

February 2, 2007

Dear St. Francis Xavier Families,

Yesterday we had an unbelievable day. We started with a wonderful **breakfast hosted by our Home and School Association**. It was nice to have so many families join us. We offered many tours to families who are considering joining our school community. Many of them said that they have been hearing such great things about St. Francis that they had to visit. **Thank you for helping to spread the word.**

We also celebrated the **100th day of the school year** with a beach party read-in/literacy celebration. Bookbeard the Pirate roamed the halls with his parrot Bookmark. (Bookbeard looked remarkably like Mr. Becker.) It was fantastic to see the teachers and all the students and their buddies celebrating by gathering in shorts, flip flops and beach towels under inflatable palm trees in the gym with the goal of reading over 100 books together. Patrick Asselin and Kiara Keenan were awarded \$25 gift certificates to Vermont Toy and Hobby when their names were selected from the "Acts of Kindness" boxes in front of Nancy's office. Please remember that we are also celebrating our teachers with **no school on Monday, February 5.**

This weekend, **Saturday, Feb. 4 & Sunday, Feb. 5**, is the first weekend of the month. As we do every month, we are asking for student participants to serve and do the school collection at St. Francis Xavier weekend Masses. Since this is the end of Catholic Schools Week, we hope to have an even greater response. Students should come in their Mass uniform. Also, students will be reading essays on their experience at our school at the 4:00, 9:00 and 11:00 Masses.

Today (**Friday, February 2**), there is a **blood drive at the Winooski Senior Center from 12:00- 5:30**. It is being **sponsored by the Winooski Knights of Columbus, the daughters of Isabella and the St. Jean the Baptiste Society.**

The Student Council has organized a **St. Valentine's Day dance** to be held this Saturday, February 3 from 6:30 to 9:30. All 6th, 7th, and 8th graders are invited. The cost is \$5 per student and music will be provided by Super Sounds. To ensure that the dance is a safe, appropriate and fun event, we remind all Middle School students of the school's **conduct and dress expectations** for the dance.

Our next **Good News Assembly will be on Friday, February 9**, starting after prayer, pledge, and announcements (around 8:10). Following the assembly, Mr. Vincent Hammer of the Winooski Knights of Columbus will provide an introduction to the Knights' **Columbian Squires program** (for Catholic boys and young men ages 10-18). We welcome family and friends who wish to join us.

With the arrival of the snow, we have had the opportunity to go **sledding** on the hill between the Church and Rectory and school parking lot. For years students at St. Francis Xavier School and members of the local community have used this hill. Sledding is a fun winter activity and, when done in a responsible and careful manner, provides healthy, physical exercise for participants. However, almost every activity carries a risk of injury and sledding is no exception to this. Saint Francis Xavier School does not wish to deprive students of fun, traditional activities during recess and as part of the Extension Program, but the School also does not wish to assume responsibility for injuries which a student may suffer when engaging in these activities.

Therefore, **students will not be allowed to sled on school or church property during school hours or as part of the Extension Program unless they return the attached waiver signed by a parent or legal guardian by Tuesday, February 6.** Even if a student does return a signed form, the School and its agents, employees and volunteers have an absolute right to prohibit any or all students from sledding on school or church property during school or Extension Program hours for any reason, including, but not limited to, dangerous ground or weather conditions, irresponsible, reckless or dangerous behavior by the student while sledding, overcrowding on the hill.

Please take part in our magazine drive. In order to make it easier for families and friends to support our school by renewing or purchasing new magazine subscriptions, we have added a link to the news section of our web page. Please visit our site at www.sfxwinooski.org.

We have an opportunity to work with **Educational Opportunities of New England** to have **International Students** attend St. Francis Xavier School next year. This is a program in which **students from Mexico in grades 6, 7, and 8 live with a host family and attend our school for a year.** This is very exciting, and we hope that you might **consider being a host family for a year.** There is more information at the office, and Dr. Turcotte of EONE is available to answer any questions.

As a way to recognize students who volunteer, Kohl's is sponsoring a Kids Who Care scholarship. This scholarship **rewards outstanding young people, ages 6 through 18, for their community service.** To nominate someone you know, visit www.kohlscorporation.com. They will accept nominations from February 1 through March 15, 2007. Young volunteers will be recognized at three levels. Two winners from each store nationwide will receive a \$50 Kohl's gift card; 170 Regional Winners will receive a \$1000 scholarship for post-secondary education; and 10 National Winners will be rewarded with a \$5,000 scholarship for post-secondary education and a \$1000 grant to his/her charity of choice. We have so many students who volunteer in so many ways. We would love to see them get nominated and recognized for their efforts.

Bethany Rice, who will be running the Survivor Summer Program again this summer, has asked us to let folks know about a fundraiser being held at the **Uno Restaurant** on Shelburne Road on **February 8.** She is the coach of the BHS forum debate team and, for the first time, their team qualified for the district tournament in Rochester, NY. This is a national tournament. In order to go, they need to raise money for their transportation and registration costs. By presenting the coupon, which is available at the office, up to 20% of your check will be donated to their team.

The **St. Francis Xavier School Board** has created a **marketing sub-committee** comprised of Steve Eustis and Brian Senecal. The committee's goal is to **increase enrollment** in the school and **get our name out in the area.** Several initiatives are being started over the next few months in order to achieve these objectives. Two in particular are of interest to current families.

- With the idea that the more people talking about St. Francis the better, **any current family that gets at least one new family to take a tour of the school gets to waive their registration fee for one student the following year (\$50).** For **each new family they get to enroll children in the school, they get a \$300 discount on their total tuition cost for the following year.**
- Saint Francis wants to encourage families of all sizes to consider a Catholic education. We all recognize, however, that larger families have larger expenses. To make an education at St. Francis accessible, the maximum tuition we will charge any family in one year is for three children. Your 4th, 5th, 6th – however many children beyond three that you have enrolled at the same time – attend tuition free.

If anyone has specific ideas for the marketing committee and the full board to consider, please contact Brian (893-4998) or Steve (878-4385).

Planning for our **summer programs** is moving along well. If you are interested in offering a summer program, please speak with Mrs. Horton. Our programs have been very successful in the past, and we would like to continue to provide a variety of opportunities to our students.

We are truly blessed here at St. Francis, and we are grateful to all the students, faculty, families, and friends who work so hard to make our school and our school community such a special place. Thank you all, and have a wonderful weekend!

Mrs. Maria Horton

Mrs. Kathryn LaVigne

Mr. Simeon Lewis