. We welcome Linda Larson (Head Cook); Kelli Recker and Tracy Knapp (Cafeteria Coordinators).

This year, we anticipate our daily lunch count to exceed 400 meals on most days. We will work diligently, with the help of our many volunteers, to produce and serve a variety of healthy, appetizing, well-balanced lunch options for our students and staff.

Here what new for this school year:

We will be using Roberts Dairy this year for our school milk provider. We have switched to serving milk in plastic bottles which studies have shown increases milk consumption in this age group. So far, students have enjoyed this option!! **PLEASE NOTE that if your student purchases milk only at school, the price has increased to .40 per milk.** We have not increased the price of milk at SFA in 5 years...this increase offsets inflation/price of bottling. (The price of school lunch will not increase this year).

Middle school students will again be offered an a la carte program this school year. This program allows them to purchase extra healthy snack items, which act as a supplement to their hot or cold lunch. These items are to be purchased after they eat lunch. Our staff discussed this program and its rules with the students on Friday: they are aware that they may purchase these items from their account only if they have sufficient funds, or they may bring .75 cash. Only one item may be purchased, which prevents students from turning a la carte into "lunch". If you have any questions or concerns about lunch, please feel free to call us at school.

We will also be offering middle school students the option of ordering a salad in place of a school lunch this year. (This will not be a salad bar, but a boxed salad, which will contain all required food components for State requirements). Please refer to the Salad Schedule in this packet to see the variety of salad options available. Cost will be the same as a student school lunch (\$2.20) and will be ordered in the morning in their homeroom class.

Because we receive State and Federal reimbursement, our diocesan schools have been mandated to develop and implement a School Wellness Policy this school year. I had the opportunity to serve on the Diocesan Wellness Committee last school year, which developed this policy for all Diocesan Schools. It is each school's responsibility to determine how the policy will be implemented, and for monitoring all wellness activities. We have formed a Wellness Committee, and we will be keeping you informed via this newsletter and other parent communications regarding student wellness activities this school year.

Thank-you in advance for your continued support of our program. Please contact us with any questions or concerns you have...

Barb Wisnieski
Jeannine Laughlin

