



# FVLA Follower

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

Summer 2006

## Principal's Perspective

At the end of a school year meaningful reflection on what has transpired is helpful. A very important part of the past year was the focused time spent on accreditation. VLHS and now FVLA have been accredited by the North Central Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement since 1977. North Central again renewed and affirmed that accreditation for the '05-'06 school year. We also applied for and went through the ongoing improvement plan process to add National Lutheran School Accreditation to our list of commendations. In addition, FVLA is a fully recognized school in the State of Illinois. In the state's report following their visit in February, they particularly noted the following: "A warm family-like atmosphere permeates throughout this well maintained facility. Students are clearly thriving in this environment where they are made to feel particularly important." It is always helpful to us when others observe and note the strengths of our culture and climate brought alive by a dedicated faculty.

In addition, FVLA is blessed with a Board of Directors committed to strategic planning and visioning for the future. Working with the school administration, we clearly know who we are as a school, what we are about, and what the very real need is for families of high school students today.

Now we move ahead to build momentum so that we may grow this ministry and develop sustainability for years to come. We have a very valuable 33 acre piece of property located near the intersection of Randall Road and Silver Glen which is in an area of exploding population growth. What a prime location that is...procured by the vision of those who came before us to choose such a valuable site! Now it is time to understand the market along with the needs and interests of the people in the area. We are very excited about the detailed market research we have planned to be conducted by Daedalus Research located in Mequon, WI. In this study that begins in July and

will be completed by mid September, discussion with church and civic leaders in the area will occur, focus groups will be held, a phone survey will determine market sizing, and an Internet survey available to area Lutheran church members will add another dimension of important input. One unique feature of this entire study is to delineate which characteristics of educational offerings are people's basic expectations and which ones are truly delighters that will offer excitement and inspire area families to participate.

This research is the first step in an exciting year that lies ahead as we grow the core of people passionately participating in FVLA. That's progress! That's inspiring! That's building the momentum needed to realize our goal of *building a sustainable model learning organization that is the area's premier provider of Christ-focused quality high school education*. I look forward to your being part of realizing that goal.

## Focus on the Staff—Jean Rahn

Mrs. Jean Rahn's B.A. and M.A. degrees have equipped her well to teach in a variety of capacities. She has instructed all levels of Spanish in both middle schools and high schools. She's been a sixth grade classroom teacher and a special education teacher for all classes at the sixth and seventh grade levels. Since coming to FVLA in 2001, she has taught all four years of high school Spanish and has developed and taught the high school health curriculum. During the past school year she has directed the FVLA stu-

dent service learning program which included coordinating working hours for students involved in the Habitat for Humanity project in Elgin and providing the guidance for students making fleece blankets to be given to those in need of both comfort and warmth. Another valuable contribution she gives to the curriculum here is that for the past two years she has guided the students in writing and producing their own drama presentation. Her talents are an indispensable addition to the FVLA program.

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## End-of-Year Activities

### Spanish Class Dinner Theater

On April 8th, the Spanish II class under the leadership of Mrs. Jean Rahn, presented the culmination of many months of effort. Their production, *Solo Un Sueño*, was a dinner theater performance. In preparing for the event, the students learned not only what it takes to participate in a dramatic presentation, but they also experienced every aspect of bringing a play to production level. The musical fantasy was entirely written, produced, and directed by the students. They set up the practice schedule and the expectations to be met by those participating. They chose who was to play each part and how each character would be brought to life. Even set design and development was under the direction of one of the sophomores. The result was a special evening for those involved in the presentation and for all who attended. It



brought public evidence and appreciation to the FVLA educational experience which offers opportunity to be involved and to learn leadership skills through hands-on problem solving and planning.

### Spring Concert

During the second week of May, the choir presented their annual spring concert. Under the direction of Mrs. Peg Youngren, the choral performers prepared a variety of secular and spiritual music for the enjoyment of the audience. Full choir performances along with featured solos and duets brought variety to the evening. Following the performance, the school family gathered in fellowship over refreshments.

### Prom

The first week of May was filled with daily activities in preparation for the prom at the end of that week. The evening before the prom, a bonfire held on Valley's property site provided a wonderful time of fellowship. Parents grilled food as everyone gathered around the huge bonfire to eat and visit. The high-



light of the week, the prom itself, was held in the idyllic setting of Lord's Park. This year's Mardi Gras theme provided fun for the students as they planned the decorations and experienced the evening. Parent peak, a prom tradition, gave the families an opportunity to take pictures and share in the excitement of the evening for a while midway through the dance.

### Honors Night

An annual tradition is the Honors and Awards Dinner which occurred during



the week preceding graduation. This event celebrated publicly the individual accomplishments of students in the areas of athletics, academics, activities, and service. A special highlight of the evening was the recognition of each senior, featuring their contributions to high school life during their time at FVLA along with the formal announcement of their post high school plans. This special event is always one of the highlights of the year for all of the school families.

### Graduation

The final event of the year was on May 27th when family and friends gathered to celebrate the graduation of the senior class. Pastor Hannibal Frederich spoke to the graduates bringing to light the school year theme of "Touchpoints" and the importance that theme has played in school life and learning along with the significance for them as they walk ahead in life.



<i>Touchpoints</i>	
1 John 1:1	That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched — this we proclaim concerning the Word of life.

## *FVLA Senior Captures Sixth in State*

### *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**

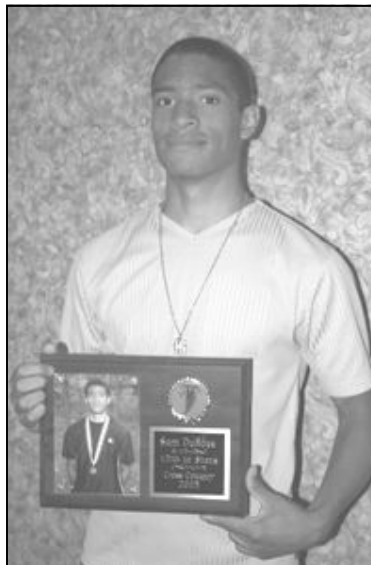
Warren Bernau  
St. Peter — Schaumburg  
Vince Elders  
Immanuel — Batavia  
Joe Heinz  
Immanuel — East Dundee  
George Hipple  
St. Paul's UCC — Elgin  
Ann Lesh  
Good Shepherd — Elgin  
Lynda Ranieri  
St. Peter — Schaumburg

Attending his own high school graduation and competing in the IHSA track meet at the same time provided a conflict for senior Sam DuBose. Although Sam began attending FVLA as a sixth grader, being present for his high school graduation on May 27th was not possible, as that was the day for the state 1600 meter finals. To reach the state meet goal, he spent many years running, coupling natural ability with hard work to grow and mature as a runner.

Sam began this year's track season with a positive outlook and high hopes of picking up where he left off last fall with his all-state performance in cross-country. He and his coaches focused on strength and speed in the off-season by lifting weights and doing regular conditioning.

During the season itself Sam captured many first place victories and ran strong with the best runners from very large high schools. He

also competed in the first annual Lutheran High School meet held at Concordia University River Forest where he won the 1600 m race by about 10 seconds, leading from start to finish.



In his quest for state honors, Sam also recorded state qualifying times in both the 400 m and the 1600 m races. However, he and his coaches chose to focus on the 1600 m event in the Seneca sectionals. By finishing first in the sectional race with a time of 4:28.62, he qualified for the state meet. On the first day of state competition, he finished with the ninth fastest time recorded for the 1600 m. This put him in the final race for the state title the next day. There he finished sixth with a time of 4:27.40.

Completing two all-state performances in one year, one in cross country and one in track, puts Sam in the FVLA track record book, and his track and cross country accomplishments will likely remain unsurpassed for years to come.

### *FVLA Staff*

**Principal**

Janet Zimdahl

**Asst. Principal**

Janet Burmeister

**Teachers**

Rev. Hannibal Frederick  
Hannah Gurnett  
David Kuhfahl  
Karl Lauer  
Kathy O'Connor  
Jean Rahn  
Peg Youngren

**Support Staff**

Merilee Werrbach

## *From The Heart of Alumni*

For so many of the over 800 alumni of VLHS and FVLA, their high school experience at Valley holds a special place in their hearts. It is a part of what has shaped who they are and, because of that, it affects both what they do and how it is done. Many alumni already have expressed how they want to provide an experience with similar strengths for their children and for many others in the years to come. That is exactly what is being worked on, and the great variety of talents and skills that alumni can bring to the future of this ministry is extremely important.

There are so many ways to become involved. Begin by regularly visiting the website [www.valleyalumns.com](http://www.valleyalumns.com) to keep your personal information updated and to read about alumni gatherings that have occurred and will be planned. Find out where your old friends

are now and what they are doing. Encourage those with whom you have contact to register on the website and add their names to the alumni network so that the core of connected alumni grows and is informed about what is happening now.

Finally, click on the link to the FVLA website and learn of the school's current activities. As connections are rebuilt, passion for creating a sustainable future ministry is inevitable. Ask yourself what talents you can contribute. Do you have interest or special skills in fundraising, marketing, recruitment of students, educational offerings, or strategic planning? You can be a vital part of the growing core of individuals building the future of Lutheran secondary education in the Fox Valley. Communicate your interest in bringing alive the passion that is in your heart by emailing [info@fvla.com](mailto:info@fvla.com).

*... giving each student a greater opportunity to excel*

## Middle School Retreat

"Get Out" was the theme of the Middle School Retreat sponsored by FVLA and held the last weekend in April. Sixth, seventh, and eighth graders from the Fox River Valley area attended the two day event at Walcamp.

Hannah Gurnett, FVLA teacher and director of recruitment, inaugurated the event, developed the theme, and led the activities. She explained the goals by saying, "The retreat's purpose was for FVLA to live as a resource to the area congregations and provide middle school students the opportunity to escape from the things of this world and grow in faith while having time for self-reflection, fellowship, and fun." Assisting as counselors by leading the Bible studies and discussion groups were three FVLA graduates who have just completed their freshmen year in college, along with one 2006 graduate.

A special part of the weekend was the privilege given to each attendee to learn teamwork and leadership skills through Walcamp's group initiatives course. This portion of the retreat was funded by a generous grant from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans. In addition, each middle schooler in attendance received a T-shirt especially designed to help bring alive the theme and serve as a reminder about how each of us is called apart from the world.

## 22nd Annual Dinner Auction

Over two hundred people—alumni, parents, students, faculty, board members, and other supporters of FVLA—shared a delightful evening of fellowship and excitement for the school's ministry at the annual dinner auction held on April 22nd at St. Andrew's Country Club in West Chicago. Each year the auction is such a grand event where those in attendance share memories of Valley's rich tradition, eat a delicious meal, enjoy visiting with each other, and look to the future with energy, hope, and commitment to reflect the light of Christ in the school's ministry. This year was no exception! In addition, the auction annually has joined together many people—donors, attendees, and supporting businesses—to raise important funds for FVLA. Once again this year, vigorous competitive bidding on a diverse selection of silent auction items and a lively response to the live auction increased the fun had by all and added generously to the funds generated for FLVA. Over \$38,000 in profit has made this year's event the premier fundraiser of the school year. It is astounding what a community of people together, through faith in God's sustaining power, can accomplish! Now both those people who attend yearly and those who came for the first time are marking their calendars in anticipation of the 2007 auction to be held on Saturday, April 21.

### Calendar

**August 2**

Registration and New Student Orientation

**August 14-17**

Faculty Workshops

**August 22**

Classes Begin

**August 22**

Opening Service—7:00 P.M.

**September 4**

No Classes—Labor Day

**Contact FVLA at:**

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220 Division Street  
Elgin, IL 60120

Tel. 847-468-8207  
Fax 847-742-2930

Website: [www.fvla.com](http://www.fvla.com)  
Email: [info@fvla.com](mailto:info@fvla.com)

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## Fox Valley Lutheran Academy

220 Division Street  
Elgin, IL 60120

Non-Profit  
Organization  
**U.S. Postage  
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### Important Dates!

**August 22**

First day of School

**September 6**

Back to School Night

**September 22**

Walkathon