

Friends Community School Bulletin

September 16, 2011

This Week's Events:

Sept. 19-20:
Madeline's Catoclin
Overnight

Sept. 20:
5-8 Back to School
Night, 7-9pm

Sept. 21-22:
Author-in-
Residence

Sept. 22-23:
5th grade Catoclin
Overnight

Sept. 23:
7 & 8 A.rt Elective
Field Trip

Upcoming Events:

Sept. 26-27:
Brigid's Catoclin
Overnight

Sept. 27-28:
Maleeha's Catoclin
Overnight

Sept. 27:
PA Meeting,
6:30-9pm

Sept. 29:
6-8 to Solar
Decathalong

Oct. 5:
K-2 Gleaning

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A Message from the Head...

Among the many wonderful aspects of the job of Head of School, visiting classes is, by far, my favorite. At this point in the year, my purpose is not to evaluate teacher performance, but to simply see children in action. Let me share some observations over the past few days. Kindergarten classes were engaged in beginning letter/sound recognition and creative movements corresponding to daily activities, and (everyone's favorite) Choice Time. My visits to 1 / 2 classrooms were highlighted by morning sharing, read-alouds, and Monarch butterfly observations. Third and fourth graders have started science classes with Gerry, reading and writing workshop, and Spanish class with Senora Silvia. Melanie B. and Sara have gotten their fifth graders off to a strong start with reading, discussing, and problem solving as they also prepared for their trip to the U. MD. ropes course. Creative approaches to reporting on summer reading, complex multi-step challenges in math, and scientific approaches to problem solving are evident at the far end of the hallway. Music, art, drama, and technology electives provide additional opportunities for our oldest children. It is so good to see each class in action!

On Tuesday evening, our Lower School parents had the opportunity to meet teachers, discuss curriculum, make some plans for the coming week, and meet each other. There was a wonderful spirit of appreciation for a strong opening of school, and anticipation for upcoming events. Veteran parents and those new to the school were able to meet each other and share insights on the opening of school. We look forward to hosting Middle School Parents Night this coming Tuesday at 7:00 pm.

Oct. 6-7:
6-8 Catoclin
Overnight

Quaker Corner

When we... take the step into the darkness of the unknown, we must believe that one of two things will happen. There will be something solid to stand on or we will be taught to fly.

-- Patrick Overton
(contemporary)

In Peace,

Larry

After-School Instrumental Lessons

After-School Instrumental Lessons are once again being offered to students in 4th-8th grade. Sign-up information will be sent home with students next week. Lessons will begin the week of October 3rd.

The weekly schedule, by instrument, will be:
Woodwinds (Beginners and Advanced) - Tuesdays & Thursdays
Strings (Beginners and Advanced) - Mondays & Fridays
Brass (Beginners and Advanced) - Wednesdays and Fridays
Percussion (Beginners and Advanced) - Tuesdays & Fridays

Next week the 4th-8th grade students will have an opportunity to attend a workshop given by the instrumental teachers during school, ask questions and participate in an instrument petting zoo. The 5th-8th graders will attend on Monday, September 19th and the 4th graders will attend on Friday, September 23rd. Information letters and sign-up forms will come home on these days.

Please contact Kiersten (kiersten@friendscommunityschool.org) or check the music website (on the FCS Google website) for more information.

Parent Association (PA) Meeting

SAVE THE DATE!

The PA would like to welcome all FCS parents to the first meeting of the school year on Tuesday, September 27th from 6:30-9.

Childcare will be available for children ages 4 and up. If you plan to utilize childcare, please RSVP to FCS-PA@friendscommunityschool.org to ensure there will be space for your child(ren).

After School Enrichment Class Updates

Thanks to the huge response from the parent and student community, the following classes WILL run starting next week:

- * Math Club, grades 5-8 on Mondays in Jordan's classroom
- * Playing with Paper, grades K-2 on Tuesdays in the Art room
- * Robotics, grades 5-8 on Tuesdays in Jordan's classroom
- * Artful Patterns, grades K-4 on Wednesdays in the Art room
- * Math Games, grades K-2 on Thursdays in Michelle's classroom

Playing with Paper and Math Games were over enrolled. Parents of

children who will not be eligible to participate after a lottery is held will be contacted via email before Monday morning. Children who cannot participate will get first chance to sign up for an art offering or Math Games (respectively) in the Winter/Spring session. If you do not get an email, you can assume your child is enrolled and will start class next week.

If just a few more students sign up for Soccer it will be a go -- you have until Friday at noon to email

Alexandra@friendscommunityschool.org if your child wants to join in the fun. Please include your child's grade and advisory teacher's name.

Unfortunately, the following classes will not run due to under enrollment: *Storybook Arts* (Mondays), *Winter Decorations* (Wednesdays), *Football* (Fridays). If your child was enrolled in one of these classes, your payment for the class will be credited to your FCS account.

All classes meet for one hour, and each begins 15 minutes after dismissal (3 p.m. for K-4 classes on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3:30 p.m. for 5-8 grade classes on Mondays and Tuesdays; 2:15 p.m. for Wednesday classes). Children who are not picked up at the appointed classroom when the class ends will be checked into Ex-day.

Please contact Alexandra (alexandra@friendscommunityschool.org) with questions.

Charleston Gift Wrap Fundraiser

Our Annual Gift Wrap Fundraiser starts next week!

- 50% of every dollar spent on gift wrap comes to our school.
- Look for a package to come home for every family early next week.
- Sale runs from Sept19 - Oct (Internet orders may be placed throughout the school year)
- Participation is strictly voluntary

CRITICAL REMINDERS RE: SAFETY, CARPOOLS & PARKING

PLEASE ESTABLISH AND USE CARPOOLS BY MONDAY!

As part of the approval process for our planned addition, traffic counters will be here next Monday and on subsequent days next week to count the number of cars driving to school during morning rush hour. We already are very close to the cap, so it will be **very important** that everyone who can carpool start to do so next Monday.

Connie has the HOV-4-KIDS parking permits for carpools carrying 4 or more students. Already we have twice as many participants as last year...yea!...thank you, HOV-4-KIDS poolers!...and there's room for a few more! (Not every carpool carries 4 kids every day.) Just contact Connie.

PLEASE DO NOT PARK ON THE GRASS DURING MORNING OR AFTERNOON CARPOOL!

Walking your children through moving carpools is very dangerous. And backing your car into moving car lines of exiting carpools also is very dangerous. Drivers often are late for work or area after-school activities, and kids walking to and from cars parked on the grass sometimes break from parents to run ahead or lag behind. Both scenarios are recipes for disaster.

Saving 3-5 minutes is not worth risking harm to others or yourself. ***PLEASE wait in the carpool line!*** In the morning, the drop-off will be smooth and safe via the carpool line. In the afternoon, it takes only 8-10 minutes from the time the first student walks out of the building until Larry signals the car line to leave.

You absolutely must walk your young child into the school for a short while yet, please park in the lot, or, lacking a space in the lot, on the grass closest to the lot. Hold your child's hand from the moment you exit the car, and cross the driveway in the marked crosswalk near the field entrance. Do not cross the driveway anywhere else.

Also, **if you park in the lot**, please walk your children to school on the grass along either side of the lot. That is safer than walking through the middle of the lot, with cars driving in and backing out.

We shall assess the effectiveness of this newly stated procedure, and update it as needed. Safety is SO important!

NO STOPPING ON THE WESTCHESTER PARK CIRCLE!

If, particularly on Wednesday afternoon, both carpool lanes fill the driveway, please continue on down Westchester Park Drive (along the far side of the athletic field), make a U-turn at the end, and pull over along the far side of Westchester Park Drive until you see the second (left) carpool line starting to move. Then you may join the end of the second carpool line, and pull up in front of the school momentarily to pick up your child(ren.)

It is unsafe and illegal to stop or idle on the circle, and we do want to be safe, legal, and good neighbors.

Finally, **PLEASE HAVE YOUR CHILDREN READY TO LEAVE THE CAR WHEN YOU PULL UP TO THE SCHOOL.**

Taking time to stash breakfast, gather stuff, etc., stalls the line. Thank you!

MORE EXCITING NEWS about UMA KRISHNASWAMI!

AWARD-WINNING CHILDREN'S AUTHOR and FORMER FCS PARENT
FCS WRITER-IN-RESIDENCE

Wed, Sept. 21 and Thurs, Sept. 22

The FCS schedule has been set for Uma Krishnaswami, FCS alum parent and award-winning author of books for children and young adults, to conduct writing workshops with all of our students, on Sept. 21 and 22. She is engaging and captivating, and our students should be thrilled with what they learn! Please try to read or discuss Uma's books (listed on the flyer sent home, and on posters in school) with your children before her visit.

Now, a number of **parents** have expressed interest in meeting Uma, and she is happy to meet and talk with parents **next Thursday afternoon, Sept. 22**. We have set up two times - 3:30 and 5:00 p.m. - when she can give brief remarks, and then talk about topics of interest to those attending. During previous informal parent gatherings, Uma has responded to questions about children and reading, children and writing, becoming a writer, choosing topics, cultural considerations, adding humor to writing, etc. And, she will sign books and book plates! We will have some of her books available for sale and signing.

Please RSVP, if possible, to connie@friendscommunityschool.org and let her know when you will attend. We are counting on a great community turn-out to demonstrate our interest in and support for Uma's work. And please do consult her fascinating website: www.umakrishnaswami.com (where her FCS visit is listed under "news".)

If you would like to catch Uma at her other appearances in this area, she will be the featured speaker at The Children's Book Guild of Washington, DC, luncheon at the Channel Inn in DC on Friday, Sept. 23. Her topic is: No Joke! How Humor Can Cross Cultural Borders and Speak the Truth! On Saturday, Sept. 24, she will present and conduct a book signing at the National Book Festival, in the Library of Congress, at 10:00 a.m. and 11:30 a.m., respectively. On Monday evening, Sept. 26, she will be on an authors' panel at the Takoma Park Library, and on Tuesday evening, Sept. 27, Uma will conduct a reading and book signing at Politics and Prose in DC. In between these appearances, Uma will be interviewed by WETA, airing to be announced, and will visit a DC public school. We are very fortunate that Uma enthusiastically will share her love and gift of writing and reading with our students for two full days before she is honored at these other events. Please do come to one of the parents' gatherings on Thursday!

"Uma's new book is really pulling me in! It's so captivating! I can NOT put it down!" - Olivia Martin, gr. 5.

Picture Day

School Picture Day is scheduled for **Friday, October 14** this year. Sibling photos as well as a make-up/retake day will be scheduled in November.

School pictures are provided as a service for our parents. All children will be photographed, so remember to send your children to school dressed appropriately on that day. More detailed information will be provided via email and kidmail.

Parent volunteers will be needed on the 14th to assist with escorting kids, adjusting hair and clothes, and keeping track of order forms for each class. You can volunteer for as little as a one hour shift and we would really appreciate your assistance! ***Please reply to olivia.mcdaniel@comcast.net to volunteer.***

Philanthropy Matters

--Christine Dunathan, Director of Institutional Advancement and IT

I enjoyed seeing everyone who attended the K-4 Back to School evening last Tuesday. Your children have great, positive energy and we are so pleased to have them here at FCS. The year is off to a great start!

FCS Google Teacher Website Access and other FCS computer information

The FCS Computer memo is coming home Monday. If your family was at FCS last year, your child can continue to use their username and password. If you are a new family, look for the memo on Monday and be sure to return Attachment IV asap to your child's teacher.

Rebate programs: Have you signed up? Re-registered for this year?

FCS participates in the Giant, Safeway and Target rebate programs. Each year supporters must register or re-register for these programs in the first few weeks of school.

It's easy, fast, and free. Once you sign up, you generate funds automatically for FCS when you shop at these stores. We are not asking you to change your spending habits, just to link your discount cards and/or credit cards so that a percentage of whatever you do spend at participating stores goes to FCS. Thank you very much.

Giant:#00599

www.giantfood.com/aplus) Can't find your Giant card?

Call 1-877-275-2758 and Giant will look it up and register you.

Safeway/Escrip: Group ID: 6505952

This is a single sign-up for your Safeway card, and for any other debit or credit cards, to generate rebates automatically when you use your card(s). Many stores participate in this program, and you don't have to keep track of which ones - rebates accrue automatically. How great is that??!

<https://secure.escrip.com/jsp/supporter/registration/step1.jsp>

Target: use your Target card #

Sign up at www.target.com/tcoe

Please contact christine@friendscommunityschool.org with questions or for assistance. Thank you for your support!

BUTTERFLY GARDEN MORNING Sat Sept 17, 2011 8:30am - 12:00pm

The FCS Monarch Butterfly garden needs you!

Come learn about plants you can add to your own garden to support this beleaguered butterfly.

All are welcome for all or part of the morning.

If possible, please email Christine@friendscommunityschool.org to RSVP so we can plan the morning and the tools we will need.

As returning families know, FCS' Monarch Butterfly garden is a native-plant garden that provides plants for all stages of the Monarch butterfly life cycle. FCS has a sister school in the Highlands Biosphere Reserve, the Leona Vicario Rural Elementary school, near Zitacuaro in the state of Michoacan. Thanks to last year's Annual Giving Fund donors, our school funded an internet connection to the school so that our students can SKYPE in Spanish with the kids at our sister school.

Back-to-School Night Childcare

Childcare will be offered for the 5-8 (Sept. 20) Back-to-School Night for children ages 4 and up.

If you plan to utilize the childcare, please R.S.V.P. to Erin (erin@friendscommunityschool.org) to ensure there will be space for your child(ren).
