

INSIDE TRACK

SEPTEMBER 2006

FALLS CHURCH CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS



Rain slickers, umbrellas and hoodies were added to the back-to-school list for the first day of the 2006-2007 school year.



What a great start to the school year we had! Despite the soggy weather, all of you really rolled out the red carpet to make our students feel welcome and at home in our

schools, and I couldn't have been prouder.

The first day of school sets the tone for the entire year, and everything and everyone I observed was positive and upbeat. Everyone from the support staff to our administrators was enthusiastic and the attitude was mirrored by the enthusiasm of our students. The buildings were clean and orderly, the school buses were in tip top shape and our cafeterias were prepared to serve hundreds of nutritious meals. All of us were focused on one thing – providing the best possible service to our students.

Thank you for all you do to give our students a firm foundation on which to build their future. Their success will be a testament to your steadfast commitment to making a difference in the life of each child. Happy New Year!

Lois



Superintendent Lois Berlin, welcomes new and returning staff members during the 2006 Convocation.

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FCCPS Service Awards

FCCPS employees were recognized at the annual convocation. Full list is on page 3.



Marco De Las Casas is congratulated by School Board Chairman Craig Cheney (left) and Asst. Superintendent Gloria Guba for his 20 years with the school division.

What Did Your Children Do On Their Summer Vacation?

One Mount Daniel Elementary school employee's son traveled 40,000 miles through 13 countries in only six weeks! And to top it off, this summer vacation could have ended with a \$1,000,000 prize waiting for him when he returned home!



Read "Amazing" trip on page 4.

Welcome New Employees!

Who are all of those new people you pass in the halls? They're the more than 60 employees, both new or in new positions throughout Below are their names, and you'll see their faces in future editions of the *Inside Track*.

System-wide

Communications

John Wesley Brett -

Communications Specialist

Marybeth Connelly - Community

Outreach/BIE Coordinator

Special Education

Cynthia Diaz - School Social

Worker

Kristi Komalesky - Psychology

Intern

Bernadette Meny-Plunkett -

Speech & Language

Pathologist

Transportation

Maritza Lafuente - Bus driver

Noel Obusan - Bus driver

Mount Daniel Elementary

School

Surbhi Ashton - Kindergarten

Paraprofessional

Mercy Bloomgarden, Preschool

Paraprofessional

Janice Dean, Music Teacher

Kelly Marple - First Grade

Paraprofessional

Janice Nette - Library Aide

Kathy Rice - Paraprofessional

Sharon Rogers - First Grade

Teacher

Estrella Triana - Spanish Teacher

Suzanne Updike - Kindergarten

Paraprofessional

Coffee Break Barometer

When the barometric pressure is high, bubbles in a hot cup of coffee will gather in the center, and around the sides in low pressure. - LA Times



George Mason Principal Bob Snee (left) talks with his new science teachers Jennifer Parsons and Husan Thompson at the new teacher luncheon.

Thomas Jefferson Elementary School

Jennifer Brooks - 2nd Grade Teacher

Natalie Gray - 2nd Grade Teacher

Jacob Steelman - Spanish Teacher

Julie Talbert - Art Teacher

Sharon Von Schrader - Special Education

Mary Ellen Henderson Middle School

Ann McCarty - Principal

Vincent Baxter - Asst. Principal

Almaz Ayane - Special Education Paraprofessional

Tarra Barton - Special Education Teacher

Kate Brodeur - Reading Specialist

Cassandra Coffman - Special Education Paraprofessional

Rory Dippold - Social Studies Teacher

Brian Jackson - 6th Grade Paraprofessional

Robin Miller - Health/PE Teacher

Larry Mendenhall - ESOL Paraprofessional

Christine Prosch - ESOL Teacher

Lynn Varshneya - Special Education Teacher

Elizabeth Wanlund - Spanish

Rebecca Winner - ASL/Math Teacher

George Mason High School

Mary McDowell, Asst. Principal

Ken Siekman - Asst. Principal

Amy Kurjanowicz - Director of Guidance

Meriem Bacha - Italian Teacher

Melanie Besio - Math Teacher

Dale Curran - Reading Specialist

William Daughtridge - IB Coordinator

Kelly Higgins - Paraprofessional

Brad McAdam - Counselor

Peggy Monahan - Paraprofessional

Jennifer Parsons - Science Teacher

Jonathon Pepper - Science Teacher

Marc Robarge - Art Teacher

Nisha Sensharma - Social Studies

Sondra Sherman - Alternative Education Paraprofessional

Husan Thompson - Science Teacher

Hilary Thornton - Math Teacher

Bianca White, Special Education Teacher

Paige Whitlock - English Teacher

FCCPS Presents Longevity Awards

More than 50 employees were given length-of-service awards at the annual back to school convocation ceremony in August.

Janet Kremer, Guidance Counselor at Mount Daniel Elementary is only the third employee in FCCPS history to achieve the 35-year milestone. (The others are long-time football coach and athletic director Jack Gambill and Michael Hoover of the George Mason English Department.)

Congratulations to longevity award winners:

35 Years of Service: Janet Kremer

30 Years of Service: Emily Florence

25 Years of Service: John Ballou

20 Years of Service: Marco De Las Casas, Mary Kelly, Janet Weber

15 Years of Service: Sara Blake, Syda Chansombat, Bridget Dean-Pratt, Melanie Elliott, Eduardo Molina, Yolanda Jordan

10 Years of Service: David Applegate, Tammy Chincheck, Shelly Feuerstein, Jose Fuentes, Tim Guy, Amy Harding-Wright, Tom Horn, Rik Jowers, Peggy Payne, Chris Pikrallidas, Helen Tam, Alice Tam-Lee, Kathleen Taylor, Pam Wilkie



Janet Kremer honored for her 35 years of service during convocation ceremonies.

5 years of Service: Adam Amerine, Julio Avila, Ann Ben-Abdallah, Katherine Brodeur, Cindy Carlson, Soon Chuan, Laurie Connole, Ivanka Dzierwa, Carey Gray, Dion Green, Nathan Greiner, Gloria Guba, Cecilia Guerra, Mary Kay Howard, Craig Humfelt, Kristen Kurowski, Sally Larisch, My Le, Jennifer Lee, John Levok, John Mays, Martha McFarland, Debra Newman, Timothy O'Connell, Toni Ramos, William Snyder, Luis Sorto, LaBryan Thomas, Jevon Wright

FCCPS Baby News!

Congratulations to FCCPS Day Care Assistant Katie Clinton and her husband, Neal, on the birth of their daughter, Abigail Marcelline.



The baby was born on July 20th and weighed in at 6 lbs, 14 ounces.

Congratulations to MEHMS Secretary Stephanie Williams and Bruce



Croom on the birth of their daughter, Brooklyn Lee. The baby was born on August 5th weighing in at 7 lbs., 1 oz.

Congratulations to Mount Daniel teacher Carol Monsess on becoming a first-time grandmother. Carol's daughter and son-in-law, Becky and Abbitt Woodall, welcomed their baby, Lydia Irene, 7 lbs., 11 oz., into the world on June 2nd.



Did Your Know?

Special Education and Student Services Director Dr. Barbara Badittoi recently "rescued" a dog whose owner could no longer care for it. The collie, named Chance, had been taken in by an animal rescue organization in West Virginia, and Badittoi decided to adopt him.

"I searched the internet, found a collie rescue organization, and drove to W. VA to pick Chance up," Badittoi said. "He is sweet and lovable, and has never met a person he doesn't like. Just being around him is a great stress reliever."

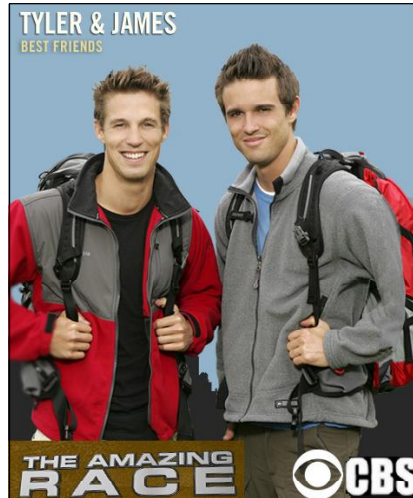
The silky-haired collie came with the name Chance, and Badittoi says it's appropriate. He now has a new "chance" at a happy life in a new home. The experience has been so rewarding, Badittoi says she hopes to volunteer at a similar animal rescue organization in the metro D.C. area.



Dr. Barbara Badittoi and Chance

Want to See Something 'Amazing'?

On Sunday nights for the next six weeks, you'll find Mount Daniel clinic aide, Timothy O'Connell, sitting in front of his television...and for good reason. O'Connell's son, James (far right) is one of the contestants in season 10 of the CBS program "The Amazing Race." It premieres Sunday, Sept. 17th at 8:30 pm. James and Tyler are professional models and currently live in LA vying for the \$1 million prize!



Calendar of Events

Falls Church Fall Festival - 9/16/06

The Falls Church Recreation & Parks Department's Fall Festival will be held Saturday, September 16th from 10 am to 5 pm in Cherry Hill Park (312 Park Ave.). Enjoy live entertainment, amusement rides, crafters, and more. Admission is free, but \$1 tickets are required for amusement rides. The event will be held rain or shine!

City of Falls Church Blood Drive - 9/22/06

The FCCPS Wellness Committee urges all staff to "Give Blood, the Gift of Life" during the City of Falls Church Blood Drive. The bloodmobile will be parked outside the Falls Church Community Center at 300 Park Avenue from 8 a.m. - 1 p.m. Contact Beverly Reich at 703-248-5127 to schedule an appointment.

Vantage Fitness Open House - 9/21-24/06

Vantage Fitness is opening their facilities to FCCPS employees

and their families free of charge. The gym is located at 442 S. Washington St. More info: www.vantage-fitness.com

Taste of Falls Church - 9/30/06

Sample savory and sweet treats from area restaurants while admiring the artwork of local artists and musicians. Interested artists and sponsors should contact - tasteoffallschurch@yahoo.com

Health & Wellness Fair - 10/12/06

FCCPS schools and the City of Falls Church are combining efforts to make this year's fair the largest ever. Fitness vendors health providers and more will be available to provide information from 3-6 pm at the Falls Church Community Center.

The Survey Says...

Breakfast reception overall:

Excellent	20.2%
Very Good	42.6%
Good	27.9%
Fair	8.5%
Poor	.8%

Best reception feature:

Food	49.6%
Door Prizes	46.5%
Beverages	29.5%
Other	31.0%
Music	17.8%

Overall rating of convocation:

Excellent	36.4%
Very Good	45.7%
Good	16.3%
Fair	1.6%

Best convocation feature:

Videos	72.9%
Staff Recogn.	71.3%
Music	62.8%
Banners	48.8%
Speakers	46.5%
Other	17.8%

Free T-Shirt:

Keep them	58.9%
Try something new	41.1%

Results of the staff convocation survey. 129 employees responded.

Recipe Roundup

The FCCPS Wellness Committee is soliciting your favorite healthy recipe for an upcoming division publication. Forward your delectable delight directions to wellness coordinator Rhonda Wilhelm: wilhelmr@fccps.org



Nelly Navia checks on a tray of scones during the welcome back breakfast. More than 400 scones were served.