



November Newsletter 2009

207-781-6321 Mackworth Island, Falmouth ME 04105

www.friendsschoolofportland.org

Contents

Calendar
News
Reflections from the Head of School
Learning Update
Student Articles & Queries

Link to Giving & Donations Online
<http://www.friendsschoolofportland.org/giving>

Calendar

Wed-Friday	November 25-27		Thanksgiving Break – NO CLASSES
Tuesday	December 1	5:30 p.m.	Board of Directors Meeting
Saturday	December 5	10 a.m - 2 p.m.	Hats Off! Annual Craft Sale Bazaar
Wednesday	December 9	6 - 7 p.m.	Parents Admissions Information Session
Friday	December 11	5:30 p.m.	Movie Night
Wednesday	December 16	8:15 a.m.	A Chat with James, Head of School
Thursday	December 17	6 p.m.	Parents Association Meeting
Sat-Sunday	December 19- January 3		Winter Break – NO CLASSES
Monday	January 4, 2010		CLASSES RESUME

News

The **Annual Giving Report** for 2008-2009, designed by Ted Smith, father of Colin, class of '10, was mailed at the end of October to officially launch our Annual Appeal to support financial aid. This year's tuition revenues are projected to cover just under 80% of the operating expenses, which is fairly typical for independent schools. Though every family, in effect, receives tuition aid from the generous donations of our greater community, individual donations contribute to the \$200,000 need-based aid budget, up from \$120,000 last year. We rely on your generous support especially in this challenging economy.

An easy way to **give TD Bank money to FSP** is to name the school in the Affinity Membership Program with an existing or new account. Call 207-774-5691 or go to <http://friendsschoolofportland.org/giving>

This year the school received a grant from **Wingspan Partnerships**, a foundation dedicated developing and supporting partnerships between public and private schools, that bring school communities together and provide additional resources to the underserved. This allowed us to create a liaison group with representation from each of the three schools on Mackworth Island, Governor Baxter School for the Deaf, the REAL School, and FSP. The group has been working to modify our collaborative gatherings to encourage more personal interactions as opposed to "parallel play." The group also supports the Tri-school Student Council, comprised of two representatives from each school, and the team building groups that meet monthly. Plans are also underway for the second annual "Island Day" on June 8, 2010.



REAL School students host FSP for Harvest Crafts prior to Halloween



Our Halloween traditions include the “Spooky Path” created by the kindergarten class & the all-school photo

Reflections from the Head of School

This past Friday, the 13th no less, it was very apparent that Friends School has arrived in so many ways. There were three different school related events and enough of us to make all of them successful. The 7th-8th grade students were invited to a social at Breakwater School, 5th-6th grade parents and teachers got together for a potluck dinner, and everyone else had the opportunity to attend Movie Night at school. As I reflected on that evening, I thought of many of the other programs and events that have recently taken place. Our after school programs, coordinated by Ellie Chase, offer a variety of enrichment activities. Her husband, Clint, is offering boat building and plans to have a sailing class in the spring. “The Flames,” our cross-country running team coached by Ted Smith, completed its second season. At the third annual community soccer game, the school band debuted. (Other activities and a calendar are listed on the website.)

In October, we hosted our second Parenting for Peace speaker series. Nicole Borrasso, our 3rd-4th grade teacher, was part of a panel presenting on environmental health and its relation to children’s health, and she gave a great overview of the school’s place-based curriculum. We hope to have a link to the video soon. And, we have set May 11th for the next speaker, Sandra Steingraber, who will speak from her perspective as an ecologist and parent.

The Parents Association continues to beautify the front entrance, sell SunriseGuides at a rate that still puts us in the lead of school sales in the Greater Portland community, and make crafts for the upcoming Hats Off! Crafts Bazaar & Incredible Bake Sale on Saturday, December 5th from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.



Meanwhile, the board and teachers have begun to examine the strategic issues that will face the school in the near future in preparation for the self-study that is part of the accreditation process that we hope to begin this spring. The students in the 5th-8th grade have been learning about Quaker business meeting by organizing themselves as a “monthly meeting” to take on issues related to putting Quaker values into action in the school.

All of this activity points to the vitality and depth of talent that is evident in our growing community. As we enter our fifth admissions season, it is heartening to hear current parents describe the school to prospective parents. Not only can they point to the maturing nature of the school and the many activities, but they also describe a school in which each child is known and respected. FSP has become and will continue to become the Quaker school that was envisioned five years ago.

~ James Grumbach, Head of School



FSP hosts GBSD & the REAL School to share what we are thankful for & to create the “Thanking Tree”

Learning Update

Part of being a Friends school includes giving students ongoing and multiple opportunities to know themselves as learners, as community members, and as physical and spiritual beings. Most of the time, we try to infuse these states of being into as much as we can. This year in grades 5-8, we also designated 45 minutes each Monday to explicitly focus on one or more of these modalities, as well as offer occasional presentations by members of the community about inspiration in their lives. The result is an evolving and eclectic class called BodyMindSpirit.

During the first quarter, with help from Jonathan Ewell, I offered yoga stretches, movement flows, and breathing techniques to help students become more aware of their bodies and how to both calm and energize themselves. Mixed in were reminders of good nutrition, exercise, and sleep. Short journal entries from students after each session show their openness to increasing self-awareness. Corie Scribner shared a bit about her experience in the Peace Corps in Ecuador.

During the second quarter, James Grumbach, Jonathan Ewell, and Jamien Jacobs have introduced the Quaker meeting for business, and the students are currently working out the clerking (leadership) responsibilities. Reports are that our previous class meetings and general approach to students were apparent in their thoughtful participation in these first meetings. Monthly meeting for business will become a regular practice. Our next inspirational speaker will be Sukie Rice, wife of Lee Chisholm and a powerfully led Quaker who has mobilized major support for an orphan care center in Kenya. Then the 5th-6th grades will look at themselves as community members in light of Quaker values while the 7th-8th grades learn some basic human physiology. Future topics include human reproduction and sexuality, healthy decision-making amid social pressures, and handling change in our lives.

~ Mary Tracy, Curriculum Coordinator



Lindy Shapiro from the Tree School presents Three Cups of Tea & students create a related collage

The following articles are from the November edition of the school newspaper, *The FSP Messenger*, which is prepared by Mary Tracy's 5th-6th grade class. Interspersed are queries from the 3rd-4th grade class about the monthly themes.

Bonfires, Oxen, and Seasons: Preschool's Busy Days by Annie Gott, 6th grade

As I walk around the room, I can't help but notice all the amazing trinkets and toys in the preschool class. They are just finishing up their morning meeting and deciding how they want to spend their free time. Fuschia decides to play with the red bricks. "I like playing," she tells me. Oliver decides to head over to the pillow area to play with Lauren as a dog. "I like playing with John when he's here," he says to me. Andy is busy at the piano and Fen goes over to a table, pulls out a pumpkin puzzle, and eagerly sets to work. Devan is busy playing with play dough. Lauren decides to head over to the play dough, along with Fuchsia and Fen. Lea, their teacher, is busily helping the kids add color to their play dough. As Fen leaves the pumpkin puzzle, Abby comes over and works on it.

Lea Sutton has been teaching for four years, all at this school. She has previously been a lawyer and a librarian. When asked about her favorite part of teaching, she simply replies, "The children. They give me more gifts than I could ever give them." She likes to see how they interact with the world and to show them something new and watch their reactions.

The class has a Seasons Table with all natural items that the children and teachers have found that reflect the season that we are in. They also had a bonfire on Friday, October 30th at Bradbury Mountain because they had been talking about how dangerous fire can be, and they wanted to see its warmth and beauty as well. The children will go on a field trip to the Winslow Farm to see oxen in November.

I asked the children what their favorite part of the day was. "Free time," Tess said. "Puzzles," Fen told me. "I like to play with this truck," Andy said, pointing to a wooden truck right next to him. "When Pete

(Nowak) comes at naptime,” Abby told me. “I like to play with Andy,” said Lauren. Looks to me like this class is having some busy days!

Queries on “Color”, last month’s theme, from the 3-4 class

What colors are special to us?

How do colors make us feel?

Do words make colors in my mind?



The 7th – 8th grade class organized an assembly of Capture the Flag, Cat & Mouse, and Statues...fun for all!!

Laura and the Infants and Toddlers by Megan Linfield, 5th grade

Hi, I’m Megan, and I am going to tell you a little bit more about a certain person whose name is Laura Morrison. She lives in North Yarmouth and has two children. Her son is sixteen and her daughter is twelve.

She took the job of Infant-Toddler Childcare Provider because she loves to work with kids. She plans the kids’ daily routine very well: free play, snack, art projects (stamping, painting, drawing, or play-dough). Then they go outside and play until lunch. After lunch they read and take a nap. When they wake up, they have their afternoon snack and play until they go home.

Laura took this job because she has a very big heart for kids. She said the kids enjoy playing outside, reading, and sing-along dance time. It is clear from the time I spent that Laura loves her job, her kids, and her life.



A teepee, on lone from HearME Now, our new neighbor, is a great delight for preschool children

Queries on “Beauty”, this month’s theme, also from the 3-4 class

In what do I see beauty that others may not?

How does beauty connect with nature?

How do you find beauty?

How does beauty make us feel?