



Footsteps



Toward a Better Tomorrow

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November 2009

Fall Celebration

The weather couldn't have been better for the annual Fall Celebration! It was best day to be outside to mingle with other teachers and students and to enjoy playing games with clear blue skies and the sun shining bright.

The upper school students walked at a very relaxing pace, while the younger students skipped through the



autumn leaves as they all journeyed to Highland Park. Each classroom had the opportunity to choose whether they got to eat at the

school or the park. All the students picked the park, mainly because of its beautiful scenery of colors – bright red, yellow and, orange – adorning the balding trees. After the students had finished their lunches they



listened to the instructions from Mr. Nisly for an exciting, brand-new game that some of the teachers had invented. It was a sort of a mixture of Prisoners Base and Jug-O-Lug.

Mr. Nisly then numbered the off the student body, and they were separated into two teams. The objective of the game was to either entirely catch the opposing team so that they would be

prisoners or to run around the safety zone without getting caught. The first couple rounds were a bit difficult but after about four rounds of playing the students finally caught on. Mr. Nisly's and Miss Graybill's students were some of the best competitors in this game since they were much smaller, a bit sneakier, and very flexible.

When everyone was finally tired and exhausted from playing, it was time to get to school, and the celebration, sadly, had come to an end. Both the faculty and the students had enjoyed a fun, refreshing, half a day off at Highland Park!



Grandparents Day

Smiling children, happy grandparents, and time off from school work are some of the greatest things about grandparents day! When the grandparents enter the school building they first greet their grandchildren and they also get to witness how their grandchildren's classroom operates.

After the period is over all, the students, staff, and grandparents assemble in the basement and then they are seated at a specific table. The grandparents and grandchildren are permitted to sit together, and everyone else is seated according to classrooms.

When everybody is seated, the grandparents and grandchildren get a chance to converse for a short period of time. Soon, the students who had brought grandparents had the opportunity to publicly introduce their grandparents, some

students were very shy and other students seemed to enjoy the opportunity.

The scents of turkey, mashed potatoes, and several kinds of cake were absolutely overwhelming, so after few minutes of everyone

trying to resist their hunger, it was finally time for them to eat!

After everyone had finished stuffing their faces the grandparents and grandchildren had the privilege

of competing together on a word game. It was fun seeing the grandparents so into a word game!

After the game was over the principal, Mr. Gochnauer, showed a PowerPoint presentation about the many ways that grandparents can support their grandchildren in school.

It was soon time to dismiss all the children back to their classrooms. The students were satisfied with the good meal and



for quality time that they had spent with their grandparents.

The children happily left for home with their grandparents.

Edge
Poetry

*Watching them run
farther from the sun
into the darkness
where the game has begun
I watched them carefully
it was so clear
I was close enough to touch them
but not enough to be near
a fear overcame me
there's no conclusion why
contemplating my decision
a result from the tears, I cry
little was noticed
unwillingly
I'm running with the people
who were once far from me*

*-Dancing on the line
and getting sucked in
later wondering how it all
came to be.*

Nicole Vasquez

U.S. Government Trip

The weather was sunny yet mild as the high school class departed for their very first trip of the year. Excitedly, all the students and staff wore big bright smiles on their faces! Mr. Gochnauer led the way as we headed to the Board of Standards and Appeals which is located in Manhattan.

The main reason we were going to BSA was to observe, in person, how our local government operates. Luckily, we didn't have to see some random case about someone we didn't really know about, because our school officials, and two of our very own classmates, were going to appeal for a special permit. The special permit would give us permission to renovate the building, so that it could be more attractive and presentable.

We finally reached our destination and it was nothing like we expected. I imagined a room filled with wooden pews which contained curious staring people, and a scary, old, rotund man wearing a long black robe sitting on the tall bench holding a gavel, just ready to condemn any one for what ever reason. But to our surprise, the room was carpeted and had green cushioned chairs half of which were occupied by the people who were presenting their case, and the six board members sat in a semi-circle at the front of the room. Interestingly, only one out of the six board members was male, the rest were female.

When it was our turn to present, Mr. Gochnauer along with Mr. Fortune, our architect, took care of most of the logistical side of things, including a request for a student unloading zone. Mr. Gochnauer included a heart-warming speech about a boy in Mr. Nisly's class and

"We finally reached our destination and it was nothing like we expected."

how our school has changed his life for the better. Lowell Hershberger pointed out the fact that the Cypress Hills area is in need of positive role models. Angel Vasquez explained how the area surrounding the school has positively changed since the school was established. Mr. Graybill explained the things FJS has to offer, such as quiz team, and basketball tournaments, which are character building. The two seniors, Gene DeCamp and Elizabeth Oporta, told the board members what the school meant to them and how negating our request would negate the possibility of FJS reaching its true potential.

It was finally time for the decision to be made, and we all nervously awaited the answer. Delightfully, they did not deny our request for the special permit! However, they could not grant the permit either because of a few things that had to be done yet, such as a central AC system, and other outstanding things.

Even though we couldn't get the permit right away, we had the satisfaction of a job well done, and some of the workers said our presentation was very professional.

The best part of this trip was seeing the students and the school board members working together to better our school and community.

Crazy Hair Day

It was a cold and gloomy day on the twenty-eighth of October. However, it wasn't gloomy in the upper school classes; Student Council had organized a very special day called Crazy Hair Day! This day was the only day of the year that the students can wake up from bed and not do their hair, or may come to school with a shockingly creative hair-do.

Many of the students came with competitive hairdos, fighting for first place. Whoever won first or second place got to be crowned craziest among the crazy hairstylists, and they also had the wonderful privilege of having their face, along with their bizarre hairstyles featured in the school newspaper.

The stakes were high and the competition was intense. "Who will win?" this question was asked by all. Alicia Rodriguez wore two little buns that somewhat resembled horns on top of her head, it looked painful but it was definitely crazy. Yessenia Oporta came with a cute Japanese

hairstyle that made her hair look shorter. She was a worthy competitor. These girls had to watch their back, because when Gene entered school he flaunted an extremely puffy Mohawk. It was obvious that he was going for first place. But sadly, he didn't stand a chance next to the one and only Christian Guerrero!

Christian wore a funky reddish brown wig that was so horrendous

that it practically guaranteed him a high place in the competition. Lazarina Luna was one of the bravest competitors. Lazarina had a hairstyle that made her look like she had a sleepover at the dumpster. She had all types of chip bags, candy wrappers, and other

miscellaneous debris hanging down her dark thick curls. It seemed like every one knew who would win, that was until Pippy Longstocking made her entrance. Nicole Vasquez had intertwined wire hangers into her braids, so that her braids would stick out just like the infamous Pippy Longstocking. Nicole, just like Christian, had the potential to be the champion; she knew the importance of sacrifice, endurance and taking chances. She sacrificed her reputation and suffered the ridicule of her classmates, endured the excruciatingly agonizing pain that comes with having hangers and five pounds of gel on her head, and also risked embarrassment as she walked to school with her hair sticking straight out the side.

Would Nicole's sacrificial efforts be enough to beat Christian, even though he had not gone through all the things Nicole had done. He had the whole upper class in an uproar with minimal effort. Christian and Nicole had done all they could but now their fates depended on the students votes.

The votes were counted and the winners were to be announced! The results were absolutely staggering!! Nicole and Christian had tied for first place and Lazarina had won second place! These students with their unfading bravery definitely deserved the reward they were given.



Nicole Vasquez



Christian Guerrero

Principal's Corner

In our efforts to try to help our students gain as much knowledge as we or others think they need, one missing ingredient in some educational programs is the opportunity to gain practical life experience. In order for education to become relevant, students need to see how it connects to the real world.

Many schools, including FJS, are attempting to achieve this through the Senior Project. In this activity, for which 12th grade students receive up to one credit, students are exposed for an extended period of time to a specific vocational or educational project.

Last term, Christopher Gochnauer and Teo Tejada both taught classes in the lower school. Teo taught Physical Education to the 1st-6th graders while Chris taught math to the 3rd graders. Today Teo continues to pursue his interest in sports, especially basketball, while studying Business Administration at Buffalo College. Chris, on the other hand, learned that he really does not prefer teaching and now studies Civil Engineering at NYU Polytech.

This year Gene DeCamp is following in Teo's footsteps, teaching Physical Education to the 1st-5th graders. In addition to watching the kids play, Gene's responsibilities include preparing brief lesson plans for each day, evaluating the students on their

motor skills, and filling out accident reports! His supervising teachers, Miss Graybill and Mr. Nisly, report that he is doing well and Gene admits to enjoying the kids.

Elizabeth Oporta is tackling the school newspaper for combined credit as her Senior Project and Journalism. This re-designed issue, along with the new name, is primarily the result of her work and effort. Along the way, she will learn and refine a different style of writing – journalism is somewhat different than essay or report writing, learn how to use desktop publishing software while becoming much more proficient with the computer in general, and gain experience in editing her own and others work. Elizabeth acknowledges that this first issue was a significant challenge, but is looking forward to the next issues becoming easier.

As principal, I see these projects as a valuable part of the students' total educational experience. The degree to which they integrate classroom content and skills with the kinds of skills which will be required in college and the workplace is unparalleled in any other academic area.

There are many other possibilities for future projects as we try to make FJS a practical and relevant place to learn.

First Quarter

Honor Roll

Principal's List

**Abigail Allert
A. J. Vasquez**

A Honor Roll

**Aimee Hill
Shianne Hartzler
Isaiah Vega
Brittany Gonzalez
Emmeline Martinez
Simon Velasquez**

**Joshua Allert
Lazarina Luna**

B Honor Roll

**Scott Adams
George Aviles
Anthony Santana
Sabrina Edwards**

Blessings in the Little Things

FJS is blessed by many gifts, large and small. One of the smallest is the little "BoxTops for Education" from General Foods products which regularly come to school in the mail or with students. General Foods gives us 10¢ per coupon for these little logos which can be found on many of their products.

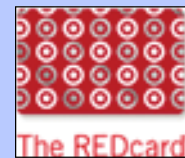
For every 100 boxtops which students bring in, they get a free hot lunch. However, the star boxtops contributor is not a student. She is the mother of Karen Graybill, one of our teachers!

<boxtops4education.com> has a complete list of qualifying items. Click on "All About Box Tops" and "Participating Products."



Target gives up to 1% of the price of a customer's purchases to the charity of their choice. Customers need to make their purchase using the Target REDcard credit card, store charge card, or check card.

Log on to Target.com to manage the benefits on your card or ask for help at the Customer Service counter at your local Target store. FJS's ID number is: 151655.



10¢ or 1% doesn't sound like much, but little by little they can add up to a generous benefit to FJS. Thanks for your participation in the little things!

Coming Events

- Dec. 24 - Jan. 1 – NO SCHOOL.** Christmas Vacation.
- Jan. 15-16 – Invitational Basketball Tournament** at Faith Mennonite High, Lancaster Co., PA
- Jan. 18 – NO SCHOOL.** Martin Luther King Day.
- Jan. 21 – PTF Meeting.** 7:00 p.m.
- Jan. 27 – History Fair** introduced
- Jan. 30 – MACSA Bible Quiz-a-thon**



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Ms. Hartzler Joins FJS

Ms. Hartzler Joins FJS Staff

FJS is greatly blessed with a new, heaven-sent staff worker, Sabrina Hartzler, an administrative assistant with a pretty smile, a big heart, and an amazingly infectious laugh.

Miss Hartzler was born and raised in Pennsylvania, and while living in her hometown of Lock Haven she worked as a home health nurse aid.

When participating in Vacation Bible School (VBS) here in New York City, she saw the great needs of many people and felt God speaking to her heart, which was the main reason she moved to New York. She always dreamed of living in the exciting city of New York.

One of her favorite things about the city is the convenience of being able to walk to the grocery store, pick up a couple of items, visit her friends while sipping a fresh cup of Dunkin' Doughnuts coffee, and being able to do all this in one trip without feeling exasperated. The noise and distractions are the most challenging things Miss Hartzler faces while living in the city, especially since she grew up in the country where silence is more overpowering than noise.

Hartzler's job requirements vary from writing checks to getting ice packs for students who have been injured during recess. "Prioritizing has been difficult for me, especially since there is so much to do; I find it hard to decide where I should start."

In addition to working full time at FJS, Miss Hartzler is also a full time college student working toward a degree in psychology. She finds her hard work very rewarding as she is able to exercise her Associates Degree in business management,

and she also considers "hanging out with the students and hugs from the younger students" very fulfilling.

Hartzler replaces Lula Miller who left FJS after seven years of service to work at the DNI Mission Training Center in Corona, Queens. While Miss Miller enjoys her work in the kitchen and domestics at the MTC, she says that she misses the interaction with the teachers and students at FJS.

Mr. Gochnauer feels blessed by the wide variety of business experience and computer skills that Miss Hartzler brings to the office. "Every week I discover something new that Sabrina can do. Sometimes I'm just able to show her part of a new assignment before I get called away, and when I come back she's figured out the rest and has the job finished. She's amazing!" observed Mr. Gochnauer.

Miss Hartzler's willing spirit to help others, and her cheerful attitude makes her a great asset to this school.



FJS Fall 09 Newsletter

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 (NIV)

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