

Letter from the Head of School

The paper we print on is one small example of a growing commitment to environmental sustainability (*see sidebar*). There are many ways we act on this value at Friends School of Minnesota.

A few examples of our environmental commitment in our academic program are:

Environmental Education

Curriculum: We are in the initial stages of implementing a comprehensive environmental education curriculum. This work identifies concepts and experiences we want every student at Friends School to have before graduating.

Student-run recycling and composting program: Our middle school students are in charge of all the recycling and composting at Friends School. That means they monitor food and other waste, they educate younger children about why we recycle and compost, and they collect and deal with the recycling and compost every day. Many of our middle school students share that they have gotten their parents to set up composting at home, once they see how easy it is and they understand the difference it makes. We were pleased to host a recent visit by a middle school interested in setting up this



FSM staff were asked to blow out the candles on the birthday cake at the Gala.

type of program at their school.

We believe it is critical for students to learn about, reflect upon, and evaluate the variables that affect our planet. Our progressive curriculum and practice help students extend their own experience, from composting to wider global concerns, and to feel able to make informed choices.

I am especially happy to share some important steps we have taken to with regard to sustainability and facilities management.

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The Friends Circle Goes Green

Starting with this issue, The Friends Circle is doing its part to have less of an environmental impact. Previously, we have published on regular paper, but are now using Cougar Opaque, a Forest Stewardship Council certified, partly recycled paper.

All of the virgin timber used in Cougar Opaque comes from responsibly managed forests; it is endorsed by the Rainforest Alliance. This new paper contributes to a greener world by saving mature trees and water, as well as by reducing emissions.

It costs more to produce The Friends Circle this way, but we feel strongly that we are helping to make Friends School a leader in sustainability.

INSIDE THE FRIENDS CIRCLE

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Purchasing policy: Our Building and Grounds Committee is in the final stages of developing a purchasing policy that will outline variables to consider and commitments to honor when purchasing supplies for our school, such as paper, cleaning supplies, and food.

Heating and cooling system: We have known for several years that the boiler in the original building was nearing its end. In gathering information to replace the boiler, our two goals were to increase efficiency, and to have the new system be economically feasible for our small school. While we would have loved to install geothermal heating, the half-million dollar cost made that less tenable!

We learned that our old boiler was generating three times more heat than our building needed. This inefficiency was compounded by its only functioning as very hot or off. We chose to install three new rooftop heating and cooling units and tie them into our existing ductwork. We expect to see both great savings in energy costs (and so consumption) and to have a more efficient system.

Programmable thermostats: We have begun to replace every thermostat in the building with programmable versions that allow us to more efficiently heat the building based on days and hours of actual use.

Motion detection lighting: We have made our common space lighting turn on only when there is movement, saving us lots of hours of light when we don't need it.

Window replacement: We have replaced all old single-pane windows with high efficiency windows.

Storm water run off project: We received a \$20,000 grant as part of our Capital Campaign initiative to reduce our storm water runoff by installing permeable paving stones and small troughs with grates in our back parking lot. The matching grant from the Capital Region Watershed District will help us to both better manage the volume of water pouring out into the

streets after a rain, and also to educate our students and community members about how it works and why it matters.

Grounds renovation project: We are very close to beginning an exciting project to completely renovate our grounds from what is essentially a lawn to what will be a wonderful extension of the classroom learning space to the outdoors. We will have native plantings, natural objects to climb on, an area with boulders and sand to play with water from a pump, and a potential biomass prairie. We will fully utilize the ground space we have to further our educational and environmental programs. We are nearing finalization of plans and getting ready to schedule the work.

We learned that our old boiler was generating three times more heat than our building needed.

Photovoltaic array: We are planning to install a solar panel on our roof which will help offset energy costs and serve to model for the community how an urban facility can be attuned to environmental issues.

There are many more examples I could share to illustrate our commitment to sustainability. Perhaps what I value most is that we are in constant conversation about ways to live our values. We will never be done, but we can get closer and closer to our vision.

I invite you to visit any time. I would be very happy to give you a tour of the school, highlighting our green practices; although I know any tour's highlight would be the amazing children at Friends School!

In peace,
Lili Herbert



Twentieth Birthday Celebration— Gala and Live Auction

Twenty years in any institution is a milestone you want to celebrate. This year's Gala and Live Auction on Saturday, November 8th, was a twentieth birthday party for Friends School of Minnesota.

We had over 140 people in attendance at the Woman's Club of Minneapolis for this very special Friends School community gathering. There was music, dance lessons (shown above), wonderful food, and lots of time for conversation. There were fifty Great Gatherings, with everything from a baseball game for kids to chamber music for adults to sign up for, and thirteen live auction items to bid on.

In addition to the money raised in those events, we were able to bring in \$6,000 towards the endowment that helps to fund our need-based scholarship program.

Lucky Thirteen: A Service Trip to Peru

By Sarah Deschamps

For most children, family vacations are the highlight of their childhoods. As the Dulles-Jordan family shows, if the child participates in choosing and planning the trip, the vacation turns into a learning experience as well as a family adventure. If the trip is one that incorporates both fun and philanthropy, it can also be transformative and an experience of a lifetime.

Allie Dulles, 2008 FSM graduate, and her family had an amazing adventure to Peru in March 2008. Allie's parents, Fred Dulles and Cathy Jordan, offered Allie the opportunity to plan a trip to celebrate her thirteenth birthday and mark her entry into adolescence. Instead of a beach-type vacation, Allie chose a service trip. The family searched for an organization in a Spanish-speaking country to support both Allie and her brother Andy's (5th grader at FSM) knowledge of Spanish from classes at FSM. They found Peru's Challenge, an organization that allows individuals to come to Peru and work in and support a school in the Andes mountain region near Cusco.

There were many hours of organizing, preparing, and packing. As part of the preparation, the family was expected to bring supplies like toiletries and to raise funds for Peru's Challenge. Allie sent an e-mail to friends and family both in and outside of the FSM community and received many items to bring and about \$1,000 in donations. It was finally time to fly!

The family spent two weeks living in Santa Ursula, Peru, with a local family. Each day they would travel up the Andes Mountains to the school in the town of Pumamarca. Once at the school, they would be with the children, ages four to sixteen. Allie and Andy spent most of their time assisting in art class, physical education, and recess. Fred and Cathy spent many hours painting the new *talleres* building, a building where the village women would work on and sell their handi-



Allie (left) and Andy (below) with children from the Pumamarca school.

FAMILY SPOTLIGHT

crafts. Allie had the opportunity to plan and implement an art class lesson and Andy planned a physical education class. The whole family participated in snack time with the children and "hygiene," a time for encouraging hand and face washing and applying lotion to treat the dry, cracked, and sometimes infected patches on the children's cheeks that result from sun exposure and poor sanitation. There were Spanish classes for the whole family several afternoons per week. As a final high point to the trip, Allie and Fred hiked the Inca trail over four days and were met by Andy and Cathy at Machu Picchu, the hidden Inca city, high in the Andes Mountains.

Upon returning from the trip, Allie says that she had culture shock. "The experience made me think about what I need to live," she said. "We did a lot of shopping in the small town in Peru. We bought only what we needed. When we got back, I went to the grocery store here. Why do we need so much variety here in the USA? I believe it isn't because we need it, it's because we want it. It isn't right to want so much."

The most powerful lesson of all, according to Allie, was that "This trip incorporated everything that I learned



and believe in already. All of the things that I had learned at FSM now had a new, deeper meaning. I learned the power of experiencing something simply for the purpose of giving."

The Dulles-Jordan family will remain connected with Peru's Challenge and the school in Pumamarca, Peru. Andy is considering whether he wants his thirteenth birthday trip to take them all back to Peru. No matter what, this family has found a new place in the world where the principles of FSM truly apply.

Simplicity and Peace in Middle School Humanities

By Gretchen Hovan

“That’s one of the things I noticed about him [McCain],” said a student during our recent Socratic seminar on the election night speeches of McCain and Obama. “He just stuck to what he believed in, even if it wasn’t popular. That’s why I didn’t like him—because some of his views weren’t inclusive enough; he should be everybody’s president.”

“His views are just different than yours,” replied another student. “There were a lot of people who disagreed with Obama’s views.”

In this discussion, the students grappled with differing political viewpoints and what will help the United States move on as a country. They discussed how senators work together (“Why did McCain call Biden his friend? I thought he hated him...”) and how the candidates presented themselves in their campaigns and in their final speeches.

In our mission statement, Friends School says, “We are committed to the Quaker values of peace, justice, simplicity and integrity.” A few years ago, we decided that one way we can make these values more clear to our students is to use them as guiding themes for our work in our Humanities classes with the students. Each year, the students explore a different value through our social studies work, our reading, and our writing.

Seventh and Eighth Graders Study Peace

The election process this year has provided a wonderful start to the seventh and eighth grade exploration of the Quaker value peace. One of our guiding questions—“How do groups and governments deal with conflict?”—has been especially interesting given the way the candidates approached



CURRICULUM
SPOTLIGHT

Eighth graders Arielle and Mashal during humanities discussion.

each other in the ads and debates of the 2008 election. The students chose specific issues to study and built a “wiki” (a web page that is very easy to change) to help them explore the issues in the election. They examined what each candidate said he would do for the issue, and they examined how each candidate talked about himself and his opponent in his ads. (See the kind of work we did at our wiki: www.fsm.election2008.pbwiki.com.)

As the year progresses, the students will explore our other questions—“How do you create peace?” and “How do you advocate for change in a peaceful way?”—in our study of how the U.S. government is structured and how it has changed over time, especially in light of how our civil rights are protected and how people have worked for change. Students will also develop their own projects to learn more about how other groups and governments in the world and in different periods in history have answered these questions.

Fifth and Sixth Graders Study Simplicity

This year, the fifth and sixth grade class is examining the value of simplicity. As we work, the students are thinking about our guiding questions: “How do people balance their needs and the needs of society?” “How do people decide how to use their resources?” “How do people decide what they want and what they need?”

These are big questions, and the fifth and sixth graders have

begun their study by examining how our U.S. culture decides this question in relation to the food we grow and consume. In their work, the students have used the tools of cultural anthropologists. They collected data about their own food habits. They logged the food they ate for one day and thought about where it came from and how they decided what to eat and when to eat. They visited three grocery stores to compare the foods—and quality of foods—

carried at each store. They

looked at how the stores were organized and how products were featured.

Students are now exploring their research questions about how food gets to us: how it is farmed, processed and packaged, and how food workers and animals are treated along the way. This

work will help the students to be ready for our trip to Red Wing, where we will learn about that part of our state’s environment and examine the role farming has played in its history.

The students will explore other questions—“How do you create peace?” and “How do you advocate for change in a peaceful way?”

Puppets, Painting the Street, Lunch and the Day of the Dead

Here's a quick look inside several of the classrooms at Friends School of Minnesota.

The Arts

Laura Pereira, our new visual arts specialist, had 54 students in the Lower School create Raven and Bald Eagle puppets out of recycled materials for a wonderful event on October 11th. It was "Gathering at the River 2008—Celebrating Creativity, Community and Conservation," organized collaboratively by ArtStart, Eastside Arts Council and Teatro del Pueblo.

Local artist and storyteller Julie Kastigar read "How Raven Brought Water to the Earth" and the students used their puppets to help tell the story. The event was held in Mears Park on a spectacular fall day.

Paint the Pavement

With the inspiration and perseverance of Veronica Guevara, the Spanish teacher, the FSM community might just be "Painting the Pavement" next May.

This would mean that the street corner of Englewood and Albert (right in front of the school) would be painted with a design created by FSM middle school students. The idea came about through the Hamline–Midway Coalition, an organization in the neighborhood of the school. They are assisting middle school students to complete the paperwork and speak to the necessary individuals.

In order to get permission to paint, the school must have signatures from 80 percent of the people living within two blocks of the school. This winter in art class, the students will come up with a design. They will then take that door-to-door and meet with neighbors.

To cover the cost of the brushes and paint, the students need to raise \$400–\$500. This fall, through a middle school Paint the Pavement elective,



Laura Pereira and Lower School students at Gathering at the River 2008.

they were able to raise \$140. The middle school students are hoping that when the day comes to paint that it will be the whole FSM community as well as the entire neighborhood of the school. Look for upcoming dates for the special painting event.

Lunch in the Bayou

Kak Jarvis says, "I started eating lunch with my class three years ago when I co-taught in the Bayou with Kristina. It came about because one day I realized that I didn't seem to know the third graders very well because of the schedule Kristina and I had worked out. What better way to get to know people than to share our lunchtime?"

"Once a week I eat lunch with the boys, girls, third graders or fourth graders. Sometimes they ask me to tell my 'stories,' but I prefer just sitting back and listening to their stories. We build our sense of Bayou community and friendships with each other. And it's fun!"

Día de los Muertos

Día de los muertos is a living celebration of the spirit of the dead.

In Spanish class as a part of our study of vocabulary about the family we make an altar for the Day of the Dead celebration. It is a well-anticipated event, where students and families can talk about and honor the memory of the dead in a fun and lively way.

The *ofrenda* is decorated with *cempasuchil* (marigolds) and *pan de muerto* (bread of the dead) as well as with many lovely photos of family members, pets, and historical figures.

I am always touched by the things that students write about their loved ones in Spanish, or the comments students make as they pass by the table.

For a week, the *muertos* are truly alive in spirit—which is the whole idea of the cultural celebration of the Day of the Dead—making for a hands-on, real world experience of this cultural aspect of Spanish studies.



The Dia de los Muertos altar created by FSM students in Spanish class.

CLASSROOM SPOTLIGHT

Alums Meet the Real World, Do More than Cope

By Susan Nagel

As Friends School of Minnesota's Admissions Director, I get asked a lot about our alumni. How do they do after they leave FSM? Often there is an undercurrent of, "Well, FSM's caring community environment sounds wonderful—but when they leave, can these kids cope with the cold, hard Real World?" You only have to talk to a few of our alumni to know the answer. They do a lot more than cope.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT



Patrick Raines

"Going to Friends School shaped my personality and is definitely part of why I chose to go to Earlham," says Patrick Raines ('02, shown at left).

Patrick is remembered by many for his infamous duct tape jacket, auctioned at FSM's Gala a few years back. After graduating from Mounds Park Academy, Patrick continued at Earlham, a Quaker college in Indiana. This year he left the comforts of college to study biology and human demography and sustainability in Tanzania. "It is very interesting from a biological perspective because we learn about population growth and how humans are fairly unique in terms of how our populations use resources and growth." Patrick writes from Africa about everything from the challenges of learning Swahili and fasting for Ramadan to seeing endangered animals and learning about the AIDS epidemic.

When asked about how Friends School of Minnesota helped prepare him, Patrick replied that FSM's science teacher, Steve Moe, "was definitely a huge role model to me and I still consider him a role model. If I end up being just like him, I'd be really happy."

Some FSM alumni make headlines, like David Gilbert Pederson ('05), the youngest delegate to attend the Democratic National Convention in Denver. Some choose to do community service work like Anna Landskroener ('08), building steps and maintaining nature trails during the Friends General Conference.

Others, like Riley Battis ('05), expand their comfort zones, getting involved in challenging programs like Wilderness Inquiry. You might not expect a junior in high school to feel ready to spend an entire school year abroad, but this year Emily Brower ('06) left her friends and family behind to go live with an Italian family and attend school in Viterbo, Italy.

Our dearest goal is for our alumni to engage in the world beyond Friends School of Minnesota as centered, outward-looking people. Next time you run into FSM alums, ask them if they felt ready for the Real World. In their words and in their actions, I think you will hear a resounding "Yes."

What binds FSM alumni is their confidence in themselves, their passion to try new things, and their ability to be the change they want to see.

FSM alumni may not always choose a straight, traditional path. Their adventures are as individual as they are. Ben Corner ('03) delayed going to Reed College for a year to "bike around New Zealand and be a migrant worker." Adria Denison ('05) wrote last spring, "I am now happily home-schooling, learning about life, animals, values, relationships and acting." But what seems to bind FSM alumni is their confidence in themselves, their passion to try new things, and their ability to be the change they want to see.



"FSM really prepared me for accepting things with an open mind and gave me the ability to step out of my box to try new things," says Anna Landskroener ('08, shown at left), a freshman at South High School. "FSM taught me to be a more confident person, and to speak up in discussions, both of which are things that really help in the daily life of a high schooler."

Kathie Simon Frank— Weaving the Fabric of FSM

By Sarah Deschamps

When it comes to volunteerism, Kathie Simon Frank is unstoppable. A sociologist by training, she worked with students as a coordinator of undergraduate advising at the University of Minnesota for over twenty years. She has lived all over the United States and in Oxford, England. She is an avid weaver, knitter, and quilter and one of the best volunteers we have at FSM. At last spring's graduation, Kathie was one of the recipients of the Collins-Fieldseth Award for exceptional volunteerism.

In 2001 Kathie retired early from the university with the intention of devoting time to her fiber artwork and volunteering in the community. She says that she loves to contribute to communities that can use her help, and she loves children.

Kathie's mother was an inspiration to her in many ways, not the least of which was her message of the importance of fostering and maintaining friendships with people of all ages and from many walks of life. This helped her mother stay active, keep her mind sharp, and understand many intergenerational issues. Kathie took this to heart and, similarly, seeks out opportunities to be active in diverse communities.

One of the organizations she holds near and dear is Crisis Connection, a free suicide prevention and crisis phone counseling service. In 2002 she completed their extensive required training and now works one phone shift a week assisting people in need.

Kathie began volunteering at FSM in 2004 when her granddaughter Brianna started at FSM. She volunteered in the library cataloging and inventorying books, and since that time has found herself involved in many aspects of the school. She works on the Fall Book Sale, is in charge of the Plant Sale phone messages, has read to the kindergarten class, helps with some of the all-school Meetings for



Kathie Simon Frank in the FSM Library

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Worship, and assists in the school office with mailings. As if that were not enough, Kathie started a knitting group at FSM for middle school students. Last year the group completed its first intergenerational project with middle school students, parents, grandparents, faculty, and staff all making squares for an afghan that raised money for the school at the Gala auction. This fall, Kathie coordinated a second all-school knitting project—another afghan to which more than twenty individuals contributed knitted and crocheted squares. This afghan was auctioned off at the 2008 Fall Gala and raised more money for FSM.

Kathie has volunteered in several schools over the years, but she says that FSM is special. "When I come into the school, everyone is engaged in something. The students seem calm, focused, and respectful. I don't hear them being mean or aggressive. It's a community I like to be a part of."

How lucky we are to have Kathie at FSM.

Annual Fund 2008–2009

The Annual Fund goal this year is \$123,000. It takes every person's gift, whatever the amount, to achieve this goal. Tuition doesn't cover all the cost of running Friends School. The Annual Fund helps make up the \$2,190 per pupil gap between tuition and the full cost of educating our children. These funds also cover operating expenses of the school, including need-based tuition assistance, teacher salaries and building maintenance.

Please consider a contribution to the Annual Fund this year. Remember every gift counts and our hope is that each family will be able to give some amount that is appropriate for their budget.

We believe you will agree that Friends School provides a hopeful answer to these challenging times and that it deserves your financial support. By supporting Friends School, you are making a solid investment in our future.

Calendar

Martin Luther King Celebration	January 11, 2 p.m.
Alumni Ice Skating at the Roseville Oval	January 17, 3 p.m.
Project Home	March 2–April 9
Paint the Pavement	May; dates TBD
Plant Sale (our 20th annual)	May 8–10
Annual Meeting at FSM	May 19, 7 p.m.
Friends Circle next issue	June
Graduation	June 7
Last day of school	June 9
Summer Day Camp	June 22–August 7

Friends Circle

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