

Friends Community School Bulletin

September 9, 2011

This Week's Events

Sept. 13:
K-4 Back to School
Night, 7-9pm

Sept. 16:
K-2 Community
Building Day

Upcoming Events

Sept. 19-20:
Madeline's Catoction
Overnight

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

Sept. 21-22:
Author-in-Residence

Sept. 22-23:
5th grade Catoction
Overnight

Sept. 26-27:
Brigid's Catoctin
Overnight

Sept. 27-28:
Maleeha's Catoctin
Overnight

Sept. 27:
PA Meeting

Quaker Corner

Quakers value
knowing

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A Message from the Head...

The start of a new school year is an exciting time for all of us at FCS. Teachers and students have spent the opening days of school getting acquainted with each other. We have shared tales of activities and vacations, of favorite books, and new pets. We excitedly ask each other, "where were you during the earthquake" and "how did your family weather the hurricane?" Nature provided us several obstacles to opening the school year smoothly, and I am proud that our faculty and staff rose to the challenge. New faculty orientation, full faculty training sessions, new parent orientations, consultants flying in, consultants postponed due to weather. . . it is a bit of a blur! It is exciting to have everyone here for the 26th year of Friends Community School.

In Peace,
Larry

In Memory of Jane

Anyone interested in the history of Friends Community School knows the importance of our founding Head of School, Jane Manring. An experienced progressive educator and Quaker, Jane was chosen to direct this school in its earliest days. She hired faculty, admitted new students, handled business functions, raised money, directed two moves, and set the tone that is uniquely FCS. We asked Jane to return to FCS to help us celebrate our 25th birthday last June, and despite very serious health issues, Jane granted our request. The long Sunday afternoon was clearly tiring for Jane, but she asked if she could return on Monday to see the school in full operation. Sure enough, Jane returned Monday morning to visit with faculty and classes. She remarked to me that she could not have foreseen this building or FCS with 200 students, but the tone and style of our classes so

"query" is Quakerism's most characteristic form - a willingness to test belief and practice repeatedly. Queries are used in classes and faculty meetings in Friends schools to inspire reflection and dialogue toward the goal of building a caring, respectful community and discerning truth.

pleased her.

Jane passed away in her sleep this past weekend, the result of her year-long struggle with cancer. It is easy to see why past parents and alumni have such pleasant memories of Jane; she was a remarkable person and school leader. In the near future we hope to host a memorial service in the style of Friends here at FCS. Our peace garden in the front circle honors Jane Manring, and is a wonderful reminder of her meaningful life.

Change in School Emergency Closings

As of the 2011-2012 school year, FCS is adopting a revised school-closing policy - henceforth, school-closing decisions will be made independently, and will no longer adhere to the PG County school decisions.

FCS's official notification of school cancellations, delayed openings, and early closings will be made through the "School's Out" website (<http://www.schoolsout.com>). Parents must register with this service in order to receive the free e-mail notices, or browse Schoolsout.com for FCS's status. School's Out also offers an optional text-messaging service for which parents are charged a nominal annual fee.

If you attempted to register last week, you may have found there was an error in the system. It has been corrected and now permits registering for *Friends Community School*.

Please register right away, so you don't inadvertently miss any notices. More info is in the *Parent Handbook*.

LICE!

School is in full swing and children are buzzing about with renewed excitement. However, we wanted you to be aware that we have found lice and nits in the middle school. We ask that all children in K-8th grades get checked every evening at home. If you do discover lice or nits, please contact the Front Office for further information.

For the next two weeks (through September 23), we ask all students with long hair to wear a bun while on campus. For this period also, hats (and any other cloth head-covering) may not be brought (or worn) to school. We thank you for your cooperation!

Fall Fair!

This wonderful parent-run FCS tradition welcomes your help in many ways. We have an immediate opportunity for one or two volunteers to coordinate publicity and signage. In addition, someone with technical experience to help create on-line sign-up sheets would be welcome. Other Fall Fair roles will be announced soon. Hold the date for *Sunday October 23, 2011, noon to 4pm*.

Also, please save good quality toys, books and games to donate to sales at the Fall Fair. Drop off dates will begin in October.

To volunteer or get more information, please contact the Fall Fair Co-Chairs:

Alexandria Lippincott: 301-277-7520, alexlippin@aol.com
Bruce Lancaster: 202-253-9354, brucejlancaster@gmail.com
Lisa Alexanderwicz: 301-220-1718, lisa-alexanderwicz@comcast.net
Trish Petty: pettys3@verizon.net

After-School Enrichment Activities

After-School Enrichment Activities will start on Monday, September 19. Class listings and a sign-up sheets were sent home with students on September 6.

Sign-up sheets are due no later than Monday, September 12 at 2:45pm in the Front Office.

Parents will be notified by the end of the day on Friday, September 16 if there is not a space available in your child's desired class. So don't forget -- no news is good news!

Questions? Email Alexandra@friendscommunityschool.com.

After-School Instrumental Lessons

After-School Instrumental Lessons are offered to students in 4th-8th grade. More information will be coming home in the next couple weeks.

But just for planning purposes for your child's after-school activities, the weekly schedule, by instrument, will be:

- Woodwinds (Beginners and Advanced) - Tuesdays & Thursdays
- Strings (Beginners and Advanced) - Mondays & Fridays
- Brass (Beginners and Advanced) - Fridays and EITHER Tuesdays OR Wednesdays (not yet definite)
- Percussion (Beginners and Advanced) - Tuesdays & Fridays

Please contact Kiersten (kiersten@friendscommunityschool.org) or check the music website (on the FCS Google website, available after Sept. 16) for more information.

Drop-off, Late Arrival, Carpool, & Parking

Now that the first few days of school are past, we trust that many fewer families will feel the need to park and walk their children into school, and more will arrive and depart in carpools. This will smooth the drop-off process in the morning, and ensure that every student is in class, ready to learn, by 8:20 a.m.

If your student walks into the building at or after 8:20 a.m., he/she must stop in the office and sign the attendance sheet before proceeding to class. Let's try to minimize such stops, so your student may start learning on time and not disrupt the learning of others!

HOV-4-KIDS parking is designed for carpools that regularly transport four or more children. Such carpools have the privilege of parking in the six designated spaces nearest to the school during carpool times, and avoiding the carpool line. Please do not park in those spaces during carpool times, unless you have a green HOV-4-KIDS permit displayed on your dashboard. Such permits may be obtained from Connie.

To arrange carpools, you may talk with other parents from your area, and consult the *School Directory*, which will be distributed next week. (N.B. If all parents had turned in their Emergency and Information forms on time, the *School Directory* would be distributed by now. Parents who still are delinquent must submit the forms by Monday morning to have their updated information included in the *Directory*).

Please feel free to consult with Connie about any of these matters. And please read the "Carpools, Arrival and Dismissal" section of the *Parent Handbook*, page 9, for the details. Thank you.

THE FINAL WORD ABOUT THE TIMES OF MORNING EX-DAY, DROP-OFF, AND SCHOOL START

We now have reached clarity about the morning Ex-Day, Drop-Off, and School Start times. The following information is final and updates the *Parent Handbook*.

- Morning Ex-Day runs from 7:40 until 8:00 a.m. (Families will be charged accordingly).
- From 8:00 until 8:15 a.m., Morning Ex-Day students, and students dropped off during Morning Car-Pool (8:00 - 8:15 a.m.), will be supervised, both in the Multi-Purpose Room and in front of the school.
- At 8:15 a.m., students will go to their classrooms, and lessons will start at 8:20 a.m.

Philanthropy Matters

--Christine Dunathan, Director of Institutional Advancement and IT

Welcome to the start of another great year at FCS! We are heading into our 26th school year with a strong, engaged community of students and adults. I'm excited to get to know you all.

Advancing FCS is my passion and my responsibility. As Director of Institutional Advancement, I support the goals of the school through fundraising, grantwriting, new initiatives, and working to find ways for all supporters to contribute to the life of FCS. My child attended FCS from 2000-2006 so I know FCS from multiple firsthand perspectives: parent, alumni family, and administrator. My professional experience ranges from fundraising and non-profit management to finance, urban development, and public policy.

I know that you, too, have a range of skills to share. The Family Survey that

was sent to you in the August mailing is the best way to let us know all your hidden (or not so hidden!) talents. Please be sure to send it in to Erin in the Front Office if you have not already done so, or ask her for another copy. I will share the resulting list with the faculty and the Parents' Association. As you probably know, volunteers are a key part of FCS. We have a role for you no matter what your schedule, talents or preferences! I appreciate your help in all aspects of advancing FCS, a very worthy and rewarding cause!

Easy, Free Funds for FCS

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. This is money waiting to be claimed! We are not asking you to change your spending habits, just to link your affinity 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!

FCS GREEN TEAM!

Inspired by our designation as a Maryland Green School, we are inaugurating the FCS Green Team, a group of interested parents, students, neighbors and others to help plan, implement and admire green projects at FCS. Our first project will be renovation of the FCS Monarch Butterfly Garden at the GREEN TEAM GARDEN MORNING Sat Sept 17, 2011 8:30am - 12:00pm.

All are welcome for all or part of the morning. In fact, we have invited an interested group from the non-profit Defenders of Wildlife to join us. Come see what the Green Team is all about!

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

Michoachan. Thanks to last year's Annual Giving Fund donors, our school funded an internet connection to the school so that our students can begin to get to know their sister school counterparts via Skype, en espanol.

Award-Winning Children's Author and Former FCS Parent: Uma Krishnaswami

FCS WRITER-IN-RESIDENCE

Wed, Sept. 21 and Thurs, Sept. 22

Uma Krishnaswami, award-winning author of 18 books and multiple short stories for children and young adults, will conduct writing workshops for FCS students on Sept. 21 and 22. Uma has been hailed as "a major voice in the expanding of international and multicultural young adult fiction and children's literature." *Journal of Children's Literature*, Fall 2006, pp. 60-65.

Uma is in our area to be the featured speaker at the annual meeting of the Children's Book Guild on September 23, to appear at the National Book Festival in the Library of Congress on September 24-25, to be featured at a Politics and Prose book reading and signing on September 27, and to participate in an evening of books and fun at the Takoma Park Library on September 26.

Excitedly, Uma is a former FCS parent! Her son, Nikhil, attended FCS for 5-6 years before their move to New Mexico, and would have graduated in 1999. Of note is his creation of the book trailer on the home page of Uma's fabulous website, www.umakrishnaswami.com.

We are very fortunate that Uma is enthusiastic about sharing her love and gift of writing and reading with our students for two full days before she is honored at other events. We encourage all of our parents to read (or discuss) Uma's books with their children before she visits.

We shall send home a flyer with more information about Uma and her visit, and are exploring ways for parents to meet her and have her books available for sale. Stay tuned!

Back-to-School Night Childcare

Childcare will be offered for the K-4 (Sept. 13) and 5-8 (Sept. 20) Back-to-School Nights 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).
