



ST. FRANCIS HIGH SCHOOL

KNIGHTS & DAYS

Volume 12 Issue 4

December 2009

www.sfhs.net

Upcoming Calendar Dates and Changes

- Saturday, December 5**
Booster Christmas Tree Pick Up
- Sunday, December 6**
"Tuskegee Airmen" 1:30 pm
- Tuesday, December 8**
Advent Liturgy (MASS DRESS)
- Tu-Thur. Dec. 8-10**
Mothers Guild Knightwear Christmas Sale
- Wednesday, December 9**
Christmas Concert 7 pm
- Friday, December, 11**
Brown and Gold Day
- Tuesday, December 15**
Toy Drive drop off
- Wed-Fri December 16-18**
First Semester Exams
- Mon., Dec. 21-Mon., Jan. 4**
Christmas Vacation*
- Monday, January 4**
Faculty/Staff Retreat (NO CLASSES)
- Tuesday, January 5**
School Resumes/
2nd Semester begins
- Wednesday, January 6**
Mothers Guild Mtg. 7 pm
Newsletter Mailing/
Bake Sale
Student Body Liturgy (MASS DRESS)
- Saturday, January 9**
Open House for prospective students Noon-3 pm

During this flu season, we would like to reiterate that parents should keep their son home if he is experiencing flu-symptoms, especially a fever. This is especially important because when a student returns to school prematurely, he places himself at risk of a relapse. He can potentially affect other students whose immune systems may still be weakened. For further information, please consult the LA County Health website at www.publichealth.lacounty.gov.

Dear Parents:

The Lord's blessings! As I write this letter to you in the middle of November, I hear that our cross country team did very well in their competition. Those young men work very hard to represent St. Francis. And we are also getting ready to participate in the CIF football playoffs. The football varsity team has done so well and I am confident that they will play with great enthusiasm. Their sportsmanship is outstanding. I am so proud of standing next to them on the sidelines.

Our MiniPOSH team is already hard at work preparing for our MiniPOSH party, Saturday February 20, 2010. By now, you should have received our letter formally requesting your participation in the Grand Raffle and donation of either a new auction item valued at \$75 or more, or a cash gift of \$75 in lieu of an auction item. Your support is critical to ensuring the financial success of our event. Keep in mind, the proceeds from MiniPOSH will benefit technology-based learning initiatives for our students. We are excited about the opportunity to get together again as a St. Francis family in support of our mission to continue enriching the minds and hearts of your sons, and those young men who will come after them. Be sure to watch for your invitation which will be mailed in January. I continue to be humbled by your continued prayers and support for us.

I am sure you all had a great Thanksgiving Day and that you are getting ready for the Christmas holidays. You must be looking forward to having your family, relatives and friends for dinners and various gatherings. And it is my hope that during the Advent season we all pause and reflect on the spiritual importance of Christ's birth.

Blessed John Dun Scotus, a great Franciscan friar, said that even if humans had not sinned, God would have sent His son to become one like us in order to allow us to know Him better. God loves us immensely. St. Francis reflected often on the great mysteries of the Incarnation and Jesus' birth which are most important in our Franciscan tradition. I suggest that we all take the time during the Advent season to prepare ourselves for the great solemnity of Christmas by reflecting on these mysteries, by praying, and by reaching out to those who are in need. Please keep in mind that there many people for whom the holidays are not always a time of joy because of challenges they face in their lives. Please pray for them. May our minds and hearts be raised to God thanking Him for his graces, and let us ask Him to make us more generous and understanding of one another.

(Continued on page 3)

PRINCIPAL INTEREST-a monthly update from the Principal

We honored an impressive number of students for their first quarter academic progress at the Academic Awards Assemblies on November 3. Nearly 55% of our student body received a 3.0 or better grade point average during our opening quarter. The GPA for honor roll students is 3.0-3.59; for scholar roll it is 3.6 and above.

The percentage breakdowns by grade were:

Grade	Honor Roll	Scholar Roll	Total
9	38.4%	27.9%	66.3%
10	29.4%	17.8%	47.2%
11	35.9%	19.4%	55.3%
12	35.4%	16.1%	51.6%

A reminder to parents that all tuition accounts must be up-to-date in order for students to take their final exams on December 16-18. If you make a payment after December 4, we ask that it is in cash/cashier check only and expect it to be delivered directly to the school (instead of the credit union).

Our annual toy drive is occurring throughout the month of December. Please consult the flyer posted to our website for details. Rather than having homerooms "adopt a family" as they have in the past, we are asking that each student bring an unopened, unwrapped toy to school on Tuesday, December 15. The toys will go directly to the families at our sister

(Continued on page 2)

The Principal's Letter ...continued

parish, St. Lawrence of Brindisi, in South Los Angeles. The drop off date is Tuesday, December 15th. Toys will be collected in front of the administration building (near the flagpole) on that day only!!! Thank you in advance for your generosity!

The first semester exams are a major consideration in determining the final grades that become part of the student's permanent transcript. Any failing grades received on the next report card must be made up in an accredited summer program prior to officially re-enrolling a student next fall. **Our counseling department highly recommends that semester grades of "D" should be made up as well, because any grade below "C" is not a college recommending grade!** We also remind parents that any student who receives three semester fails will be asked to leave St. Francis immediately.

Please save the date of **Thursday, January 21** for our mandatory parent meeting, "State of the School!" In addition to distributing first semester report cards, we will be informing parents about every aspect of the school operation including plans for next year. We expect one parent from each family to attend!

On Saturday, January 9, we will be holding our Annual Open House for prospective new students and their families between noon-3 p.m. If you are aware of any family who may be interested in sending their son to St. Francis, please encourage them to attend.

We would like to thank our students and their families for their support of our Thanksgiving Food Drive during November. Congratulations to Mr. Eulalia and the cast and crew of Othello that took place last month. Our winter sports teams (basketball and soccer) begin action this month. We wish the best of luck to them and ask you to please support them throughout their seasons. Congratulations to the football and cross-country programs for advancing to the CIF playoffs!

Please continue to consult the school website for upcoming opportunities for students to fulfill their Christian Service Hours. The number of completed service hours will be listed on each student's first semester report card.

MOTHERS' MOMENT-a monthly update from the Mothers Guild

It seems as though school has just started, so it's hard to believe that Thanksgiving is already behind us! The month of December will bring final exams and the hope that this year we enjoy the true meaning of Christmas and the special time it brings with family and friends.

November was a time to give thanks, and we want to recognize the hard work of so many volunteers last month. The Hospitality: Drama committee (Susie Pilmer and Ryan Haynes) worked tirelessly behind the scenes supporting the cast and crew of *Othello*, graciously organizing and hosting refreshments for the audience. The Faculty Lunch committee (Rene Korth, Kim Kaufman, Ginger Brody, and Teri Davis) outdid themselves with a Thanksgiving feast for all our faculty and staff. Huge thanks to Linda Wood and Cathy Boyack for the successful Thanksgiving Pie Sale fundraiser and organizing our first *Dinner Knight Out* fundraiser at Pepe's. And many thanks to our Knightwear committee (Sharon Swart, Emilie Brennan, and Kelly Valles), who have been working hard at home football games and many other events, boosting SF spirit with some great merchandise. Just in time for the holidays, they'll be selling Knightwear in the Courtyard on December 8th, 9th, and 10th from 11:30 am until 1:00 pm. This is a perfect opportunity to buy holiday gifts and stock up on St. Francis apparel for the upcoming casual Mini-POSH.

Thank you to all the families who participated in the Mothers' Guild *Dinner Knight Out* (DKO) fundraiser at Pepe's. All proceeds will go to the MG Hope Fund. Be on the lookout for our next DKO in February. If you have a restaurant recommendation for a future DKO fundraiser, please contact Linda Wood or Cathy Boyack.

The December school calendar flies by, but we hope you will spend a wonderful, relaxing evening with your family at our annual Christmas Concert on December 9th in the Degheri Performing Arts Center. The Men's Chorus puts on an outstanding program as their gift to us. You'll definitely find the holiday spirit there.

You recently received a mailing from Mothers' Guild about our annual Christmas gift to the faculty and staff. This is an opportunity for us to show our appreciation for the dedication and care each member of the faculty and staff demonstrates to our sons every day. We hope you will join us in this holiday tradition of recognition for the outstanding work they all do. All contributions are due by Friday, December 11th.

And don't forget, our Fall Sports Awards Banquet for football and cross country will be Monday, December 14th. If you plan to come for dinner, advance reservations are due by Friday, December 4th. Details and reservations forms are on the website.

The Yard Sale committee is already gathering donations for our Yard Sale in April. Please think of St. Francis as you prepare to give away your end-of-year tax deductible donations! Contact Linda Koklas for donation drop-off information. We hope to make this our best Yard Sale ever and your donations will help!

Looking toward January, Open House is Saturday, January 9th. Our Hospitality: School Events committee will need baked goods and assistance that day, so please call Trina Cabrera if you'd like to volunteer.

As we enter into the holiday season, we wish all of you and your families the peace, joy and blessings of Christmas. May 2010 be filled with good health, happiness, and good fortune.

We look forward to seeing you at our January 7th meeting at 7:00 pm, followed by an evening edition of the Parent Connection. Come meet other parents and ask questions you might have about St. Francis.

God Bless and have a Merry Christmas. See you next year!

Kim Kunitake & Beatrice Harendza,
Co-Presidents

The President's Letter ...continued

Thank you for everything you do and for your great confidence. The faculty and staff of St. Francis High School will continue to do their best to educate your sons and to teach them the Catholic Christian values and Franciscan virtues. This is our gift to you. You will be remembered at my Christmas Masses and during the Christmas season. We wish you and your families a very holy Christmas Day.

Yours in Jesus and Francis,

Fr. Tony Martí, OFM Cap.
President



SPORTS AUTHORITY-a monthly update from the Booster Club

Happy Holidays to everyone in the Saint Francis family from your Booster Club. Hopefully your home or office will be warmly decorated with a tree, wreath or poinsettia purchased from the Booster Club, with all proceeds benefiting your student athletes. We thank everyone at Normandin Nursery for donating poinsettias.

As I write this letter, the football team is preparing for the first round playoff game. Congratulations to Coach Bonds, his staff and the players for a great season.

The cross-country team has concluded its season under the leadership of Coach Donovan. Congratulations to Kyle Palazzolo who qualified individually to run in the CIF Finals as a representative of Saint Francis. Good luck Kyle!

Winter sports are getting ready to begin. Head Varsity Soccer Coach Glen Appells is preparing his team to defend its title. Head Varsity Basketball Coach Jeff Stephens and his staff are also getting ready for a strong season. Coach Stephens, with the help of the Booster Club, has replaced the pads in the gym and made upgrades to the boy's locker room.

Come out and cheer on the Golden Knights in basketball and soccer. If you wish to Volunteer to work the basketball concessions, under the direction of Tim Rahtz (818) 248-8688 and trahtz@hotmail.com; basketball security, under the direction of Dan "the fireman" Perrugini (818) 951-3892 and mscooch14@gmail.com; or the soccer concessions, under the direction of Jim Ondrejko (818) 956-8503 and vjko77@charter.net, please contact the above Chairpersons as noted. In addition, you can always contact our Volunteer Coordinator Candace Ingram (626) 359-0199 and mczj@yahoo.com to volunteer to help.

In this month's Chairperson Spotlight, I have highlighted Security and 50/50. During the football season, the Booster Club is at its busiest because of the home football games. Between security, concessions, 50/50, merchandise, reserved tables, programs and 5th quarter, security is by far the largest volunteer turnout of the year. Our security this year was led by Vito Palazzolo (Kyle '11 and Travis '13) and Burt Garavaglia (Jeffrey '12). Vito and Burt, as Chairpersons, were our key coordinators in gathering volunteers and positioning them throughout the stadium to help provide a safe and enjoyable

environment for our home games. With thousands of people visiting the campus on these nights, it is a huge task to coordinate all the different moving parts of security. On any given night we had 40-80 different people volunteering their time to cover various positions. Throughout the year, Vito and Burt were professional in their approach and as accommodating as possible to meet peoples' needs each and every game. The Booster Club would like to thank them for making the evening memorable and enjoyable for everyone involved and providing an environment where people could gather afterward in room 404 and socialize and feel they contributed to the evening's success. The Booster Club would also like to thank all the volunteers who offered their service and time throughout the year.

Our 50/50 Chairperson, Ed Boyer (Class of '59, Jeff '86) has been associated with the Booster Club and part of the Saint Francis family for many years. Ed and Gino Altobelli Sr. (Gino '86) worked together to start the 50/50 drawing back in 1986 and over the years, under Ed's guidance, it has become one of the highlights of the evening. There is always a huge pot which generates substantial income for the Booster Club which is used to support the athletic department. Ed helps make the 50/50 activities fun and all of the volunteers associated with the evening's activities always enjoy themselves. The Booster Club would like to send out a special thank you to Peter Spoto (Aaron '10) for his extra help this year. Unfortunately, Ed was forced to miss a game this year and Peter, in his absence, stepped up and led all the committee functions for the evening. We thank Peter, but most especially we thank Ed and his volunteers for their years of service and dedication.

Our January Booster Club meeting is scheduled for January 14, 2010 at 7:00 pm in the Field House. All are welcome to attend and participate.

When this letter is published, Christmas will be three weeks away. The Booster Club wishes to thank everyone for their support and wish you a Merry Christmas and a happy 2010!

Go Golden Knights!

Chuck Brash
President

COLLEGE COUNSELORS' CORNER

SENIORS!

Now that your UC and CSU applications have been filed, you should be concentrating on private and out-of-state public institutions where you plan to apply. **Be sure to watch application deadlines!** (Also, aim to send all of your applications before Christmas.) The majority of colleges will be asking for seventh semester grades, so study hard and avoid senioritis! Remember that improvement counts. Our office will automatically send your seventh semester grades to colleges in early 2010.

SENIORS – December Timeline

- Send official test scores to all colleges you have applied to. You must do so through The College Board and ACT Web sites: www.collegeboard.com and www.actstudent.org, respectively. You can save in sending SATs to CSUs by using CSU Mentor (Code #3594).
- Report Early Decision or Early Action results to our office.
- Pursue private scholarships and awards. To obtain more information regarding scholarship opportunities, listen to KNIT for announcements, check the Counseling Office's scholarships list on Naviance Family Connection, and go onto the SFHS website and access the links in the Scholarships section (click on "College Counseling" under "Academics"). Be aware of scholarship scams! A good rule of thumb is that you should never pay for scholarship applications or information.

SENIORS AND PARENTS OF SENIORS – Line-by-Line FAFSA Review Night

All seniors and their parents are invited to attend the Line-by-Line FAFSA Review Night on Thursday, January 7, 2010, at 7:00 p.m. in the theater. This is an extremely important meeting where detailed information will be given regarding the financial aid process. The presenter for the evening will be Dan Dabek, Assistant Director of Financial Aid at Occidental College. Families will receive a FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) worksheet, if it is made available by the U.S. Department of Education at the time of the event. What can you do now in preparation for the FAFSA? Order a PIN (personal identification number) for the student and at least one parent. (The PINs serve as the student's and parent's electronic signatures.) Go to www.pin.ed.gov to obtain the PINs.

SENIORS AND PARENTS OF SENIORS – What is the CSS PROFILE?

The CSS PROFILE is a financial aid form that some colleges require (in addition to the FAFSA) from students seeking financial aid or merit scholarships. Private institutions that do not require the CSS PROFILE frequently require applicants to fill out their own financial aid forms (in addition to the FAFSA). It is very important to follow each college's directions for filling out forms and meeting financial aid and merit scholarship deadlines. Please call the financial aid office at the college with any questions regarding deadlines and procedures.

ALL STUDENTS AND PARENTS – Some Helpful Financial Aid Websites

1. FAFSA: www.fafsa.ed.gov.
2. CSS Profile: <http://profileonline.collegeboard.com>.
3. Federal Student Aid FAFSA4caster: www.fafsa4caster.ed.gov. This website allows families to get an early estimate of their EFC (Estimated Family Contribution), which is the amount of money that the federal government anticipates a family can contribute toward the first year of college for the student.
4. FinAid: www.finaid.org. This website offers great information on financial aid: how it works, how to apply, what the resources are, strategies for maximizing eligibility, a list of questions and answers, terminology, and overall good advice. It is a comprehensive source for student aid information with descriptions and links to other sites, including university and college websites. It too has an online calculator to predict the EFC.
5. See additional financial aid links in the College Counseling section (within "Academics") of the SFHS website.

JUNIORS AND PARENTS OF JUNIORS – College Knowledge Night
Please mark your calendars for College Knowledge Night on Thursday, February 4, 2010. This is a very important meeting for juniors and their parents. As juniors, you will soon be getting more involved in the college search and application process. Our goal at St. Francis is to keep you informed and prepared. We want to make sure that each of you proceeds smoothly through the application process and matriculates to a college that is a good fit academically, socially, and spiritually. The more you know about the college application process, the easier it will be for you and your family next year. "Where should I apply?" "How do we pay for college?" "When should I take the SAT or ACT?" "How do I prepare for these tests?" "When do I apply?" "What courses should I take senior year?" "What are the admission requirements?" "How many schools should I apply to?" These are some of the topics that will be covered during the course of the evening. We look forward to seeing all of you there—7:30 p.m. in the theater. Watch for an invitation in the mail.

COLLEGE INFORMATION FOR JUNIORS

You can now register for spring 2010 SAT and ACT exams. If you are interested in UC campuses or other highly selective four-year institutions, you should also plan to take SAT Subject tests in May or June, particularly for subjects you are taking this year (e.g., chemistry or U.S. history). For the UC, you must take two subject exams in two different subject areas (e.g., your two subject tests cannot be both U.S. and world history). Also, if you take the Math Subject test, **it must be Math 2**. To register, go online to www.collegeboard.com for the SAT and www.actstudent.org for the ACT. **Be sure to include the St. Francis High School code: #051311.** In addition, if you are interested in test prep for the SAT or ACT, please come to the College Office. We have a list of referrals that you can research. Remember, however, that the best way to prepare for the reading sections of these tests is to READ, READ, READ!

JUNIORS - PSAT Results

We should be receiving the PSAT scores by early January. The results will be mailed to your homes. Please remember that the PSAT is a practice exam. We do not recommend test prep courses (if taken) until the spring of junior year. Intensive prep courses should be taken during the summer preceding senior year to avoid interfering with junior year classes.

SOPHOMORES – PLAN Results

The PLAN score reports have arrived. Mr. Terrazone will be visiting 10th grade classes soon to distribute the score reports.

STUDENTS IN AP COURSES (AND PARENTS OF THESE STUDENTS)

School policy states that it is mandatory for all students enrolled in AP courses to take the AP exams in May. The College Board has designated the price of each exam to be \$86.00. For those who qualify for financial assistance by meeting The College Board's criteria, the cost per exam is \$56.00. Families will be billed for AP exams in early 2010.

ALL STUDENTS – TIP OF THE MONTH!

Regarding your personal statements for your college applications: It is never too early to begin thinking about what you will write about in your essays for college. Colleges are looking for creative essays that give the admissions office a better understanding of who you are. Students are encouraged to be creative. Tips: Tell stories of leadership roles, things you are passionate about, and significant events that have occurred in your life. Make sure to have a few people proofread your essay. Also, make sure to answer the question that is asked.