



Parent Post



A NEWSLETTER FOR PARENTS AND FRIENDS OF FOX RIVER COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL

Fall Festival Leaves a Happy Feeling



Once again families and friends gathered under the vibrant oak trees on the Fox River Country Day School campus for Fall Festival. Bundled children and parents climbed onto the hay bales in the back of the wagon, ready for their horse drawn hayride. The driver signaled with his familiar click-click, and the horses were on their way.

For many families, a hayride is the official beginning to this favorite Fox River event. The threat of rain moved some of the activities to the gym, but the faculty and staff maintained their high level of enthusiasm for the afternoon's activities. **Jami Switzer** and **Mary Fehlman** artfully spun cotton candy wands, while **Bonniesue Wadleigh**, **Stacey Spears**, and **Lauren Bierman** grabbed microphones and belted out a Beatles favorite on the karaoke machine. Pumpkin painting took place under the spirited guidance of **Cindy O'Sullivan**, **Jessica Lund** and **Bridget Austen**. Children were lined up in the hall to get their faces painted by **Ginger Mack** and **Carol Betts** and then headed off

to try the moonwalk, decorate a sugar cookie with **Diane Schael** and **Linda Stoka**, or visit with a favorite teacher. Outside, families took part in the Crazy Scarecrow Race with **Bethany Whitaker** or joined a spontaneous soccer game on the lawn.

Meanwhile up at the Dining Hall, the Fall Festival Bake Off was under way. Participants submitted their best homemade pumpkin and apple creations to be sampled and judged by a panel of sugar specialists, **Phil and Ruth Calkins**, **Mary Fran Doolin**, **Barbara Butcher** and **Nathan Bowen**. The competition was fierce, but finally, **Jami Switzer's** Apple Crisp and **Jana Schwan's** Pumpkin Bars were judged to be the winners! Recipes, if not cherished as family secrets, will be shared for the holidays.

A bountiful potluck dinner was the perfect end to the day!

Thanks must go to Mellanie Michael for organizing and orchestrating the Fall Festival and to all of the Fox River faculty and staff for providing this memorable day for our families! 🍁



Left: Kayla Yourek gets her face painted; the Perlman family. Above: the hayride's a popular attraction. Right, clockwise from top: musical chairs with Samantha Friberg and Rachel Dwyer; Darshan Addanki and his younger brother decorate cookies; Irena Grauzinis, Marianna Silva and Hope Damel show their painted faces; Peter Mikulak presides over the grill.



Parents' Support Association News

The PSA has been hard at work organizing and running various events on and off campus. The fundraising events, such as Max and Erma's and Chuck E. Cheese were successful and well attended. The Fall fundraiser offered a beautiful assortment of wrapping paper, gift items, and candles. It was once again well organized and an effective, fun way to raise money for our school.

Ready...set...they're off! The Auction Committee is racing ahead towards making this year's auction the most successful in our school's history. It will be held at the Boulder Ridge Country Club, located in Lake in the Hills, on Saturday, April 22, 2006. More details will follow as we round the next curve!

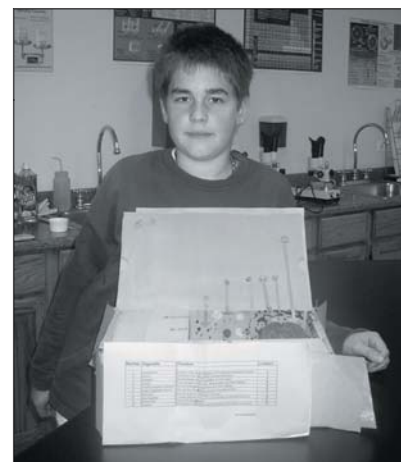
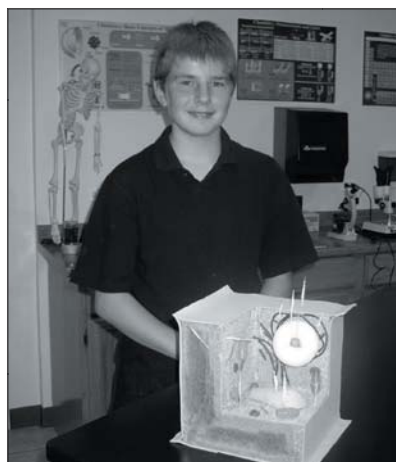
The Handy Man Helpers have done an outstanding job this year clearing unwanted brush and trees from areas around campus. Campus beautification projects are ongoing throughout the year. If you would like to be a part of beautifying our campus, come join the fun on a Saturday morning soon. Please check the website and *Nuts and Bolts* for your next opportunity.

The PSA would like to announce its new Public Relations/Marketing committee. If you have a background in PR or marketing and an interest in getting involved on this committee, please contact Julie Kelgard. 🍁

Middle School Science

Drop by Bethany Whitaker's science lab in Cox, and you just may find yourself diving into a project with the students. Whether it's virtually dissecting a frog, creating a crystal garden, designing a complex machine, or constructing a coral reef, Ms. Whitaker and her Middle School students, are busy discovering more about the world around them.

The seventh grade had the opportunity to express their creativity in a recent science project. The assignment was to create a three-dimensional animal or plant cell, using common materials found around the house. Out came the ping pong balls, puffy paint, and plastic cups! One student used cake, marshmallows, and candy for his model and treated his classmates to a sample during the presentation. Students discovered the complexity of plant and animal cells by creating their own unique models. What's next for seventh grade scientists? Stop in and have a look! 🍁



Kyle Garand and Jan Schnau show their science projects.

From the Head of School



I've enjoyed pondering the words of several Education writers recently. Their perspectives are fresh and thought-provoking, and I wanted to share them with you.

Ted and Nancy Sizer, noted education reformers whose most recent book is *The*

Students Are Watching: Schools and the Moral Contract, feel strongly that students of today must learn to "grapple," to deal with problems that may have many answers, or no answers at all. According to Mr. Sizer, the difference between grappling and other ways of learning is that "when the questions become the student's own, so do the answers." Allowing children to struggle—to grapple—requires more from the adults in their lives than merely standing by and watching the process unfold. As Sizer says, "Kids watch us all the time, and learn. Those of us in the school world are conscious of signals arising from our very being, the way we carry ourselves, the way we draw lines, the things we honor or cherish. Substance may be less important than the way we act."

Roland Barth, author and former faculty member at the Harvard Graduate School of

Education, underscores this observation in *Learning By Heart*. He writes, "Our business as educators and parents is to lead young people toward profound and lasting levels of learning. We can't do that unless we go there ahead of them, behind them, and alongside of them."

Our example as parents and teachers, as learners and thinkers, as friends and colleagues, as listeners and problem-solvers, as neighbors and citizens, will give our students meaningful models as they "grapple" with life issues that come their way. Any school can teach facts and figures. But a school is only as strong as its staff and parent communities. Thank you for partnering with us to make Fox River Country Day School one of those special schools that fosters and models "profound and lasting" forms of learning.

Warmly, John Friborg

Environmental Ed

Our Fox River students and Fen Day volunteers have enjoyed many Saturday mornings pruning, clearing, and planting in our forested fen? If you have not participated in a Fen Day and are asking yourself...so, what exactly is a forested fen?...our naturalist has an answer:




It is a forested area where mineral water percolating through glacial deposits of sand and limestone runs beneath the surface of the ground, seeping out through the soil. Indicator

species of a forested fen include black ash, white cedar, and skunk cabbage. There are an estimated 17 acres of this unusual wetland community in all of Illinois, and fully half exists on school property. To protect this gem as well as other prized neighboring natural communities, in 1989 the school went through the steps to designate 25 acres of the campus's natural environment as a Natural Heritage Landmark, now called the Forested Fen Sanctuary. Our school's promise to maintain and nurture these natural areas is fulfilled by students in our environmental education program and by our valiant Fen Day volunteers.

Please check the website for the date of the next Fen Day. There is a pruning tool with your name on it...



This month the Environmental Education Department kicked off its Sponsor a Tree Program. In early October each class in grades 3-8 selected a specific oak tree as their "class tree." Students are responsible for the care of their tree until their graduation from Fox River Country Day School. Each tree will be identified by a plaque with the class' year of graduation. With the hope that these oak trees live out their 300 year lives, these plaques will remind visitors of our students' contribution to our school for decades to come. Most of the trees are located near the school entrance or close to the Dining Hall. Ask your child to point out his or her class tree. 

What's Going On In the Classroom?

Penny Meyers teaches a lively group of fourth graders in her loft classroom above the gym. During a language arts class, the students were discussing a poetry project—Autumn Through the Senses. The students brainstormed about the sights, sounds, tastes, and fragrances of autumn and discussed strategies for writing poetry. Full of a fragrant and colorful sense of fall, the class composed their poems. The following is a sample of this poetry:

Autumn Through the Senses

by Kevin Realzola

Autumn is such a colorful season.

Bright crimson and orangey leaves make a colorful carpet on the ground.
In the evening, a huge golden ball drops right down behind the trees.
Geese gather together and fly in a V formation.

Leaves make a soft sound drift to the ground.
Busy birds chirp and sing like a symphony of violins.

Strong winds rush right past me.
Fall rains come crashing down on my head.

I smell oak trees all around me.
Roaring bonfires of leaves send smoke above my house.

I taste the juicy red apple.
Hot cocoa tastes delicious.

Autumn Through the Senses

by Elinor Davies

Fall is a season of joy.

Leaves cover the earth like a blanket for the cold ground.
Flowers of gold and scarlet die away.
The sky, icy blue, is like a glass of water spilled on the earth.

Birds are twittering, making plans for their travel.
The wind whispers secrets in my ear.
Erie howl of the wolf rings loud and clear.
The rustling of the leaves makes you wonder what they have to say.

Leaves crunch under my feet.
The air has a chill like a snowstorm.
The squirrel, bustling to find food, brushes its tail against my frozen legs.
I finally reach the milky white door,
And it squeaks like a mouse.

A burst of warm air like an oven at full heat.
The rich turkey's scents fill my lungs,
And the spicy stuffing is ready to eat.

I sit by the blazing fire and sip Mom's warm chocolaty cocoa.
The stuffing falls down my throat like rocks tumbling down a vast hill.
I snuggle into the cozy blanket just like a baby bird in its nest.

Autumn is a beautiful season.

Athletics: Go Hawks!

Soccer

A stampede of soccer cleats, a cheer of “Let’s Go Hawks!” from the huddle, freshly cut grass, a chill in the air, a blaze of color from the trees...it’s soccer season!

Coach Roger Honey shares these words about the Hawks soccer team:

“This season, with the addition of several new and talented players, our team has enjoyed improving skills and a true sense of teamwork. Well executed plays from both defensive and offensive situations resulted in a joyous sense of achievement and enabled the team to experience the fun of cooperation, tenacity, and discipline. When faced with strong opposition, the ‘Hawks’ rallied to produce their best soccer with great spirit and intelligent plays.

“Very well done! to all the lads and especially to those younger players who supported the senior team. We are all blessed and extremely fortunate this season to have senior players of such a high caliber, who are remarkable examples to all.”

Many thanks to our soccer coaches, **Roger Honey** and **Ryan White** for leading our soccer team through their undefeated season. Thanks also to our officials, **Phil Calkins** and **Rob Waller**.

Volleyball

The keyword for the Middle School volleyball players was “teamwork”. This year the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth grade players built on the foundation of skills learned last year and competed with other private schools in the area.

The game against DaVinci Academy proved to be a turning point in the season and an opportunity to gel as a team. The girls passed, set, and spiked the ball, while communicating with each other and expressing their winning attitudes. Matches against Harvest Christian, Quest, and Summit on the home court were equally as exciting.

Coach Reid Charlston writes, “The great thing about our season is that we have seen teamwork in effect on and off the court. We are a group that cares about and has a



Clockwise from top left: Middle School Girls' Volleyball teams up, Soccer team shows its stuff, the Acarath Fun Run gets underway, Girls' Volleyball practice.

commitment to each other. Our successes this season have been a result of everyone’s contribution.” The team’s final match against DaVinci was the culmination of their hard work this season. Cheering fans were treated to exciting rallies, “killer” serves, surprising saves, and a wonderfully solidified team.

Thanks go to volleyball coaches, **Reid Charlston** and **Bethany Whitaker** for a great season. Thanks also to **Mario Vergara** for officiating at the home games and to **Christie Clarke** and **Lisa Johansen** for all of the extra support.

Acarath Fun Run

Runners in Grades One, Two and Three assembled at the starting line ready to compete in the annual one mile Acarath Fun Run at the Acarath Montessori School in Schaumburg. With the command of “GO”, they were off! Dressed in their

spiritwear, Fox River students enjoyed some friendly competition with old friends and new, and finished their races, rallied by the cheers of teachers and parents. Each student was treated to a sack lunch prepared by Miss Carla. Congratulations to all of our FRCDs runners. Go Hawks! 🌟



*“Follow the yellow brick road...” Second grade students attended the Children’s Theatre of Elgin production of The Wizard of Oz at the Hemmens Cultural Center last week. The students thoroughly enjoyed the play and even recognized two of the actors, **Sydney Faler** (2nd grade) and **Malik Pauldon** (4th grade). After the play the students were invited backstage to meet the cast, ask questions, and take pictures!*