



NOTES TO PARENTS

April 2008

The Lost Boy of Sudan

As part of the Advisory Program, Middle School students watched *The Gods Grew Tired of Us*, a documentary about the thousands of young men forced to flee from Sudan. As mere children, they left their homes in order to escape the violence of the Second Sudanese War of the late 80's and 90's. They walked nearly a thousand miles over the course of three years and suffered from starvation and the elements in order to reach refugee camps. Only half of the boys who fled survived the long journey. Now young men, they are known collectively as "The Lost Boys of Sudan".



In 2001, thirty-eight hundred of these young men were offered relocation to the United States. With the help of Teacher Pat Russell, Friends School was able to bring one of them, Macharia Yuot, to speak to students in grades four through eight. On his arrival to the US, Macharia had attended the West Philadelphia Catholic High School with the help of the Lutheran Church in Philadelphia. He was accepted at Widener University in 2003, where he became a very successful cross country runner. This fall he took part in the US Olympic men's marathon trials. He continues to train with Vince Touey, his Widener coach, who also accompanied him on his trip to Friends School.

Macharia Yuot and Coach Touey address a group of Friends School parents, community members, and Rowan University students during the evening presentation.

During his visit to Friends School, Marcharia spoke to students about his difficult journey to Kenya and his eventual placement in the United States. He also shared the joy of earning a college degree and learning to run competitively. Despite his success, Macharia is a very humble person. He repeatedly downplayed his accomplishments and stressed that he had more left to achieve. This, as well as Macharia's refusal to hate those who had persecuted him, impressed the students.

After an afternoon training session, Macharia and coach Touey returned for a presentation opened to our parents and local community. Friends School was honored to host a presentation by man with such inner strength and optimism.

-Teacher Nicole Donnelly
Middle School Academic Coordinator

Community Service News

Peter Manzelmann
Community Service Coordinator

Annual ARC Mini-Walk

On Friday, April 25th at 11:15 a.m. students, teachers, ARC consumers, and friends will gather to celebrate Friends School's partnership with the ARC of Gloucester. For the past several years our school community has helped gather funds for the ARC. Our contributions have helped ARC with a building project at the Camp Sun n' Fun in Williamstown. Throughout the year our 7th graders visit and work closely with mentally/physically challenged adults at two local ARC facilities. Each Friends School student was given a sponsor sheet. Donations should be directed to the classroom teachers. Parents are welcome to join us on the 25th for our annual walk to support our friends at the ARC.

Pennies For Peace

Two months ago our school community embarked on a journey to help create world peace in a different way – helping to build schools in a far-away land. Our students collected \$338 to help build schools in remote Himalayan valleys in Pakistan and Afghanistan. We thank you for your help. We should all be proud of our commitment to help children in such worn torn regions.

Friday Paper Recycling

Recently middle school students – **Daniel Leone, Ali McCardell, Olivia Cabry,** and **Chloe Patrick** met with **Teacher Howdy** and a recycling specialist to discuss more efficient ways to recycle here at Friends School. One idea that came from that meeting was to collect more newspapers. On Fridays we are asking middle school students to bring newspapers to school. Our recycling representatives hope this idea will generate more newspaper recycling here at school. Remember – at any time any family can bring papers from home and put them in the yellow bin at the High Street entrance. Thank you for your paper donations.



Second Grade Donates Blankets

Second grade students have finished their first service project during the month of February. Students wanted to make fleece blankets to comfort sick children in local hospitals. Each child's family donated fabric and students worked together, cutting and tying the blankets. Everyone worked very hard and second grade completed twenty-five blankets that will be donated to the maternity ward at Kennedy Memorial Hospital in Washington Township. Second grade students loved helping other children and reaching out to their community.

Fourth Grade Supports Local Wildlife

The fourth grade is continuing its community service focus on the local environment. Teacher Pasha is making plans for the science students to assist in certifying our woodland property (the preserve across from Raccoon Valley Swim Club) as a preserved habitat. Also, the upcoming Fourth Grade Symposium will celebrate and support all five south Jersey Friends schools. In cooperation with the Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge and Education Center, speaker Jan Eyre will guide students in activities to support environmental awareness and responsibilities. Thanks to **Teachers Glenn and Pasha** for their service leadership with the fourth grade.

Argentina Service Project

We recently heard that the participants on the Argentina trip took part in a wonderful service project while south of the equator. They volunteered at a center for children with Down's Syndrome. We look forward to hearing more about their experiences.

From the Principal

The superb performance of *Annie Jr.* by the Middle School students is still fresh on my mind. These young actors demonstrated inspiring courage, poise, and creative talent on stage. Another fantastic Friends School production was the third grade puppet show. I enjoyed watching the third graders' excitement as they wrote their script, created puppets, and practiced their lines. Both of these experiences are examples of our commitment to foster the creative spirit in each child.

In late February Drew Smith and I were fortunate to attend the NAIS Annual Conference in New York City. We were especially delighted to have the opportunity to hear one of the keynote speakers, Sir Ken Robinson. He is the author of *Out of Our Minds: Learning to Be Creative* and a proponent of nurturing creativity in schools. I encourage you to view his clip from the TED Talks: Do Schools Kill Creativity?

www.ted.com/index.php/talks/view/id/66

Sir Ken believes that creativity, defined as the process of having original ideas that have value, should be a priority in education. Educators are preparing for an unknown future. Creativity will help one to participate in the probable changes and contribute to them with a flexibility of mind. Being able to think divergently is fundamental to creative work. Educators should encourage students to find alternative possible solutions, to reinterpret the question, and to think metaphorically. In most school situations, students are asked to do the opposite—being taught that there is only one correct answer. (Sir Ken reminded us that it is at the back of the book.) Because public schools' funding relies on this selection of the one correct answer on standard tests, Sir Ken stated that it is the duty of private school educators to lead the change in education.

The Friends School faculty accepts the challenge to nurture the creativity in their students.

—Patti Sanderson

Middle School Musical Annie Jr.



Ali McCardell as Annie

Chris Stallings as
Daddy Warbucks

Reflections of the Lost Boys of Sudan

—Tia D'Costa, 7th grade

After watching the movie (*The Gods Grew Tired of Us*) I was really affected. I can't even imagine what the Lost Boys went through. I wouldn't even have survived half of that. They were separated from their parents for over twenty years. They never got to see their family. That must have been tragic. I am so lucky to have a family to raise me. They traveled over one thousand miles in a group so that they could escape war. Many of them were shot. A couple were lucky to get sent to the USA. But hundreds of them are still there. There are many dying of starvation. The ones in America want to help their people in Sudan. I think they are very thoughtful. This movie really touched me and I hope the Lost Boys reunite with their families.

Lower School News

Third Grade Puppeteers



During the month of February, third graders enjoyed the experience of working with the professional puppeteers, **Dr. George and Ann Neff** who facilitated the process of creating an entire show from beginning to end. Their time together began with a show called *Bluberry Tales* performed by the Neffs. Given the topic of the Underground Railroad, the Neffs then guided the students to create a story and script as the students utilized the valuable background information that they had learned in their classroom reading of children's literature. Next, the Neffs and third graders set out for the art room to select their characters and to build their unique rod puppets. After several rehearsals under the gentle encouragement of the Neffs, two fabulous shows were performed for the school community and third grade families.

Teacher Megan shared "It is amazing how much we learned without even realizing it. We were so focused on our show and puppets that we forgot we were actually learning about the very real and very important piece of history known as the Underground Railroad. What a way to celebrate Black History Month! This is a memory of third grade we will surely not forget."



Second Grade Weather Reporters

Second graders began learning about, observing, and recording weather early in the school year. Even though they have long since moved on to other topics of study they continue to monitor the local weather.

Each week there are two second grade weather reporters. After taking care of their usual morning classroom duties, they report to the science lab. Using the computer, they access the daily weather forecast for Mullica Hill. With this information, they fill out a weather report; noting such facts as the daily expected high and low temperatures, air pressure, humidity, and sunrise/sunset times.

Now it is time for their favorite part! Nine copies of the weather report are made. One copy is displayed by the main doors of the Hanshi Building. The other eight copies are distributed to the classrooms of grades one through five by the weather reporters.

The weather reporters are rotated weekly so that each child will have several turns monitoring our local weather.

Meeting for Worship Query *Does Peace Mean We All Must Agree?*

The following students felt moved to speak during an April Meeting for Worship. Below are their abbreviated responses:

Blaine Fox: No, but we should not solve disagreements with wars.

Eric Roscoe: Yes, otherwise we would fight too much.

Tara Smith: We should compromise when we don't agree.

Gianna Campanelli: No, if everyone always got along it would be bothersome. Everyone should do the right thing instead of going along with others (in order to keep the peace).

Inside the Classroom

Please be sure to read more about the activities and academic study of each grade level on the Friends School website. Click on "Inside the Classroom".

Middle School Update

Egypt Presentation

Mike Ayars, former board member and friend of our school community, shared his exciting stories from a recent trip to Egypt. Mike spoke to the entire middle school about the history and diverse influences that have helped shaped present day Egypt. He told wonderful stories about being the presence of the pyramids, about wandering through the ancient markets, about visiting with an Iraqi family, and even what it was like to float in a hot air balloon above the Nile River. Thank you, Mike, for your time and service in teaching our students about Egypt.

Science Fair

On March 7th the annual Middle School Science Fair was held in the gym. The sixth, seventh, and eighth graders put their months of hard work on display. Each of the students had to design an experiment, make a hypothesis, carry out the experiment, record the data and then share it with the community. The displays themselves were amazing, but the demonstrations and explanations from the students made science come alive. **Teacher Jason** must be commended for his hard work and guidance. Without his organization and leadership such a fantastic event would not have been possible.



Esther Raab is joined by Cheli and Dan Kramer.

Dear Esther

On February 18th the seventh and eighth grade classes attended a play about the Holocaust. The play, "Dear Esther," was based on a true story about a woman who had escaped Sobibor, a Nazi death camp. The students had been prepared for this by reading Elie Wiesel's *Night* and watching the films *Everything is Illuminated* and *Escape from Sobibor*. The play deeply moved the Middle School students, but what moved them most was the surprise at the end. At the end of the play it was announced that Esther Raab, the woman on whom the play was based, was in the audience. Esther stood up, and to a standing ovation, made her way to the front of the theater. Esther, who is now well into her 80s, even answered many questions from the students. Through the discussions, books, films, and play much was learned by all.

Helen Glass Essay for Peace Contest

The Mickleton Friends Meeting sponsored the Helen Glass Essay for Peace contest. Students were asked to reflect on two quotes by Martin Luther King, Jr. and to apply them to their own experiences or current world issues. The winners were announced on April 4th the anniversary of King's assassination. **Aileen Denzler** of the seventh grade was declared the winner while **Amanda Patti** and **Eric Burleson** of the eighth grade were runners-up. Aileen will have \$250 donated to FSMH for scholarships and an additional \$250 donated to a charity of her choice. All of the essays will be published in the Salem Quarterly.



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2008 Spring Auction & Dinner Gala
Friday, April 25th beginning at 6pm at Auletto's in Deptford, NJ

Don't miss out on a fun and exciting evening! Over 300 items to bid on!

Send in your reservation card now. For more information email
info@friendsmh.org or call 856.478.2908 X101



The **First Grade Quilt** for the **2008 Spring Auction** is on display in the lobby of the Hanshi Building. You must see it in person to appreciate the fine details and handiwork incorporated into this unique masterpiece!

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