

FRANKly Francis Wyman



FRANK

Congratulations to Alex D., winner of our school-wide newsletter mascot contest.

A Fond Farewell



The Frankly Francis Wyman Newsletter is a PTO sponsored publication. Its intention is to provide one source to keep parents informed of what's been going on in our school. How often you receive the information depends entirely upon how many volunteers we have, and how much the budget allows.

Through informal discussions with parents, in regards to the newsletter, we've found needs seem to be changing and that means things should evolve. That was the plan for the newsletter this year, to evolve. We were hoping to get closer to bringing the newsletter to you in a new way (electronically), and through a new voice (the student's). Unfortunately, it's been a tough year for this committee. We have limited resources on all counts. Printing is no longer donated by local print houses, and volunteers seem to be placing their talents elsewhere. So, in a year when we were hoping for a fresh face, we will instead be bidding you all a fond farewell.

That being said, we cannot provide a full issue of the newsletter this year. So, in this limited number of pages, and with our limited resources we'll highlight just a few of the happenings around Francis Wyman. You'll find a student interview where you can learn who our new Principal really is. We'll show you a little of what the PTO has been doing for our school, ways you can get involved, and the different locations this information can be found in the future.

Read on!

If you're interested in saving the newsletter and would like to volunteer for this committee contact Michelle Feist
781-272-4106

Birth of a Mascot

Alex D. is 11 years old and is in Mrs. Tierney's fifth grade class. She loves to draw. Alex states, "Sometimes when I'm bored, I just doodle or draw." "So it was a lot of fun drawing Frank." Her favorite things to draw are animals and her favorite animal is a dog. "I was most definitely thinking about drawing a dog for the Frank contest." Alex sat down before she started to draw Frank and saw one of her stuffed animals. She thought about which one could make a good "Frank". Alex thought and thought and finally remembers choosing the pug. "My pug looked exactly like a Frank so I set him in a position and began to free draw."

Alex thinks that drawing Frank was one of the most challenging drawings she has done. She said "but the hardest part was drawing the Francis Wyman spirit pants that Frank was wearing. I kept getting mixed up and asking myself which line connects to which." Alex is very proud of her drawing and could not believe out of all the great drawings hers was selected by her peers at Francis Wyman. She recalls, "Frank ended up with the pants and I ended up with a **bunch** of pencil shavings."

From the Principal

Dear Families,

What a wonderful year this has been! It has been such a pleasure getting to know the Francis Wyman School community. There is a warm, compassionate, and fun-filled atmosphere. Students come to school enthused about learning. Our teachers are dedicated to providing an interesting and enriching education. Our parents work hard to support our school. Thank you for sharing your children with us and sending them to school ready to learn. I wish all the best to our fifth graders as they move on to their next new adventure at the Middle School. I have so enjoyed getting to know them and will miss their smiling faces. Have a great summer and I will see you in the fall!

Sincerely,
Susan Astone

Assistant Principal

Another school year has come and almost gone by! Time really flies with all the activity that goes on at Francis Wyman School. Every classroom is hard at work doing their lessons, and some are preparing for or completing this year's MCAS testing. As always, walking through the school always gives me a sense of pride as I observe the amazing things the teachers are doing with the children, and the attention and the skills that the students are developing. Parents are frequently dropping in to help out in classrooms, attending a concert or show, or just dropping off something their child forgot. Special visitors came and went as well from our present superintendent of schools, Dr. James Picone to our new Superintendent Dr. Eric Conti to our Governor of Massachusetts, Deval Patrick.

Each and every year is unique and filled with excitement and great learning, and this year has been yet another awesome year. I have always felt that Francis Wyman School is the very best! Many thanks to each and every one of you who have helped to make the Francis Wyman School special. Finally, with gratitude, a fond farewell to our newsletter, *Frankly Francis Wyman*. This is their last issue, and it will be sadly missed.

Notes from the PTO

There has been several changes this year; from a new principal to an new PTO Executive Board. But, one thing that has not changed is the support of our Francis Wyman families that make our school such a success. Because of the generosity of our families this year the PTO has been able to fund and/or organize the following:

- Subsidize the rental of school buses for field trips for each grade.
- Have four authors visit the school.
- Artist in Residence Program, this year Roger Marrocco, created paper-mache based art, check out the animals the students made during Arts Night.
- Provided each teacher a gift card to Staples for National Education Week.
- Provided two scholarships to Burlington High graduating seniors.
- Made donations to the Post Graduation Parties for both Burlington High and Shawsheen.
- Provided each classroom with two magazine subscriptions.
- Provided snacks for all students participating in the MCAS testing.
- Provided each fifth grader with a yearbook of memories of their time at Francis Wyman Elementary.

For the upcoming school year there are two (2) openings on the PTO Executive Board. We are currently looking for a Co-President (2 year commitment) as well as a Secretary (1 year commitment). *If you are interested in these positions and would like more information please contact Joan Ford at fordie8790@rcn.*



From the Library

Many thanks for the kind generosity of the Francis Wyman Community which made this year's Spring Book Fair our most successful book fair ever!

Hopefully you agree that this book fair had a great selection of books for all ages, and everyone enjoyed it.

Thank you

Once again, with the help of families and teachers who purchased and renewed magazines through our annual Innisbrook Magazine drive, the PTO was able to purchase two educational magazine subscriptions for each classroom. Students will have available to them fun and educational magazines such as Kids Discover, Zoobooks, Sports Illustrated for Kids and Newsweek, to name just a few.

Ready to PLAY

Francis Wyman is a terrific school, and this year we're going to make the playgrounds great too. Last summer an exciting and comprehensive plan was kicked off to renovate all of the Francis Wyman play areas. The cornerstone of all these renovations is a natural playground design, which will provide safe, accessible, age-appropriate play, social and learning opportunities, as well as much needed landscaping and site beautification. Many studies have pointed to the advantages of children playing and learning in such environments, and we are very fortunate to be one of the first schools in the greater Boston area to incorporate this type of play area.

These exciting changes have already begun. In the fall, the front asphalt play lot was completely resurfaced, and new mulch was brought to the back equipment area. This spring a wheelchair-friendly surface with new play structures will be installed in the back equipment area. Our goal is to build the natural playground over the summer, complete with paths, outdoor classroom and natural play opportunities. The Town of Burlington, together with local businesses and parents, have been very supportive of this project, and because of their generosity Francis Wyman will have a fantastic playground!

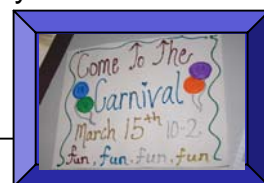
Nobody made a greater mistake than he who did nothing because he could do only a little.

-Edmund Burke

Carnival Success

What makes a great Francis Wyman event? One that is fun for all and makes money too!!! That is what the 6th Annual Family Carnival was all about on March 15th. Lots of families spent the day enjoying the games, prizes and food while we made over \$5,000 for the PTO supported programs for our students and teachers. The repeating comment made was ... "This was the best so far!" That is the committee's goal every year. We keep what works and work on what doesn't ... a true work in progress. I would like to take all the credit for pulling off such a wonderful event, but there is no way I could do anything without the dedication of the 18-parent planning committee. Each parent took a part of the carnival and made it work. I truly appreciate all they did to make the day such a huge success!!! Next year's date has already been set ... Saturday, March 14, 2008. See you then!!!!

Faydeen Sateriale, Carnival Committee Co-Chairperson



Physical Education

Mr. Ganley (Grades 3,4 & 5)

Mr. Ganley's classes have just completed Physical Fitness testing for the year. This year the scores reflected the consistent improvement when following their progress since they began these tests with Mr. LeV in the first grade. This past winter, Mr. Ganley's fifth graders had a very successful ice skating experience as the program struggles for enough volunteers to support the activity. This year's fourth grade parents should start to give next year's ice skating program their support. Mr. Ganley is now playing whiffleball with his classes and is deep into preparation for this year's Field Day, which will be held on Friday, June 6th. Those interested in volunteering for the day should contact Mr. Ganley or Mr. LeV through their child.



Mr. LeV (Grades 1,2 & 3)

Mr. LeV's classes have been involved in their annual fitness testing. This year, Mr. LeV did a pre-test in the fall and it seems that many of the students, especially the second graders took it seriously as their scores demonstrate a dramatic improvement from the pre-test. All of Mr. LeV's parents can expect a "Fitness-Gram" sent home this year with the test results from the seven fitness tests. This will show the parents the need for year-round activity for the children and should consider making physical fitness activity a "Family Affair".

After much persuasion and discussion, Mr. LeV was able to convince the administration and faculty to precede the MCAS testing periods with an exercise session. All the research and literature supports activity before test sessions as a means to release excess energy and relieve stress, which typically occurs before tests are administered. After some initial concerns, all the staff realized the benefit especially in the attention spans of the students when giving the directions for the various tests. Basically, we took the kids outside for a ten-minute run/walk period, then, returned them to their classroom teachers for their tests. The concept is now being given serious consideration at all the other elementary schools.

Mr. Ganley and Mr. LeVasseur wish everyone a happy and healthy summer!

PTO Enrichment Committee

In partnership with the Francis Wyman administration, the Enrichment Committee selects programs which supplement the curriculum and provide positive, educational content.

The fourth and fifth grade students were privileged to welcome Newberry Honor award winning author, Cynthia Lord. Ms. Lord spoke about writing her book (RULES), about winning the Newberry Honor, and living in a family with a child with autism.

Author/Illustrator Ralph Masiello thrilled the K-third graders with his presentation about what it's like to be an illustrator. He even gave some insider secrets about his work, including some tricks he played on Jerry Pallotta, author of several of Ralph's books.

In April, the third-fifth graders welcomed nature photographer/author, Darlyne Murawski. Ms. Murawski showed slides of photos she's taken on location for National Geographic, and shared stories about each creature. The students were very mesmerized.

In May, Francis Wyman parent and author, Valarie Giogas rounded out the Enrichment Programs for the year. Through various games, Ms. Giogas shared animal identifiers from her backyard as well as the story behind the story of In My Backyard to the K-second graders.

The Enrichment Committee would like to thank the Francis Wyman community for supporting these programs through their interest, enthusiasm and purchase of presenter's books.

Best Wishes

Best wishes to our Francis Wyman Retirees:

Mr. Butler, Music

Mrs. Orsini, Kindergarten

Mrs. Troscianeki, 5th Grade

You'll be missed!



Interview with Mrs. Astone

As Mrs. Astone begins her years at Francis Wyman we all become curious about how she got here, who she really is, and what she's going to do next. In order to answer some of these questions we asked fifth grade teachers to choose students from their class to interview Mrs. Astone for the Frankly Francis Wyman Newsletter.

Nick C., Patrick D., Julia L., Michaela M., Juliana P., and Julia R. were chosen to do the interview. The five students were each given an area of Mrs. Astone's life to question her about. They consulted with each other about what people might want to know. Then, they met for lunch and what ended up being an informative, fun and unpredictable meeting with their Principal covering her education, family and career.



CHILDHOOD

Julia L.: *What was your favorite Principal like?*

Astone: I remember she looked large and tall. She had a presence of being large and mostly serious. Sometimes she smiled, but most were afraid of her. She did talk one on one. She used to be an art teacher and let me work with her on Friday afternoons because our school didn't have an art teacher. So, she wasn't completely mean. Although strict with the whole school, one on one she was very nice.

Julia L.: *What made you want to be a Principal?*

Astone: First, I wanted to be a teacher because I wanted children to have a good education, and love to learn. Then it grew into wanting that for the whole school. I wanted children to have a good foundation. If they have a good elementary school experience they have a good chance of having a good life.

Julia L.: *Did you get good grades?*

Astone: Yes, I did.

Julia L.: *What was your favorite grade in school?*

Astone: It was fourth grade because I had my favorite teacher in fourth. I was lucky enough to have the same teacher in sixth grade so I got my favorite teacher twice. Fourth was my favorite because in sixth the kids were starting to get fresh with her and I didn't like seeing that.

Julia L.: *Who was your favorite teacher?*

Astone: Sister Christiana. She was tall and very skinny. Also, she had the nicest smile and laughed a lot. I went to Catholic school, St. Mary's in Dedham.

Julia L.: *Were you ever sent to the Principal's office?*

Astone: No.

PAST

Nick: *What College did you attend?*

Astone: Framingham State College to become a teacher. Then, Notre Dame College for my Master's, and then, Plymouth State University for CAGS.

Nick: *What jobs have you had in the past, what was your favorite?*

Astone: I was a teacher for grades 1 and 3, Reading Specialist for K-5, and Assistant Principal. Favorite? I can't really say. I enjoyed them all and they're all linked together and similar. They're all about the thing I love to do.

Nick: *How did it feel being a new Principal?*

Astone: Very exciting. It was like an adventure.

Nick: *What's the worst punishment you have given a kid?*

Astone: The worst punishments are anything to do with being suspended from school. I don't like to do that, but sometimes have to.

Nick: *What school did you teach at last?*

Astone: Hollis Primary School in New Hampshire.

FUTURE

Juliana: What future plans do you have for the school?

Astone: There are several new curriculums. The school will implement reading, math, and writing programs. Teachers will need to have training in those. I am working with teachers to help them work in teams that look at student learning to help the children learn more. I'm always looking to improve schedules so you have good learning time.

Juliana: Do you want a school mascot? If so, do you have anything in mind?

Astone: Well, you all voted for the Pug for the newsletter. We were looking at the Pug as being a mascot.

Juliana: *What do you want the new playground to be like?*

Astone: To use as much space as possible. A slide, Amp Theater, maze, a lot of green; shrubs, trees. I imagine lots of children playing on it and lots of room to play.

Juliana: *When will it be done?*

Astone: They say they can build it in about a month, but we have to get the money through fundraisers. We're hoping to build it in the summer.

Julia R.: *How will you stop vandalism?*

Astone: We want to install lights, and police will drive by.

Juliana: *Do you want to continue lunch bunch next year?*

Astone: Yes

PERSONAL

(Julia R. and Michaela M. teamed up to ask questions and write answers)

Julia R/Michaela: *How many kids do you have?*

Astone: Two girls. One is 17, the other is almost 20.

Julia R./Michaela: *Where do you live?*

Astone: Nashua, N.H.

PERSONAL cont.

Nick: *Where are you from?*

Astone: I'm from Massachusetts and used to teach in Foxboro. I always wanted to come back to Mass. some day. I grew up here and it's fun to be back.

Julia R./Michaela: *What's your favorite day of the week and why?*

Astone: Friday because I know I'm going to have time to relax. I don't think you can have a bad Friday.

Julia R./Michaela: *What are your hobbies?*

Astone: I love to ski in winter, go to the beach and swim in summer, and I like to sing. I used to sing more, but don't have as much time now.

All: *Will you sing a song?!*

(This is the time in our interview when the room went a little crazy. All our interviewers were begging Mrs. Astone to sing for them. It was clear she had unintentionally started something she would have to finish. After a little pleading she agreed and the room went silent. The children were awestruck. Their eyes were wide, mouths open and the only sound from them was an occasional, whispered "WOW". By the end of Mrs. Astone's song (and it wasn't Happy Birthday) they were full of excitement. These students just found out their Principal can actually sing, and she's REALLY GOOD! Actually, I believe the word was, "AWESOME"! Is American Idol in her future? Well, they think so, and they're pretty sure she'd win! It was difficult to regain their composure and finish the interview, but they did so, and with a new level of excitement.)

Julia R./Michaela: *Who's your favorite sports team?*

Astone: Right now, I think the Red Sox, Patriots, and Revolution.

Julia R./Michaela: *What is your dream car/house?*

Astone: A house at the Cape, right on the beach. Any convertible sports car would be cool. I don't know which one.

Julia R./Michaela: *Do you have any pets?*

Astone: No.

Sadly, the interview ended here. The children clearly didn't want to leave Mrs. Astone. They had just gained a new respect and a newfound sense of enthusiasm for their Principal. She could actually sing, which made her unique. Every child knows that if you have a unique and talented Principal, you must have an extraordinary school!

Want to know what song Mrs. Astone sang? Check FRANK the Pug for the answer.

Stay Informed

Have you been to the PTO website lately?

The school website and PTO website are always being updated with new, important information. Go there periodically to keep up-to-date on curriculum changes, field trip information, and school happenings.

Here are a few of the things you'll find there:

- A link to information on the new Francis Wyman Playgrounds
- A listing, by grade, of activities and events for the year
- Fundraising information
- School Calendar
- The school bus routes
- Ways to volunteer and get involved!

Visit the PTO Website for more information about Francis Wyman and more.

Go to the school website (www.burlington.mec.edu/fw) and click on the PTO link.

Calendar

June

Friday, 6 Field Day K-5

Monday, 9 Field Day – Rain date

Wednesday, 18 Last day of school for students (one snow day used)

PTO Executive Board 2007-2008

Co-President: *Wendy Czerwinski* (year 2 of 2)

Co-President: *Joan Ford* (year 1 of 2)

1st Vice President: *Barbara Mozzicato*

2nd Vice President: *Susan Astone, Principal*

Secretary: *Mary Sweeney*

Treasurer: *Susan Frost*