



FALLS CHURCH CITY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

INSIDE TRACK

OCTOBER 2007

FALLS CHURCH CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The Sweet Smell of Success

Lois Berlin, Superintendent



Our school division has long enjoyed cooperative partnerships with our business community. But the school division's latest community connection will soon add a gourmet touch to the Mustang Café lunch menu. It's all part of a unique partnership between our food service staff and the Art Institute of Washington.

This exciting news comes just as the nation is preparing for National School Lunch Week. FCCPS Food Service Supervisor Richard Kane has been working with art institute staff to create a culinary competition that our very own George Mason High School students will get to judge.

Art Institute student chefs are being challenged to create unique, healthful recipes that high school students would enjoy. Student chefs will be invited to prepare their meals for our high school students once a month at the Mustang Café. The recipes that get rave reviews will stay on the cafeteria menu, and the institute's student chefs will be invited back to show our veteran food service staff how to prepare the delicious dishes. The challenge is scheduled to begin on October 26th.

The competition enables Art Institute of Washington students to get real-world experience preparing meals for large groups of people, and our high school students will be introduced to new, healthful taste sensations. Of course, staff members can enjoy the new foods, too. I can hardly wait!

National School Bus Safety Week

It takes a special person to drive a school bus. Bus drivers brave the traffic for five hours each day, carrying precious cargo. Falls Church is lucky to have a dedicated staff of thirteen bus drivers and five aides.

All bus drivers must have a commercial driver's license. They spend 24 hours in classroom instruction, 24 hours behind the wheel and another 10 hours as monitored drivers with students on board.

In Falls Church, there are eight morning and afternoon routes for middle and high school and four routes for each elementary school. With field trips and high school sports, the grand total is 94,563 miles traveled per year. In recognition of our great transportation staff, we'll celebrate National School Bus Safety Week October 22-26.



Bus driver Charmaine Barr and transportation supervisor Nancy Hendrickson help a Mt. Daniel student navigate an emergency evacuation drill.

"Autumn
is a second
spring, when
every leaf is a
flower."

Albert Camus

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Henderson Teachers Take Flight

MEH science teachers Lisa Blandford and Lisa Mueller had an out-of-this-world experience last month as part of a group of 50 area teachers on Northrop Grumman's Weightless Flight of Discovery. It touched down at Dulles Airport, where they participated in a "micro-gravity" flight that flew in a parabolic pattern, leaving the teachers weightless for several 25-second stints. Mueller says she did it because it was an amazing opportunity, and she "wanted to find a way



Lisa Mueller (left) and Lisa Blandford set up their science experiments before liftoff.

to excite more students about science."

Blandford was surprised that getting upside down in weightlessness was more difficult than she imagined. "Knowing how you want to move and actually moving that way are two different things," Blandford said. "Trying to stay in that position is an entirely new challenge."

Northrop Grumman operates flights each year, and registration is usually in the spring. Blandford and Mueller promise to share details when they are available. Learn more at www.northropgrumman.com/community/weightless.html.



Lisa Blandford completes a weightless flip.

Employees Certified in Non-Violent Crisis Intervention

Thirteen FCCPS employees attended a crisis prevention workshop this week at the GMHS TLC. Under the direction of special ed teacher Andy Hosier, they learned that the first step is to create an environment in which everyone feels comfortable. The afternoon dealt with physical controls and non-violent crisis intervention. They worked on individual and team approaches to potentially dangerous situations. Upon completion of the one-day session, all participants received certification from the Crisis Prevention Institute.



Mt. Daniel pre-school teachers (l to r) Amy Harding-Wright and Danielle Clark practice blocking a punch.

So, if things get tense, here's whom to call: Wendi Adkins, Alex Aman, Judy Becker, Valerie Chesley, Danielle Clark, Surabhi Dobhal, Amy Harding-Wright, Rachel Hutchison, Brian Jackson, Mary McDowell, Seve Padilla, Janae Rittenhouse, Katie Sloper. Way to go!



October is a Month To:

Appreciate firefighters during **National Fire Prevention Week** October 7-13.

Read a book with a student during **Read Aloud to a Child Week** October 14-21.

Be grateful for healthful school lunches during **National School Lunch Week** October 15-19.

Thank a bus driver or aide during **National School Bus Safety Week** October 22-26.

Share the benefits of healthy lifestyle during **Red Ribbon Week** October 22-26.

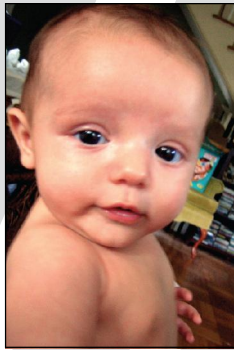
FCCPS Baby News



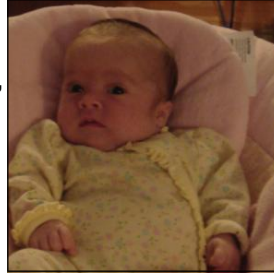
Kate Dirga and her husband welcomed son, Dewa Putu Thomas Dirga on May 9th. He weighed 9 pounds 4 ounces and is now up to

16 pounds. Kate's husband already has Tommy decked out in Barcelona colors to support his favorite soccer team.

GMHS Counselor, Brad McAdam and his wife, Heather, are parents of Ella Ryan McAdam, born May 30th. She weighed in at 7 pounds, 6 ounces. Not content with mere thumb-sucking, Ella is working on how to fit her entire hand into her mouth.



Pam Mahony and her husband, Steven, celebrated the birth of Molly Jane Mostow on July 2. She measured 19.5 inches long and weighed 5 pounds 6 ounces. Molly arrived six weeks early, and is doing well. She has learned to smile which makes her parents melt every time.

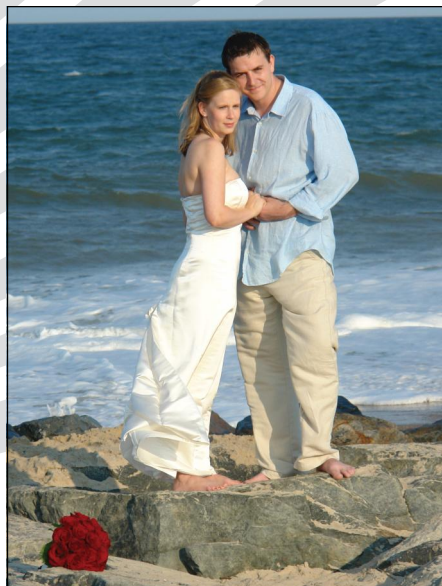


Just last month, TJ 4th grade teacher Emily Reuhs delivered her son, William. He was born Sept 27th, and is a sweet little armful weighing 8 pounds, 6 ounces.



Beach Wedding for Newton and Lauer

Fourth grade teacher Lauren Newton and her new husband, Ryan, were married on Friday July 27th at sunset on Rehoboth Beach. The next evening they hosted a luau reception in their backyard in Clifton. After honeymooning in Antigua, Lauren started the school year as Mrs. Lauer.



The Power of a Positive Attitude

Could it be that people with a positive attitude, who are energetic, happy, and relaxed are less likely to suffer from the common cold? Perhaps, say medical researchers.

According to a report in the July 2003 issue of *Psychosomatic Medicine*, 334 healthy volunteers were interviewed about their moods. They were then given a squirt of rhinovirus, which causes the common cold.

Result: Those with the most positive attitudes experienced fewer cold symptoms.

They had stronger immune systems, and were less likely to pick up illnesses carried by others. This is particularly important for those of us who work with children!

The message is clear:

Positive begets Positive.

Get Happy,

Stay Healthy,

And above all,

Assume Good Will.

As always, we in the Employee Assistance Program are available to serve FCCPS employees and their family members by assisting them with personal issues that may interfere with their quality of life. We are only a phone call away.

Office phone: 703-528-8033

Cell phone: 703-863-6680



Weatherbug Lands at TJ

Have you heard Channel 7's meteorologist Doug Hill mention the weather at Thomas Jefferson Elementary School in Falls Church recently? That's because TJ joined the Weatherbug Network.

Technology coordinator Steve Knight initiated the project because "predicting, measuring and observing weather is a large part of both the second and the fourth grade science curricula."

Students learn about the weather during morning announcements and on TIGER TV. Weatherbug information can be found on the TJ homepage.

To launch the program, several teachers visited Channel 7 studios this summer for Weather Fest. They were welcomed

by Hill and news anchors Maureen Bunyan and Leon Harris.

They learned how the news team pulls together the weather for each broadcast. According to Shelly Skomra, "You always know putting the news together is last minute, but actually seeing the news station really brings it home. It is quite an exciting place."

They are pleased to share this insider information: Hill predicts snow in December and a heavier snow season than the past few years.



TJ Teachers (standing l to r) Mary Kelly, Jean Lewis, Kathy Poff (seated l to r) Sharon Von Shrader, Sarah Romer, Katie Stratman, Shelly Skomra try out the WUSA 7 News Desk.

Community Calendar

The Center for Voter Deliberation

Deliberation Night: Thurs, Oct 25

Deliberation Day: Sat, Oct 27

Registration is free if you live or work in Falls Church. Events are in the MEH cafetorium. Register at: www.centerforvoterdeliberation.org/Register_for_DFCCVA.html.

Flu Shots Wednesday, Oct 31 at the TJ Library from 3:00-5:00 p.m.; Thursday, Nov 1 in the MEH Cafetorium from 3:30-5:00 p.m. The cost is \$24.00 per person. You must register and prepay by October 24th! Contact Rhonda at X5614 or wilhelmr@fccps.org.

Washington D.C. Teachers' Night 2007

National Air and Space Museum
Friday, November 2, 2007
7:00 to 9:30 p.m.

Free Admission.
Register at
www.smithsonianeducation.org/educators/professional_development/teachers_night_07_dc.html.

Submit Your News

If you have a story to share, an event to publicize or a milestone to announce, send it to Marybeth Connelly connellym@fccps.org.

We are looking for staff stories about interesting professional development programs, unique vacations and volunteer experiences.

Grant Deadlines

The deadlines for grant applications to two programs are approaching. Applications for **Falls Church Education Foundation** grants are due October 15th. Visit www.fcedf.org to learn about grant guidelines and download an application. (The second round deadline for applications is January 15th.)

The Washington Post Grants in Education deadline is October 12th. Grants averaging \$300 each in the area of math, science, technology and theatre are awarded to teachers in the 19 local public school systems. Visit www.washpost.com/community/education/gea.shtml for an application.

Clip and save the Box Tops labels from General Mills, Hefty, Ziploc,



Kleenex and other products. Mt. Daniel, TJ, and MEH all collect these box tops. Schools earn \$.10 per box top - which adds up quickly. Thank you!

The Year of the Boa?

Is this the “Year of the Boa” in Falls Church? First Kathy Halayko and Lois Berlin entertained us during Convocation and then the Encore staff at MEH entertained the parents at Back-to-School Night.

Be on the lookout for additional boa sightings (and, come to think of it, top hats, too).



MEH teachers (from left) Kate Brodeur, Megan Atkinson, Lauren Glass, Adele Eskin, Connie Jenkins, Debbie Baird, Pam Wilkie, Mim McFarland, Barbara Piscopo and Brett Sparrgrove get ready to whoop it up at Back-to-School Night.

Run for the Schools

Sunday morning September 16th dawned clear and cool -- perfect race weather for the second annual Run For the Schools. The Falls Church Education Foundation event featured 250 registered runners, many of them familiar faces in Falls Church, and raised \$12,000 through sponsorships and registrations.



Gloria Guba celebrates with the TJ Tiger.



Tito the Husky, Margie Spier, Renata Carvahlo, Maria Shields, Mustang Sally, Danny the Hippo, TJ Tiger and Grace Risetto meet at the finish line.



Local Treasure

Did you know that William Blaisdell, who lived at Cherry Hill Farm from 1856-1865, was one of 28 people who voted to stay with the Union at the beginning of the Civil War?

Forty one of his neighbors voted to secede, so Blaisdell (a northerner from Massachusetts) was definitely in the minority.

For more fascinating facts about Falls Church history, visit Cherry Hill Farmhouse, which hosts FREE field trips for Falls Church City Public Schools. Visit the site for a hands-on lesson in Civil War history or simple machines. The staff will bring primary sources to your classroom.

Contact Diane Morse dmorse@fallschurchva.gov for more information.