

New Growth

This issue of Matters (March 2005) is brimming with stories of new growth – highly suitable for the month that will bring us spring. As I write this, it appears that March will live up to its reputation and come in like a lion. Here's hoping it goes out like a lamb.

The sixth grade trip to Costa Rica was a huge success by all accounts. Students and teachers experienced all that we hoped they would and grew closer together in support, appreciation, and friendship. Their itinerary took them to La Paz Waterfall, Lake Arenal, Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve and the Monteverde Friends Meeting. They visited the Cloud Forest school and the Carrara and Manuel Antonio national parks. They delivered our gifts of school supplies and financial donations to various recipients and joined in community service at the Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve. We look forward to opportunities for our whole community to learn more about the trip and see some of the hundreds of photographs. We give thanks for their safe travel.

After two years of careful study and review, guided by the Math Committee, Friends School Haverford will adopt a new math curriculum for kindergarten through fifth grade in 2005-2006. *Trailblazers*, developed by the University of Illinois, is a reform-oriented curriculum that is distinctive in its commitment to the standards developed by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) and its integration of math with science and language arts. During the past year, teachers at all grade levels studied the curriculum and incorporated lessons and activities. The faculty is enthusiastic about this new curriculum, and look forward to having it serve as the spine or backbone of our math program. Plans are now being developed for teachers to have workshop experiences and other professional development opportunities to ensure their readiness to use the curriculum next fall. (Please see related article on p.).

Last January, the PTO initiated a process to revise the Community Scholarship Program. Each year fundraising activities of the PTO (portions of the race, Spring Fair, and the auction) benefit the Community Scholarship Program. With the support of the School Committee and the administration, the Community Scholarship program will be administered with greater flexibility and outreach potential. The Community Scholarship program will now offer partial scholarships to children whose families live in the FSH neighborhood. In 2005-2006, there will be four Community Scholarships of \$1,250 each available to students in grades 1 through 5. The regular financial aid program will provide additional resources to Community Scholars. (Please see the related article on p.)

The last item to mention in this summary is the work being done by the Property Committee to design the process that will lead to the development of a campus master plan. We are grateful to the committee, and the leadership of Susan Callahan, for creating opportunities for all stakeholders – students, teachers, parents, Meeting members, and neighbors – to share their ideas and hopes for the campus. While there are, of course, limitations and constraints, I am confident that we will develop a plan that is both practical, meeting the needs of our educational program, and inspiring.

These initiatives capture many of the values that are at the heart of Friends School Haverford. They represent experiential learning, global awareness, service, integrated learning, empowerment, high academic standards, innovation, access, diversity, mission, engagement, leadership, and forward looking. I am grateful for the opportunity to work with you to create a powerful educational experience for our students today and to expand that experience for the future.

Martha B. Bryans
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