



FVLA Follower

✝ a Christ-focused discipleship experience ✝
brought alive in an outstanding learning community

Spring 2005

Principal's Perspective

The mission of Fox Valley Lutheran Academy is to prepare individuals to live their vocation as disciples of Christ in service to God and to others. To accomplish this, the school:

Educates using excellent instruction, solidly equipping students with life skills.

Models and celebrates Christ's forgiveness and love while developing personal accountability.

Permeates value formation with God's saving truth.

Offers opportunities for critical thinking and effective communication of ideas.

Works to build self-worth based on being God's loved, uniquely created people.

Emphasizes social interconnections and service opportunities within school, family, and community.

Recognizes God has equipped each person to fulfill His purpose for living.

Surrounds students with faith-filled, calm, confident servant leaders.

Empowered by the grace of God, FVLA is committed to living its mission. It's exciting to see empowerment materialize into action. Examples of it are evident daily. Faculty members put in extra time to see that no child falters from lack of understanding. They plan field trips and diverse learning activities to expand opportunities for student growth. Students reach out a caring hand to others who struggle, and they practice teamwork learned in class leadership exploration. Board members pursue with passion strategic planning for the ministry. Alumni become involved to enlarge the opportunities they once had here. Volunteers work to expand the success of school sponsored events.

We are a community of diverse talents, yet one unified by God's forgiving love. Empowered to serve Him, we are privileged to live out our vocation as disciples of Christ in service to God and others. May the foundation of this school always rest on God's saving truth! May the core of those involved grow so that the school's mission can empower more people!

FVLA Staff

Principal

Janet Zimdahl

Asst. Principal

Janet Burmeister

Teachers

Rev. Hannibal Frederich

Hannah Gurnett

David Kuhfahl

Karl Lauer

Kathy O'Connor

Dorie Pearson

Jean Rahn

Peg Youngren

Support Staff

Merilee Werrbach

Calendar

April 19 –
Open House – 7:00pm

April 20 –
All School Field Trip

April 23 –
21st Annual Dinner Auction

May 6 –
Prom

May 12 –
Spring Concert – 7:00pm

May 17 –
Honors Banquet

May 28 –
Graduation – 2:00pm

Focus on the Staff

Ms. Kathy O' Connor has taught all levels of mathematics at FVLA for the past 8 years. During that time she has also assisted with the instruction of theology and coached basketball. She dedicates time each day to help any student before or after school, making her commitment to each individual's success obvious. Her credentials include a B.A. and M.S. degree from Wayne State College. She

subsequently secured her Educational Specialist degree from the University of Missouri. Her extensive experience has included teaching math and physical education for 13 years in Nebraska and math for 12 years at St. Teresa's Academy in Kansas City. Ms. O'Connor has also served as an adjunct instructor of mathematics for Johnson County Community College in Kansas and pres-

ently teaches evening math classes at Elgin Community College. Currently, as an adjunct professor at Concordia University in River Forest, she is able to teach college algebra and college trigonometry to FVLA's advanced math students allowing them the privilege of gaining college credit before studying at the university level. The FVLA community is blessed by her presence.

Speech Class Activity

Juniors and seniors in speech class recently delivered interpretive readings of Newbery Medal winning books to the fourth graders at Good Shepherd Lutheran School in Elgin. It was a wonderful opportunity for the students involved to learn leadership and mentoring skills while interacting with these younger children. Following each reading, the high school students worked with the fourth graders on reflective and interpretive activities that encouraged response to the readings.

Hannah Gurnett, the FVLA English teacher who spearheaded the project, reflected on the events by saying, "The experience that the students had during this cooperative project was worth all the time and



energy put into it. Being able to see my students excel and flourish in a new environment was truly a blessing. Some of them surprised me (and themselves) with just how well they could do, some were reassured in their possible career paths, and everyone involved had fun. It was truly an experience that won't soon be forgotten by anyone involved."

The entire opportunity was a thrill for the Good Shepherd fourth graders, as was explained in the words of their teacher, Karen Crow, "The experience of working with older students who are not part of our own school community has been wonderful for my class. The exposure to these high school students has provided a

different level of insight to my class, as well as given them something new to look forward to. The interaction between the two classes was fun to watch. Both groups of students learned a lot from each other, which is what we were hoping for."

The impact on the Fox Valley students who participated was exciting to watch develop. Some discovered how natural they felt working with these younger children. Senior Tony Scarpinato, who will attend Concordia University Wisconsin in fall, summed up that enthusiasm with the words, "The speech assignment was a great taste of what I would like to pursue as my career. It makes it so much harder to wait and go through college because I want to do it now."

Meet the Board: Andy Locke

Andy Locke has served on the FVLA Board of Directors for 3 years. He has also served on the Board of Education at First Immanuel Lutheran School in Cedarburg, WI and on the Capital Campaign Focus Committee at Lord of Life Lutheran Church in La Fox, IL.

Andy graduated from Valley Lutheran High School in Saginaw, MI in 1985. He earned a Bachelor's Degree in History and a Master's Degree in Student Personnel Administration from Concordia University Wisconsin in Mequon.

He currently works for Thrivent Financial for Lutherans as Manager of Lutheran Community Services. His responsibilities for Thrivent include managing benevolence, financial education, and savings programs, creating a Financial Service Center, and developing a partnership between Thrivent members and Habitat for Humanity.

Andy shares his views on Lutheran

schools and FVLA in particular by saying, "I have a passion for Lutheran education. I am a product of Lutheran schools from kindergarten through graduate school. Students from Lutheran high schools are not only well-prepared for college academically, they are the campus leaders in sports, clubs, and in the spiritual life of the campus. As I look back now 20 years since my graduation, the fact that those teachers kept me close to Jesus – that is what I value the most."

"I choose to serve on the board at FVLA because I see the strong leadership in the Principal and the Chairman of the Board that is necessary to make FVLA a first class Lutheran high school. I would not be on this board if I didn't think it is going to happen!"

Andy and his wife Jennifer live in Batavia with their daughter Mikayla and their son Baden.

Board of Directors

Chairman

Terry Pfortmiller
St. John's — Elgin

Vice Chairman

Andrew Locke
Lord of Life — La Fox

Secretary

Kyla Jacobsen
St. John's — Elgin

Members

Warren Bernau
St. Peter — Schaumburg
Vince Elders
Immanuel — Batavia
Joe Heinz
Immanuel — East Dundee
Carol Hipple
St. Paul's UCC — Elgin
Ann Lesh
Good Shepherd — Elgin
Lynda Ranieri
St. Peter — Schaumburg
Cori Smith
St. Peter — Dundee

Students Share Giving Spirit

During the week preceding the Super Bowl, the National Honor Society led the student body in a week of service to aid the area's homeless and help bring relief to the tsunami victims. Sponsoring their annual "Souper Bowl" week, the leaders of the event tied together various themes in planning the activities. Collecting soup cans to feed the homeless has been the traditional focus of the experience. This year over 430 cans were delivered to the Elgin food pantry. Expanding the scope of influence to reach those devastated by the recent tsunami, the Student Activities Council pledged to donate 25 cents for each soup can collected while the school's Booster Club decided to promise 50 additional cents per can. In addition to this money, students contributed an additional \$120 at a Souper Bowl party held on the last day of the week. As a result of everyone's effort,

a check for over \$420 was written from the FVLA community to Lutheran World Relief.

Mixed in with the service plans were multiple fun experiences for the student body. Tiki Tuesday saw students dress in tropical clothing reminding them of the vacation paradise destroyed by the tsunami's wave of destruction. A football jersey day and an afternoon of football competition in a game designed and run by the students tied the week to the Super Bowl.

While it was exciting to see such positive energy generated and fun enjoyed, the best part of the week was witnessing students freely reaching out to help one another as they united in assisting those outside the school community. Smiles were in abundant supply as was a tremendous dose of kindness and caring.

Boys' Basketball Finishes Season

The Falcon basketball team, coached by Tom Wright, ended its season with a first round loss in the IHSA regional tournament against Elgin Academy. This game concluded the year with an overall 3-17 record. During the regular season FVLA plays a variety of area schools of similar size and is also a member of the Tollway Athletic Conference. Other members of the conference are Illinois Lutheran, Luther East, Christ Academy, and Mooseheart.

Special recognition for the season goes to senior Kurt Woock who joins Keith Kaschub ('98) and Sven Zimdahl ('96) in the FVLA 1,000 point club. In his four Falcon seasons, Kurt scored 1,290 points and was named to the Daily Herald All Tournament Team during his junior and senior years.



From The Heart of Alumni Kurt Claussner ('87)

I attended Trinity Lutheran School in Roselle from kindergarten through eighth grade and then Valley Lutheran High School from ninth to twelfth grade. I believe, without a doubt, that Christian education has had a profound, positive influence on my life.

Christian education has taught me how to live with Christ as the center of my life. It has strengthened my faith in God and given me the confidence to handle any situation that may arrive. Having had daily devotions, chapel, and the right to pray during school developed an instinctual pattern of faith that has stuck with me. Memorizing the Ten Commandments, Luther's Small Cate-

chism, and being taught lessons from the Bible helped me to realize the blessings that come from following God's commands, forgiving and loving one another.

I also remember how my Lutheran teachers and coaches challenged me and encouraged me to be the very best, and their discipline and direction guided me when I was not the model student I should have been.

The students and friends I associated with also were important. It is very comforting to see the many people I went to school with attend church regularly. Beyond that, they are leaders in their congregations. I see them as teachers,

elders, council members, and active in church activities. Most, if not all, send their children to Christian schools. They have experienced Christian education for themselves and want that same positive impact for their children.

I am so grateful to my parents for making the decision to give my sister, brother, and me a Christian education. I strongly recommend the same to any parent who wants to instill Christian values and teachings in their children.

Kurt is president of Modern Business Computing, Inc. He and his wife Christa along with daughter Anna live in Elgin where they are members of St. John's Lutheran Church.

... giving each student a greater opportunity to excel

Don't Miss the 21st Annual Dinner Auction!

FVLA's annual dinner auction has always been a wonderful evening of fellowship and positive enthusiasm for the school's ministry while also being the premiere school fundraiser of the year. This year marks the 21st annual event and builds upon the theme: "Accent on Youth—2005: Bridge to the Future." The opportunity to gather in support of Valley will be on Saturday, April 23, 2005 at the St. Andrew's Country Club located on Route 59, just north of North Avenue near West Chicago.

The astounding success of this occasion has always resulted

from generous donations and a wonderful group of interested supporters in attendance. Donations are encouraged and will be accepted through April 8th. The school welcomes gifts of goods or services, vacation opportunities, and tickets to athletic or cultural events. Anticipation is high that there will again be many long-standing and also new supporters who will attend this enjoyable evening of fellowship and fun in support of Lutheran high school ministry. A phone call to the school office at 847-468-8207 will bring information on how to donate items or make a reservation for attending.

Donor Generosity Celebrated

FVLA is thrilled to celebrate yet another amazing blessing that has come this school year. Through the generosity of an anonymous donor, the school now utilizes 10 brand new computer systems with flat panel display monitors.

The donor, in making the gift to the school, stated, "It is my desire for the students to have access to the latest technology available." The gift does exactly that. Each classroom is now equipped with one of the new systems while the others have been placed in the school's computer lab. All systems are effectively networked and have high speed Internet access.

"This gift opens up wonderful opportunities for us that we did not think were possible at this time. It gives us the ability to develop curricular goals that were once assumed to be more long range," states principal, Janet Zimdahl. Recently the Spanish IV class did extensive research in preparation for a full day trip to view the Machhu Pichhu exhibit at the Museum of Natural History. The college trig class has pored over the concepts of simple harmonic motion online, while the speech class has conducted research and will prepare a PowerPoint presentation for their final project. Zimdahl continues, "This astounding gift now can stimulate other donors to expand what is available to the students in the computer lab. The possibilities are exciting."

Coming Soon...

Look for information in the next newsletter about the formation of an Alumni Association and the development of a website for Valley alumni.

Contact FVLA

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Fox Valley Lutheran Academy

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