From the Director

Snow days - they are definitely not over. I am sorry that we have had to cancel school several times lately, but our policy is to think of the safety of the children first.

When the Pittsburgh Schools decide to close and other districts close or delay, the majority of our children are left without their ride to school. The situation is complex. We want the children in school. We know that parents work and need to find supervision each time we delay or close. We are aware that the snow has caused hardships for all of us.

Our concern stems from children on streets that have no room for safe waiting, the lack of busses to transport them, cars out of control on slippery roads, and the general chaos which accompanies every arrival and dismissal here at Falk School. The last two closings were unavoidable due the lack of sidewalks and parking here at Falk. The University was closed on Monday – a state-declared day of emergency. University facilities management was not able to handle the enormous amount of snow removal. I presume some of us suffered the same problem at our homes.

The consistent variable in all of this was our notification system. I want to thank the parents and teachers who are the hub of this system. Without their early morning efforts our situation would be much more problematic. The teacher and parent phone chains are working to perfection. I hope we will keep cooperating with them so that emergency communication procedures are kept intact. I know this is not an easy task. When all my first calls are answered “Good morning Dr. Mac” I know that this has happened too often.

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From the PTA President

As I type this message on the eve of our annual Falk PTA Bingo event, I think about how the icy cold days of this winter often have tried our patience. As with everything, however, if you look hard enough, the silver lining shines through. These unexpected snow days have allowed many of us to enjoy quality time with our families, that would have been scheduled away, had we known we were going to have those open hours. I’ve enjoyed the extra moments of a slower pace, and getting a little hibernation time. The things I’ve learned that are going on in my kids lives, (now that we’ve had extra time to talk about them), has allowed for adjustments to be made, communication to open up, and rekindling of closeness to occur. As Kahlil Gibran so aptly said, “The obvious is that which is never seen until someone expresses it simply.” The slow and simple structure of snow bound days has exposed me to things I’ve otherwise been too busy to see or address.

This winter has also given us a chance to witness the commendable work of our room parent co-chairs, Sabina Rosenfeld and Barb Rubenstein, and their dedicated teams of room parents who have cheerfully called us with snow delays and cancellations. (I’m on a first name basis with my room parents, now!) I think that they have handled themselves admirably, despite the fact that their volunteer time has been stepped up considerably. We are one of the few schools to offer the convenience of personal calls for snow delays, and I consider this another one of those “Falky things” that makes our school special.

Another Falk bonus has been the dedication of our many head and assistant coaches for the middle school boys and girls basketball teams.

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Calendar of Events

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<tr>
<td>March 22</td>
<td>Excellence in Teaching Roller Skating Event</td>
<td>April 17-21</td>
<td>Falk School Holiday Break</td>
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<td>April 3,4 + 7,8</td>
<td>Library Book Fair</td>
<td>April 22</td>
<td>General PTA Meeting</td>
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<td>April 3,4 + 7-9</td>
<td>Parent Teacher Conferences</td>
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From the Director (continued)

I will continue to shoulder the blame for the decision to delay or close. Please talk to me rather than the parent reps or the teachers. You should also know that the faculty and I are at work examining our process to see if we need to revise the procedures. As I write this, we’re about to have Spring Break. Let’s all hope that the sun comes out to stay!

Dr. McDonald

From the Vice President

We had a great General PTA meeting in February, with psychologist Lori Gephart talking about the topics of respect and bullying. Despite the arctic temperatures, we had nearly a full house. It was great seeing those of you who were able to attend.

Our last General PTA meeting will be April 22nd, 7:30p.m. I am excited to tell you that we’ll be bringing back Leslie Bonci, M.P.H., R.D. – nationally renowned expert on nutrition. Ms. Bonci is a dynamic speaker and she will be presenting: “Tell me What they Should Eat and What I Should Say: A Parent’s Guide to Feeding Kids and Dealing with Body Issues.”

Leslie is the Director of Sports Medicine Nutrition for the Department of Orthopedic Surgery and the Center for Sports Medicine at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center. She is a registered dietitian with a Master’s degree in Public Health. She is a media spokesperson for the American Dietetic Association, providing nutrition expertise nationally in print, radio and television. Leslie serves as the nutritionist for the Pittsburgh Steelers (a position she has held for the past 11 years), the Riverhounds, The University of Pittsburgh Athletic Department and the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre, and also consults to local and national schools and universities, and lectures on behalf of the NCAA on topics such as eating disorders and sports nutrition. She is on the Gatorade Sports Science Institute’s Sports Nutrition Board. She is also the consulting nutritionist for the US Olympics Canoe and Kayak team. Leslie is the co-author of Total Fitness for Women, and the author of the American Dietetic Association Guide to Better Digestion.

Please plan to join us! As always, child care will be provided in the gymnasium for Falk students, age 5+.

Pam Greenhouse

From the PTA President (continued)

The season was exciting and rewarding for the students, parents, and coaches that led us to victory more often than not. It made a special impact on those involved, as was proven in the various “end of season” award and pizza parties that were held. Thank you coaches, and way to go players!

PTA vice president, Pam Greenhouse, provided another meaningful speaker for our general membership meeting held on February 13th in our cafetorium. The topic “Respect”, presented by licensed psychologist Loretta A. Gephart, was informative and very pertinent for children and parents in this new millennium. We boasted an almost record breaking turn out, despite inclement weather.

As a trustee and officer of the Excellence in Teaching Scholarship Fund, I want to invite all families, teachers, staff and their friends to join us for our major fund raising roller skating event, on Saturday March 22, 2003 from 4:30-7:00 p.m. at “Romp N’ Roll” skating rink in Glenshaw. Details will be coming to you by mail, but please plan to support the scholarship by joining us for an afternoon of fun. Also, the cookbook committee for Excellence in Teaching is still “hungry” for recipes. Please see the EIT article in this edition of FalkTalk for more information.

In closing, let me remind you that we are in the final phases of filling the PTA executive board committee chairs and support teams for the 2003-2004 school year. The slate will be published in the next FalkTalk, but we are always ready to find a place for willing workers. If you are interested in a specific area of the PTA, please contact me ASAP. We vote on this slate at the April 22, 2003 general membership meeting. Thank you for your input.

Charlene Barnett

“The obvious is that which is never seen until someone expresses it simply.”

– Kahlil Gibran

Chess Team Wins First Place!

At the 2003 Pittsburgh Scholastic Chess Championship held at Brashear High School on February 15, 2003, the Falk chess team won the first-place trophy (out of a field of 18 school teams). Congratulations!

W e had a great General PTA meeting in February, with psychologist Lori Gephart talking about the topics of respect and bullying. Despite the arctic temperatures, we had nearly a full house. It was great seeing those of you who were able to attend.

General PTA Meeting
April 22, 2003
7:30pm
Leslie Bonci, M.P.H., R.D.

Tell me what they should eat and what I should say: A parent’s guide to feeding kids and dealing with body issues.
BIRTHDAY/GIFT BOOK PROGRAM

The library and the PTA coordinate a Gift Book Program as a means of expanding the library collection while commemorating special times and special persons: birthdays, holidays, grandparents, teachers, interns and sometimes even pets. An appropriate bookplate is placed in each book. A note of acknowledgement is sent to each teacher honoree and to others if address is provided.

All Falk students, teachers, interns, and staff benefit from the continuous updating of the collection. The Gift Program information was recently sent to the families of students with winter birthdays. These materials including the Gift Book Form and Winter Gift Book List of suggested books are also available on the library website at http://tc.education.pitt.edu/library. If you would like to make a donation or have questions about the Birthday/Gift Book Program contact Ms. Herward (412-624-8010), Bonnie Gorscak (412-243-3672), or Beatriz Kantewicz (412-521-7168).


LIBRARY RECEIVES TITLE V FUNDS

The library received an allocation of $1,900 in Title V government funds to be used for educational materials. Nonfiction books, reference books, and videos were purchased supporting the science, Spanish, and social studies curriculum at the primary, intermediate, and middle school levels. The materials covered a wide range of topics including weather, countries of the world, the human body, life sciences, peoples of the Americas, authors, scientists, inventors, and international foods and recipes.

LIBRARY BOOK FAIR

APRIL 3-4 & 7-8, 2003

The Library Book Fair (book sale) is the opening event of the annual Spring Reading Initiative. Its purpose is to encourage reading of quality children’s books while raising additional funds to expand the library collection. A Literature Book Fair will be supplied by Scholastic, Inc. The Fair will once again be held in the gym on the first four days of the spring parent conferences, Thursday, Friday, April 3-4 and Monday, Tuesday, April 7-8.

Each primary and intermediate class is given an opportunity to shop at the book fair during the school day. The tentative schedule for the classes is given below. Arrangements will be made for the middle school students to visit the Book Fair during the first two periods of the day. Students will be bringing home updated publicity.

- **Thursday** Rm. 112 and Rm. 225
- **Friday** Rm. 111 and Rm. 222
- **Monday** Rm. 116 and Rm. 224
- **Tuesday** Rm. 115 and Rm. 221

The book fair will be open until 6:00 P.M., Thursday, Friday, and Monday and until 4:00 P.M., Tuesday. Parents are encouraged to stop in before or after conferences. Please note the fair will close at 4:00 P.M. on the last day, Tuesday, April 8.

Volunteers will be needed to work during the Book Fair, to set up on Wednesday afternoon, April 2 beginning about noon and to pack up on Tuesday, April 8 at 4:00 pm. Contact Ms. Herward (412-624-8010 or herward@pitt.edu) or Ann Kelton (412-244-5722) if you are able to help.

SCHOOL LIBRARY MONTH—APRIL

In April and May the library celebrates “School Library Month” with special events. Families are encouraged to participate in the April-May Reading Initiative by keeping a Reading Calendar (grades K-5), filling in Book Badges for the reading chain and page tally, selecting books at the annual Library Book Fair, and joining the Falk School community in a school wide SSR Read-In. Please support these activities. Look for information to be mailed, sent home, or visit the Library Web Site at http://tc.education.pitt.edu/library. Due to the vacation time in April and other special events, the reading activities continue into May.

HEARTWOOD CURRICULUM BOOKS

Hope is the attribute for March.

Main Books:

- *Angel Child, Dragon Child* by M. Surat
- *The Cherry Tree* by D. Ikeda
- *We Be Warm Till Springtime Comes* by L. Chaflin
- *Fly Away Home* by E. Bunting

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**Music Notes**

**HAPPY MUSIC IN OUR SCHOOLS MONTH!**

March in national “Music in our Schools “ month and we hope all our Falk family will join us in celebrating. Letters have gone home inviting you to join your child’s music class anytime during the month. We encourage you to share your music-making with us. In the past we have had a wonderful variety of performances and we look forward to return visits from many of you and new visits from those who have never performed for us before. If you did not receive a letter, please let me know (Dr. Lee Ann Conover-412-383-9617) and I will be glad to send you one and set up a date for your performance. Our Intermediate Chorus is preparing a special concert to be given at the end of March—we hope many of you will be able to join us.

The Middle School Musical “Into the Woods Jr.” is in rehearsal and we want you to mark your calendars now, so you won’t miss it. We will be performing 12:30 matinees on May 19-21 and evening shows (7:00pm) on May 20-22. Please join our talented Middle School students as they take you to a land where fairy tale characters come to life. You are sure to be “enchanted” with this production.

*LeeAnn Conover*

**Snow Delay Update**

As you know, we’ve had a rash of school delays and cancellations this year. Falk School follows the lead of the Pittsburgh Public Schools mainly because of transportation safety and availability.

Many thanks to the Room Parents who have been spreading the word to you whenever such delays and cancellations have been called.

We know that for many of you, delays and cancellations can wreak havoc with your jobs and schedules, so it is important to have a back-up plan ready to put into action. We also thank you for your patience at these times. We would like to remind you not to bring your children to school any earlier than 10:15 a.m. when there is a two hour delay, as there is no one at school to be responsible for them. If you have any general questions about weather-related delays and cancellations, please give one of us a call. In the meantime, stay warm.

*Sabina Rosenfeld (412-243-1676)*

*Barb Rubinstein (412-247-5006)*

*Room Parent Coordinators*

**Library News (continued)**

*Knots on a Counting Rope* by B. Martin, Jr.,
*How Many Days To America* by E. Bunting

Supplementary Books:
*Amigo* by B. B. Schweitzer
*Aurora Means Dawn* by S. Sanders
*Dogsong* by G. Paulsen
*The Jazzman* by M. H. Weik
*Kumi and the Pearl* by P. M. Martin
*The Mountain That Loved a Bird* by A. McLerran
*My Grandmother’s Journey* by J. Cech
*Odette, a Springtime in Paris* by K. Fender
*Owl Moon* by J. Yolen
*Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes* by E. Coerr
*Sarah, Plain and Tall* by P. MacLachlan
*Song of the Swallows* by L. Politi.

Linda Herward

**PTA Bingo Event**

**BINGO WAS A BIG SUCCESS!!!!!!!**

There were at least 140 people who attended for our all new Bingo Party. That was a great turn out. Thank you to everyone who came, whether you pre-registered or decided at the last minute to come, aren’t you glad you did? Pass the word along and perhaps more will want to come next year! I hope everyone enjoyed themselves with the games, the auction, other drawings and, of course, Bingo. The two top games were getting a chance to throw a whipped cream pie at Dr. Mac and the Wheel of the Months game. Both games will be back next year and I guess next time I will have to get a double or triple supply of whipped cream.

I especially want to thank those who participated in the set up and clean up. I won’t say names, because I don’t want to leave anyone out, but it was very nice of you to volunteer to help where you saw the need. You know who you are and if you ever need my help with anything, please don’t hesitate to ask.

Also, there were two plastic containers left at the Bingo and are currently being held in the main office. If you think they may be yours, please stop by the office to pick them up.

*Sheila E. Talley-Armstead*
**Fundraising Initiatives**

**KEEP COLLECTING BOX TOPS!**

By clipping Box Top logos from over 330 participating General Mills products (such as Cheerios, Chex, Lucky Charms, Trix, Betty Crocker products, Betty Crocker fruit snacks, Yoplait multipacks, Go-gurt, Expressse, and Lloyd’s barbeque products), the Falk School earns 10 cents for each Box Top we redeem. Money received from the Box Tops can be used to purchase any items at the schools’ discretion, not just computer technology.

The deadline for sending in box Tops for this school year was March 15th, but they can be saved all year. So don’t throw any of them out! For more information, please contact Nancy Glynn at 412-825-6545 or momalix@aol.com.

**COMPUTER RECYCLING PROJECT NEARS $3000**

To date, through our computer cartridge recycling program we have collected over 1200 cartridges, earning us over $2600 in cash for our school.

Thanks to all of you who are helping to fill the boxes in front of the main office to the brim! This is an ongoing project, so please continue to collect cartridges from your home, place of business or from friends. If you need boxes for your place of business, please or other information contact Nancy Glynn at 412-825-6545 (momalix@aol.com) or Barbara Bianco at 412-624-8459 (bbianco@pitt.edu).

Thank you for your support and your cartridges!

**PORTRAIT DAY**

Thank you to the families that participated in the Portrait day back in November. We made good money just from the sitting fees, but also are due more from our additional purchases. Will anyone who purchased anything besides packages please e-mail or call me what you bought and the price of the items. This includes anything such as holiday cards, key chains, mousepads etc. I want to be sure that we get our 10%! Thanks,

*Betsy Levine-Brown 412-521-9324, betsylevine@aol.com*

**EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING EVENTS**

Please join us for our annual Excellence in Teaching Fundraising event on Saturday March 22, 2003. This year we are planning a fun roller skating extravaganza at Romp N’ Roll skating rink, 1661 E. Sutter Road in Glenshaw, from 4:30 – 7:00 pm. We will of course hold our silent auction with theme gift baskets donated by each students classroom, and many other auction items. We plan to roll along with Falk students, parents, faculty and staff, or participate in our fun aerobics for those not on wheels. There will be refreshments, face painting, and a drawing marathon for tree logos for our EIT stationary and up coming cookbook. The cost is $28.00 per family or $10.00 per person which includes admission, complimentary snacks, event souvenirs and skate rental. The early return of registration forms being sent home (or available in the school office), help us plan for supplies, however you may register at the door. We are also in need of auction items to be donated. Please contact me if you have items to offer. What a wonderful way to spend quality time with your family, while supporting this worthy cause. We hope to see you there!

And speaking of cookbooks, we are still in need of recipes for our other fundraiser, the Excellence in Teaching Cookbook. Many families have yet to turn in even a single recipe. This event is relatively painless, and costs nothing. We simply need recipes to include in our book, due out later this year, or our funds will register a dramatic decline. All proceeds of the cookbook and skating event fund the Excellence in Teaching Scholarship for the year. Without your support, children who may need to access the fund might not have the opportunity. Please take a moment to jot down a recipe or two, and send them to the school office. If you can’t participate in either of these activities, please consider sending a donation to the fund at any time. We all know that time and money are tight everywhere. However, just consider how your support of this fund impacts all the children at Falk. You can make a real difference in a child’s life with your financial support. We on the EIT board appreciate all you can do!

*Charlene Barnett, Trustee*
Pirate Tickets

I have received the information and schedule for the Pirates Games this year and would like to get a head start on getting the tickets reserved. It really was a lot of fun last year! I need to get some kind of idea of how many tickets to reserve. The cost last year was around $14.00 each. Please fill out this form and return to the main office.

If you have any questions, please call Sheila E. Tally-Armstead at (412) 241-2945.

Sheila E. Tally-Armstead
Lori McDermott

Please return to this portion to the main office

Pirates Tickets

________ Yes, I am interested in going to a Pirates Game

________ No, I am not interested in going to a Pirates Game

I would probably need __________ tickets.