



September 5, 2008

Dear St. Francis Xavier Families,

What a great week this has been. The weather has been a bit warm, so there were some afternoons when it was a bit hard to concentrate in class, and yet our students and faculty are managing to accomplish what they set out to accomplish. **Tonight** our Home and School Association will host the first **Home and School meeting starting at 6 PM with Open Classrooms following until 7:30 PM.** This is a great time to meet teachers, see your student's classroom and sign up for Parent Teacher Conferences on Friday, September 19.

On Wednesday, thanks to a generous grant from the Merchants Bank Foundation coordinated by St. Francis Xavier parent, Heather Cruickshank, we were able to host Kids on the Block Vermont (KOBVT). KOBVT is a non-profit organization that consists of a very special troupe of puppets who teach children about various topics. We had performances on Medicine Safety, Healthy Snacking, Bullies and School Safety, Body Image, and a workshop on Making Healthy Choices. The troupe provided a very informative and thought provoking morning. We extend our gratitude to Mrs. Cruickshank and the Merchants Bank Foundation.

The journalism program/school newspaper will begin next Friday, September 12. Mr. James Fuller will be the advisor. This is open to students in grades 6, 7, and 8. Students in other grades are encouraged to contribute articles, stories, poems and photos to the newspaper.

We just received word that a poem entitled "When My Uncle Hugged a Bug" by Morgan Liska, one of our third grade students, was the winner in her age group in the Winooski Memorial Library summer poetry contest. It was displayed in the library, and Morgan received some books for her excellent literary efforts. Congratulations, Morgan!

October is the month of the Rosary and Right-to-Life month. **Bishop Matano** will be celebrating the Diocesan Mass for Respect for Life Month on Respect for Life Sunday, the first Sunday of October. The **Mass will be at 4:00 p.m. on Sunday, October 5, 2007 at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception** and will fulfill the Sunday obligation. Before the Mass, at **3:15 p.m.**, Elementary and Middle School students are invited to lead the **Family Rosary for Life.** Please consider participating in this as a family and turn in the signed commitment form to your student's Religion teacher by **Wednesday, October 1st.** Saint Francis faculty members will be present, including Mrs. Winchester, Mme. Hawes, Mr. Gaudette and Mr. Badillo.

Cross Country Running is under way. If your student would like to participate, please contact Mr. Gaudette or Mr. Becker. Cross Country Running is **open to students in grades 5 through 8.** Practices are Tuesday and Thursday from 3:00pm to 4:30pm, and the first meet is the **Browns River Hill Meet on Wednesday, September 10.**

We are accepting **registrations** for our **Drama, Woodshop, and Martial Arts After-School programs.** Additional information about these programs registration forms are available at the front desk. **Drama** is open to **students in grades 3 through 8** and **begins on Monday, September 8.** **Martial Arts** is available to students in **grades 3 and up** and will start on **Thursday, September 11 in the St. Francis Xavier gym and run from 5:30 PM to 6:45 PM.** Students should arrive by 5:15 PM. **Woodshop** runs on Tuesdays and Thursdays and is open to students in **grades 5 and up** (Rice High School Students are welcome!) and students may attend either Tuesday, Thursday, or both days. The starting date will be announced shortly.

If your student is interested in these activities, yet is currently participating in fall sports or other activities that conflict, please talk to the teacher(s). In most cases, they are able to make accommodations.

Raffle Tickets for the 6x12 Storage Shed are still available. The shed was built by the woodworking students during the summer program, and you can take a look at it in our parking lot. They did a fantastic job! Delivery within Chittenden County is included. Please register soon!

Students must be picked up immediately after school or their specific after school program, or be enrolled in the Extension Program. **If students are not picked up by 3:10, they will be sent to the Extension Program and families will be charged the applicable rate.** We are concerned for the safety of our students and cannot permit them to remain unsupervised. Thank you for your help.

The Diocese of Burlington implemented “**Shield the Vulnerable,**” a law based program, for all priests, deacons, teachers, and other persons in a position of trust. **All volunteers, which include the majority of our families, and other persons in positions of trust who spend time with students, are required to complete the Shield the Vulnerable online training program.** The program takes about 90 minutes and completely internet based. Access Shield the Vulnerable at <http://www.shieldthevulnerable.org/>. **If you do not have internet access, please let us know.** If we have families in that situation we will schedule some times in our computer lab so that our families can complete the course. If families have completed the program for Rice or another organization, please let us know and provide us with a copy of the certificate of completion. **There will be update on Bullying that is scheduled to be available by mid-September, and all faculty, staff, and volunteers are required to complete this update by November 1.**

The Charter also requires that we must complete a background check on **all volunteers.** **If you have not yet had a background check done, please submit the form provided in the registration packet.** Nancy has additional forms if needed. Nancy, Kathryn Boyles, Maria Horton, and Diane Potvin can notarize the form for you. If you have already gone through the background check through St. Francis Xavier or another organization within the diocese, you do not need to go through it again. If you have a background check with fingerprints on file at another location, such as a school district, there is another form you can fill out so that information can be sent to the diocese. Nancy has that form also.

We are participating in the **Price Chopper Tools for School Program** again this year. **Our school code is 15195.** Point accrual begins September 14 and runs through February 14, 2009. In years past we have been able to get some excellent computer equipment and additional materials to use in math, music, and physical education. Every year we earn more points and are able to get more equipment. Please help us continue this increase. **If you or your family members have not registered your AdvantEdge card, you may do so online at <http://www.pricechopper.com/>, at Price Chopper, or here at the school.**

We are also continuing to **collect ink and toner cartridges, outdated cell phones, Boxtops for Education, Hood SoxTops, and Campbell’s Soup Labels;** you may drop those off here at school or at the back of the church at any time. **Please pass the word about these programs; they are easy ways to help our school.** If you are interested in helping us with these programs, please let Louise Lynch or a member of the Home and School Association know. Many aspects of these programs can be done at home.

St. Francis Xavier School has the following areas with pipe insulation that may contain elements of asbestos. These areas are not accessible to students and are inspected regularly, every 6 months, to ensure that they remain in good condition and in compliance with applicable codes. The areas are as follows: new section, first floor storage, mudded joint packing on non-suspected pipe covering on ceiling area; new section above ceiling tile, mudded joint packing on non-suspect pipe covering; old section, old boiler room, mudded joint packing on non-suspect boiler tank insulation; old section, above ceiling, mudded joint packing on non-suspect pipe covering. The three year AHERA inspection was conducted on February 28, 2008 and all areas passed as well maintained and in good condition.

**Thank you again to all our students, faculty, families and friends** who work so hard to make our school and our school community such a special place. We look forward to seeing you tonight.

Mrs. Maria Horton

Mr. Jesse Gaudette

Mrs. Kathryn LaVigne