



## Basketball Team Wins 2 in PA

by Teo Tejada



Finally, we had a basketball team. On January 19 and 20 Followers of Jesus School participated in a basketball tournament in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. The double-elimination tournament included seven Christian schools.



Basketball Team (from left) Christian Guerrero, Davy Oporta, Joel Oporta, Lionel Alvarez, Chris Gochnauer, Sammy Alvarez, Austin Gavin, Gene DeCamp, Billy Alvarez, Rich Schwartz – coach, Teo Tejada

Most of us were happy because this is what we like to do. We went with 10 guys (pictured above).

We left school around 2:45 p.m. on Friday afternoon and got to Mr. Gochnauer's Pennsylvania home at around 6:00 p.m. It gave us enough time to eat and get ready to go to work. We were the shortest team, but we knew what we were capable of doing.

We played against Maranatha High School. We came out firing on all cylinders. Then they had a little run for themselves. All of the momentum changed. At halftime they were up by 4 points. We were down with 5 minutes to go in the game. I told Lionel, "Yo! Let's turn it up!" And that is what we did, winning the game by the final score of 42 - 34.

After the win I thought we were sure

to do well in this tournament. We went back to the house around 10:30 p.m. and took showers but we didn't go to sleep or act like we were sleepy until 12:00. I couldn't sleep and I think I speak for most of us. We woke up at 7:00 a.m. because our first game was at 9:30 on Saturday morning. Mrs. Gochnauer made us a good breakfast. Mountain View, the team we played on Saturday, passed the ball about 10 times each possession before a shot. I started getting tired of playing defense. We were close most of the game but they had some BIG guys and a good shooter. They pulled away and beat us by 14 with 3 minutes to go.

We played another game at 11:45 a.m. against Terre Hill. They had 3 players over 6' 3" tall. A.J. and I had a big task in front

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## Public Relations Tour to DE, MD, DC

FJS faculty and students will be taking a public relations tour to Delaware, Maryland, and Washington, D.C. over Spring Break.

Tentative plans are for the group to be in Delaware on Friday and Saturday, March 30 and 31, then travel to Maryland on Palm Sunday, April 1.

The program will include singing by the team, student testimonies, a PowerPoint presentation about FJS, and an inspirational message.

Included in the trip will be a visit to Washington, D.C. for Joel Oporta, this year's prospective FJS graduate, accompanied by the rest of the team.

Churches or organizations wishing to host the group should call or e-mail the school as soon as possible. The tour itinerary will be posted on the school web site closer to the time of the trip.

### Second Quarter Honor Roll

#### Principal's List (97%-100%)

Brianna Schwartz  
Angel Vasquez, Jr.

#### A Honor Roll (93%-96%)

George Aviles  
Sabrina Edwards  
Christopher Gochnauer  
Karina Guerrero  
Shianne Hartzler  
Jada Vick

#### B Honor Roll (85%-92%)

Samuel Alvarez  
Dina Bú  
Natán Bú  
Gene DeCamp  
Sarah Gavin  
Emmeline Martinez  
Yessenia Oporta



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1st & 2nd grade received a Tea Party for reading the most books during a fall contest.

## NYS Math and ELA Tests Given

This year, for the first time, FJS is administering the state-wide standardized math and ELA (English Language Assessment) tests to fourth and eighth grade students.

According to the NYS Department of Education, the tests measure whether or not students are on track in their academic skills or need remedial help over the summer to progress from grade to grade.

At FJS, we will use the tests to determine how our students compare to the state-wide population and to assess weak points in our curriculum. In addition, it will also indicate which students need more intervention to stay caught up in their work.

To date, the tests have revealed that our curriculum is weak in composition skills. A study committee comprised of several faculty members is currently reviewing the English curriculum to see how this might be improved.

We expect the math tests, to be given this month, to show that our math program is significantly stronger.

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*And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others. 2 Tim. 2:2*

FJS is a ministry of Followers of Jesus Mennonite Church.

## Principal's Corner

by James E. Gochnauer



### What Makes an FJS Education Unique?

Recently, Steven Brubaker, Academic Administrator at Faith Builders Educational Programs, likened Christian Education to climbing Mt. Everest. Mr. Brubaker indicated a need to establish a series of "base camps" in order to reach our goal of a quality, Christian, Mennonite education.

One of the essential base camps which Brubaker identified was the need for a "set of clearly defined beliefs. Beliefs about the purposes of our schools – why we exist."

Our "Parent Handbook" states that "FJS is operated by Followers of Jesus Mennonite Church for the purpose of providing a quality, Bible-based, character-building education for the benefit of our church families and other interested families." But what does that mean from day to day in the classroom?

If I may paraphrase the Statement of Faith and Objectives from the "Parent Handbook," I recognize the following purposes of an FJS education.

1) FJS exists to teach boys and girls about Jesus Christ and the reason why he came to earth – to save us from our sins and give us eternal life. Through Bible classes, through the testimony of committed Christian teachers, through chapel times students are taught who God is, that mankind are sinners, and that Jesus Christ is the only way to be a part of God's family.

2) FJS exists to teach kids who have accepted Christ as their Savior what it

means to live the Christian life. One of the reasons I am excited about the growing high school program is that we will have more opportunities to work with older students as they learn to live as Followers of Jesus in a very secular urban environment.

3) At FJS we have the opportunity to teach our own church young people and those from other faith traditions the distinctives of our Anabaptist faith. Our forefathers suffered and were martyred for some deeply held principles which the contemporary Christian church has largely lost. Among those are our belief in Jesus' teaching to love our enemies, choosing to let God take revenge on wrongs rather than taking revenge ourselves. That is why we do not go to war or use violence to defend ourselves against aggression. Another distinctive is a Christian walk separated from the world. The way we talk, dress, the jobs we hold, our commitment to family, the choice to live simply, using our resources for God's work all are part of our heritage as an Anabaptist church.

4) We endeavor to accomplish this while providing a quality academic education which will equip students for the colleges or jobs they will go to when they leave here.

We want to be proud of our FJS grads – proud of their academic achievements, Regents scores, awards and honors – but even more, proud of the godly young men and women they have become as they choose to become Followers of Jesus.

## Basketball Tournament, cont'

of us. We had to guard them and we are both 5' 9". At the beginning I think we just let their height get to us because we weren't playing. They were winning at halftime by 20 points. During the second half we came back. We played like a team behind Lionel Alvarez. We lost by 6 points, eliminating our team.

We had a consolation game at 3:00 p.m. against Maranatha, the team that we'd already beaten. We beat them a second time by one point. Was that a game!

Maranatha was up 4 points with 30 seconds to go. After Lionel scored, we had 20 seconds to go. Then Gene was fouled and made both free throws, tying the game with seven seconds left. Just before the buzzer, Lionel got fouled. He made the first free throw for the go-ahead point, winning the game.

Overall we had two wins and two losses. Hopefully we go back next year and play in some more tournaments.

# Grandparents Attend School



Grandparents enjoy performances by each of the classes after the meal.

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## Lower School Performs Christmas Play

This Christmas, students in grades 3-6 had the privilege of performing the annual Christmas play.

The play was adapted from Max Lucado's Christmas story, "Jacob's Gift." Jacob, played by A. J. Vasquez, is a woodworking apprentice who is slow to get started on his project. The instructor, played by Natan Bu, is encouraging the young woodworkers to do a good job because his uncle is coming to select one of them to help build the synagogue.

The uncle (Sammy Alvarez) turns out to be Joseph who has come to town with Mary (Diane Aviles) for the census. While they are there, Mary gives birth to Jesus and lays him in Jacob's project – a manger on wheels.

Grades 1 & 2 opened the program with a poem and a few songs. Each of the other classes, as well as the faculty, sang one or two carols before the play. The evening ended with the traditional whole school choir singing two carols.

On Wednesday, September 27, over 20 grandparents and friends came to visit school on Grandparent's Day. Because some grandparents live so far away, students were welcome to invite other friends of their family to join them in place of their grandparents.

Grandparents arrived at 11:00 a.m. and went to their grandchild's classroom to visit until lunch time. Some grandparents had two or three classrooms to visit!

A dinner, prepared by Mrs. Gochnauer with the help of other parents, was served at lunchtime in the basement. While a few of the students complained about the absence of rice, many of the grandparents complimented Mrs. Gochnauer on the delicious, home-cooked meal.

After lunch, each grade gave a spe-

cial presentation. Some sang songs; some performed memory verses; one class did a short play.

A PowerPoint presentation about the school was also shown to the guests.

Because many of the grandparents do not speak English as a first language, David Narvaez agreed on very short notice to serve as an interpreter. He interpreted Mr. Gochnauer's remarks to the parents as well as the PowerPoint presentation. A couple high school students told personal experiences about being a student at FJS, which David also interpreted. It was the first time he had ever done anything like this and, even though there were some funny moments, David did an incredible job. At the end, all the students and grandparents clapped loudly for him!

Recently Grandparent's Day has been every two years, but Mr. Gochnauer hopes to make it every year after this.

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## FJS Celebrates Thanksgiving

by Nicole Vasquez



Walking in the hallways and smelling the sweet aroma of turkey, tells me it's that time of year again. This year at our Thanksgiving feast our Pilgrims and Indians were a tie.

As we got together to appreciate the true meaning of Thanksgiving we played a lot of fun activities, and with that began our Thanksgiving events. Later that afternoon we arranged baskets of canned foods to give to the less fortunate, so their Thanksgiving can be as good as ours. Maybe not exactly like ours because of the delicious food people were willing to make and you can't have delicious food without someone to eat it. We appreciate all the good food that parents brought in for the meal.

After our meal we finished up our activity-filled, face-stuffing with some poetry from some of the students. If we really listened to the words, they made us think of what the true meaning of Thanksgiving is. It's not just about the turkey or the fun time we had playing games. Thanksgiving is when we take time to realize how lucky we are and give thanks to God for all He has given us.



Thanksgiving baskets prepared by students for needy families.

## Coming Events

- March 6-8** NYS Math Testing for Grade 4.
- March 7-9** MACSA Bible Quiz Retreat. Lancaster Co., PA
- March 14-15** NYS Math Testing for Grade 8.
- March 19-23** Missions Week.
- March 30** End of Third Quarter.
- March 30-April 4** PR Trip to Delaware, Maryland, and Washington, D.C.
- April 2-9** **NO SCHOOL.** Spring Break.
- April 12** Parent Conferences.
- April 13** **Early Dismissal.** 1:30 p.m. Parent Conferences.
- April 24-27** Achievement Testing for all students.
- May 3** Science Fair and Spring PTA Meeting, postponed from March 8.

## Teachers Needed

FJS is looking for 2 or 3 teachers for the 2007-8 school term. At least one teacher should have experience with the BCE or ACE curriculum. The other should be a qualified high school teacher, subject area negotiable.

Contact the school for more information.

# High Schoolers Take Electives

This year, FJS high school students had the privilege of choosing between several Wednesday afternoon electives.

During the first semester, Miss Detweiler taught Home Economics, Mr. Gochnauer taught Graphic Design, and Mr. Dwight Gingrich, a volunteer, taught Sight Singing.

The Home Ec. class was held at Miss Detweiler's house because there is no kitchen at the school. The girls made cookies and a variety of main dishes.

Mr. Gochnauer's Graphic Design class learned how to design letterheads, envelopes, and business cards. Then they formatted them on the computer. The plan was to print them on Mr. Gochnauer's printing press during second quarter, but by then no one was in the class.

For students to continue participating in the electives, including MACSA Bible Quizzing, they needed to be passing all their subjects. Because many students fell behind in their work during first quarter, Home Ec. and Graphic Design didn't run 2nd quarter.

Mr. Gingrich's Sight Singing class went the whole semester. The students learned how to read music and how to sing in parts. Seven of the students sang one of their songs in the Christmas program.

In second semester, Mr. Roth is teaching Personal Finance, Mrs. Valerie Mast, a volunteer, is teaching Art, and

Mr. Gochnauer is teaching Graphic Design again.

Personal Finance is learning how to handle money. They are studying checking and saving accounts, and purchasing and borrowing. In addition, they are learning how God expects them to use money.

In Art class, Mrs. Mast is teaching the principles of composition. In addition to drawing, she also hopes to do some painting.

The Graphic Design class, in addition to the goals from 1st semester, will assist in the publication of the "Future" newsletter.

Of the 26 students in grades 7-12, twelve qualified to take the spring electives.

In addition, students are getting credit for participating in the church's Tuesday evening Missions Training Institute. Several students took the Institute in Basic Life Principles seminar which was held throughout the winter. Mr. Gochnauer will be teaching two computer classes beginning in April which will also be available to students. Students earn 0.15 units in the evening classes.

"Electives are a very important part of the school's curriculum," says Mr. Gochnauer. "They help students learn many things which are not part of the regular academic program, and broaden the students' experience and knowledge."

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