

WOLF WATCH

— WEEKLY E-NEWS —

News for the Week of March 4

All School

Donate Your New or Gently Used Children's Books

With the flooding and loss caused by Hurricane Harvey, the need to replace books is greater than ever!

The Ladies for Literacy Guild of the Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation is hosting its second-annual Community Book Drive, and we want to help. Donated books will be used to stock the Guild's Curiosity Cruiser mobile library initiative, a one-of-a-kind mobile library that travels to low-income neighborhoods and provides children and their families with access to books.

To participate, **please donate new or like-new children's books (early childhood–eighth grade ONLY) by dropping them into the box in the Crum Library by Friday, March 9.**

Please Wear Name Badges While on Campus

Student safety is a top priority here at St. Francis. We take your children's well-being very seriously, not just because it is the right thing to do, but also because we genuinely love them.

- To help us in this effort, **all faculty, staff, and visitors should have a visible name badge while on campus.**
- Additionally, we ask that you **please make sure you are following our check-in procedures and sign in at the front desk.**

Festival Fiesta 2018: Sunday, April 15

Our community is the best! Thank you to all the event and booth sponsors, ticket and T-shirt purchasers, faculty shirt underwriters, and dinero donors.

We want this Festival to have all the frills and thrills, and **there's still time to show your support by sponsoring one of the booths below or by sharing some dinero for a portion of the booth cost!**

- Figure 8 Obstacle
- Yard Wars
- Quad Jump
- Tubs of Fun
- Hippo Chow Down
- High Striker
- Dora 5-in-1 Combo
- Primary School Fiesta Games
- Airbrush Tattoos
- Custom Leather Bracelets
- Face Painters
- Hair Spray
- Balloon Artist
- Pig Races
- Toro Toss
- Plinko
- Raising Cane's Chicken
- James Coney Island
- Pizza
- Grilled Burgers and Hot Dogs
- Wine
- All the Fixings
- Fiesta Snacks

Please note that if a booth doesn't have a sponsor, we won't be able to have the booth at the event.

REGISTER AND PAY ONLINE

Remember, we have **online registration and payment** available.

- To view the printed packet, please [click here](#).
- For registration and payment, [click here](#).

WITH QUESTIONS

If you have questions or did not receive your packet, please contact event chairs [Megan Tipton](#) and [Marjorie Dale](#).

Parent Community Bible Studies

Please join us for upcoming Bible studies aimed at our parent community:

MOMS' PRAYER DEVOTIONAL WITH MRS. HEINEMANN

- **Wednesday, March 7, at 8:40 a.m. in the Chapel of St. Clare**
- This is a peaceful time of scriptural reflection, prayerful meditation, and supportive fellowship.
- All moms are welcome!

DADS' BIBLE STUDY WITH FATHER WISMER

- **Thursday, March 22, at 7:15 a.m. in the Christian Education Rooms** (at the end of the Middle School hallway)
- This study examines the New Testament book of James and seeks to apply it to life.
- All dads are welcome!

Register Today for Summer on the Point

Make a Move toward summer! Registration for Summer on the Point 2018 is now open. SOTP offers students entering Primary I through Upper School grades camps in discovery, enrichment, arts, sports, STEAM, technology, and academic review.

- Sessions for **June 4–29** and **July 16–August 10** are packed with learning, discovery, and fun!
- For course descriptions, [visit our summer programs page](#).
- To register, please [sign in to your My Backpack account](#) and select "Program Registration."

PA Spring Luncheon Is April 4

This year's St. Francis Parents Association Spring Luncheon will be held at the Houston Country Club on Wednesday, April 4. You won't want to miss Shasta Nelson, M.Div! The relationship expert and author

of Frientimacy: How to Deepen Friendships for Lifelong Health and Happiness and Friendships Don't Just Happen! The Guide to Creating a Meaningful Circle of GirlFriends will be speaking to us about how to have and be meaningful friends—and how to teach our children to do the same!

[Click here](#) to register via the MySchoolAnywhere store. (Remember, you'll need to log in.)

Primary School

From the Division Head: Loose Parts

As a parent, you have surely discovered the magic of a cardboard box. We've all given our kids toys we were sure would be a big hit, only to have them love the box more than the toy! Or what about the really big appliance box that was beloved, but took over the house, so that you finally had to sneak it out to the curb on garbage day before the kids woke up?

Those boxes, like many of children's favorite materials, are free. In the early childhood world, we call boxes, sticks, rocks, buttons, acorns, and other open-ended materials "loose parts."

Collections of loose parts have value in Reggio-inspired programs, like ours, because they have unlimited potential. They can be manipulated, moved, changed, and creatively used in ways that aren't always predictable or planned.

They are treasured by children because they allow them to experiment, invent, and make things up as they go. There is no script, and no right or wrong way to use them. We do not know how loose parts will be used when we make them available to students. They are the engineers, artists, and architects who are building their capacity in decision-making and problem-solving.

The term "loose parts" was first used by architect Simon Nicholson. His theory was that people had come to believe that creativity was a rare commodity, reserved only for a select, gifted number of people. By giving children access to open-ended materials, the opportunities for creativity were abundant.

As educators, our responsibility is to support students and challenge their thinking, helping them deepen their learning and reflect on their discoveries.

In helping to broaden our selection of loose parts, **our PII classes are asking for your help in their quest to collect the materials listed below.** If you have any of these materials, please send them to school in your child's blue bag, or you may drop them off in the front office. We are happy to reuse, repurpose, and recycle these materials for you.

- **Buttons**
- **Bottle caps (no beer/alcohol bottle caps, please)**
- **Empty tubes from toilet and paper-towel rolls**
- **Spare tiles**
- **Any type of beads**
- **Fabric**
- **Items from nature (acorns, pine cones, pebbles, dried flowers)**
- **Spools**
- **Ribbon**
- **Doilies**

“In any environment, both the degree of inventiveness and creativity, and the possibility of discovery, are directly proportional to the number and kind of variables in it.”

~ Simon Nicholson, Architect

Thank you for your help!

Amy Whitley, MA
Head of Primary School

Note About Celebrating Summer Birthdays

We would like to follow the schedule below for celebrating summer birthdays during Chapel, from now until the end of school:

- **If your child has a June birthday**, we will celebrate at the end of March/beginning of April.
- **If your child has a July birthday**, we will celebrate during the month of April.
- **If your child has an early August birthday**, we will celebrate at the end of April, through the first week of May.

Please contact your child's teacher as to when you would like to celebrate your Primary Schooler's summer birthday in Chapel, according to the above schedule.

Thanks for helping us to commemorate these special birthdays in such a meaningful and spiritual way!

Primary School Dining Hall Menu

To view the Primary School Dining Hall menu for March, please click [here](#).

Mark Your Calendar

Tuesday, March 6

- *Chapel:* 9:30 a.m.
-

Wednesday, March 7

- *Chapel:* 9:30 am.; Primary I and II students wear uniforms
-

Monday, March 12–Friday, March 16

- *Spring Break:* Student holiday
-

Tuesday, March 20

- *Chapel:* 9:30 am.
-

Wednesday, March 21

- *Chapel:* 9:30 am.; Primary I and II students wear uniforms
-

Tuesday, March 27

- *Chapel: 9:30 a.m*
-

Wednesday, March 28

- *Chapel: 9:30 a.m.; Blades drama performance; Primary I and II students wear uniforms*
 - *MWF Pre-Primary Easter Egg Hunt: Students only*
 - *Primary II Fathers & Friends Lunch: 11:00 a.m.*
-

Thursday, March 29

- *T/Th Pre-Primary Easter Egg Hunt: Students only*
-

Friday, March 30

- *Good Friday: Student holiday*
-

Sunday, April 1

- *Easter Sunday*

Lower School

From the Division Head

Our kindergarten 100 Day Parade was the cutest thing you have ever seen! The creativity of our students' hats was incredible. All other grade levels came out to cheer on our little folks, and Penny, our therapy dog, led the way wearing her 100 Day shirt.

As I roamed the halls and visited classrooms this week, I was especially impressed with all the writing going on in classes. **Our students have been**

busy exploring features of nonfiction texts and practicing their informational and persuasive reading and writing.

Our **kindergarteners** are writing “All About” books after wrapping up a unit of how-to books. You would be amazed at the things they have taught their friends and teachers—from how to brush your teeth and how to feed your cat to how to take a shower the wrong way. Excellent information for all!

First graders are practicing their persuasive skills by writing “reviews” of various things, including movies, games, restaurants, and vacation spots. I’ll bet you didn’t know that Aspen is the BEST vacation spot because you can get room service there! And check out Carrabba's for fine Italian food!

Second graders are researching various biomes and the animals there. Their research is allowing them to explore both traditional nonfiction texts as well as online resources. Classroom teachers have collaborated with Mrs. Martinez, our K–2 STEAM teacher, to teach students about climate, land forms, food chains, and plant and animal adaptations. Their culminating project will be to present an informational book about their animals and the biome in which they live.

Across the hall, **third grade** is writing “Expert” books. Each child has chosen the topic that is their area of expertise, and they will organize this knowledge into a chapter book. Along the way, they have incorporated craft moves they are learning from authors of mentor texts. Throughout the process, students have the opportunity to edit and revise with others, reflecting on their continued growth as writers.

Fourth graders just wrapped up a unit on immigration, as they study the regions of the United States. A great deal of research was done on four topics: reasons immigrants chose to leave, their journey to America, their entrance experience through Ellis Island, and their assimilation into their new home. The culminating project was the creation of a historical fiction piece in which students developed an immigrant character and wrote about each component of their journey in a journal format.

A significant component of the writing workshop approach is student choice. As you can see, all of our students have had some choice in their writing projects. We all find value in activities that have personal meaning; this increases engagement, and engagement increases learning.

In addition to learning to write many genres, the students also learn and practice applying conventional mechanics authentically. Revision and editing checklists are used throughout the process to promote accountability and self-reflection on the application of new learning. ***It is so rewarding watching our young learners become so excited about writing!***

Have a wonderful week!

Carol Christ, MEd
Head of Lower School

Mark Your Calendar

Monday, March 5

- *Dress Uniform Day*
 - *Birthday Chapel:* Students with a birthday between March 4-10 will receive a birthday pencil in Chapel today
-

Wednesday, March 7

- *Regular Uniform Day*
 - *Leadership Council 4 Induction Chapel:* 8:05 a.m.
-

Monday, March 12–Friday, March 16

- *Spring Break:* Student holiday
-

Monday, March 19

- *Dress Uniform Day*
- *Birthday Chapel:* Students with a birthday between March 11-24 will receive a birthday pencil in Chapel today

Wednesday, March 21

- *Regular Uniform Day*
 - *FAC Chapel: 8:05 a.m.*
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Thursday, March 22

- *Second-Grade Biome Bonanza: 1:00-1:45 p.m. in the second-grade pod and classrooms; parents welcome*

Middle School

From the Division Head

Happy Sunday, Middle School Families. I hope this finds you all well today.

In her letter last week, Amy Whitley, our Head of Primary School, kindly suggested to all the parents in our community that they **read each division's *Wolf Watch* letter**. I'm echoing Amy's collegial, inclusive advice to us all. I know that she and Carol Christ provide our families with wonderful, useful information every week, so please take advantage. Thank you, Amy and Carol!

This week, our MS students showcase their creativity during Friday's Variety Show. Two weeks ago, I attended the **49th Learning and the Brain Conference**, centered around the science of creativity and how to enhance our classrooms with that knowledge. Whether our teachers and students harness the power of storytelling, awaken the empathic parts of the brain, or practice a growth mindset to build executive functioning skills, I know that our faculty and staff are working hard to enhance their classrooms with best practices.

For additional information, [click here](#) to view the **Google folder that I created at the conference**. If you choose to look at it, then please pay special attention to three Google Docs within the folder: LATB Resources/Links 2.15.18, LB49 SF Final GB Program, and MS Division Meeting 2.20.18. Those three items will give you a snapshot of the Mind,

Brain, Education Science research practices that are better informing our faculty's teaching and our students' learning. I encourage you all to search through as many of the researchers and presenters as possible, as all of their subject areas focus on salient topics in education.

It's a beautiful day, and we are Wolves!

Connor Cook, EdD
Head of Middle School

After Party: Snacks to Follow Variety Show!

The annual Middle School Variety Show is **Friday, March 9**. After the show, students will enjoy some much-anticipated social time, complete with concessions sponsored by FoFA! Your child is welcome to bring money to purchase a variety of items. **All drinks and snacks are \$2 each.**

Community Service Hours Request Forms

Don't forget that Quarter 3 Community Service Hours Request Forms are due in the Middle School office by **Monday, March 5**. We've attached [a copy of the form](#), as well as of [the e-mail](#) sent to all families this past week, for your reference.

Snow Day Photos Needed for Yearbook

We'd like to include pictures in the upcoming Yearbook of St. Francis families enjoying the snow days from school. If you have photos to share, please e-mail high-resolution images to Steve Johnson by **Friday, March 9**.

Mark Your Calendar

Monday, March 5

- *Regular Schedule/Dress Uniform Day*
 - *Q3 Community Service Forms Due to MS Office*
 - *Chapel: 10:45-11:15 a.m.*
-

Tuesday, March 6

- *For Grades 5, 6, and 8: Regular Schedule/Regular Uniform Day*
 - *For Grade 7: Casual Dress Day*
 - *Bible Study for Eighth Graders: 7:15-7:45 a.m. in the Christian Education rooms at the end of the Middle School hallway*
 - *Seventh-Grade Field Trip: Day trip to Camp Allen*
-

Wednesday, March 7

- *Regular Schedule/Regular Uniform Day*
 - *Bible Study for Seventh Graders: 7:15-7:45 a.m. in the Christian Education rooms at the end of the Middle School hallway*
 - *Chapel: 10:45-11:15 a.m.*
-

Thursday, March 8

- *Regular Schedule/Regular Uniform Day*
 - *Bible Study for Fifth and Sixth Graders: 7:15-7:45 a.m. in the Christian Education rooms at the end of the Middle School hallway*
 - *MS Council Meetings: 9:15-10:00 a.m. in classrooms*
 - *WEB Activity for Seventh-Grade Applicants: 9:15-10:00 a.m. in Mr. Duran's classrom*
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Friday, March 9

- *Special Schedule/Regular Friday Uniform*
 - *NJHS Meeting: 7:15-7:45 a.m. in Dr. Bedard's classroom*
 - *MS St. Francis Got Talent Variety Show: 1:50-2:50 p.m. in the Fine Arts Center; students only*
 - *MS St. Francis Got Talent Variety Show Concessions Social: 2:55-3:35 p.m. in the Fine Arts Center; students only*
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Monday, March 12–Friday, March 16

- *Spring Break*: Student holiday
-

Monday, March 19

- *Regular Schedule/Dress Uniform Day*
- *Q4 Begins*
- *Chapel: 10:45-11:15 a.m.*

Church

Lenten and Holy Week Booklet Is Available Online

Our Lenten journey began last week on Ash Wednesday. Lent is the season of preparation for Easter and a time of fasting, penitence, reflection, and prayer. Regardless of whether we are giving something up or taking something on, our focus is on Christ and coming to know and love Him better.

To view the St. Francis Lenten and Holy Week booklet online, [click here](#).

Father Bates to Lead Forgiveness Workshop

Father Bates will lead a forgiveness workshop on **Saturday, March 24, from 9:00 a.m. to noon**. Consider whom you need to forgive and work through a process of learning to release others and yourself. Please RSVP to [Amy Homer](#) at 713.458.6307 if you plan to attend.

Participate in Our Palm Sunday Passion Play

On **Sunday, March 25**, our **9:00 a.m. Family Worship Service** will include a passion play that reenacts the events leading up to Jesus's suffering and death. The Gospel reading for the Sunday of the Passion ends with the dramatic event of the crowd shouting, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!"

The passion play is hosted and organized by our seventh graders, but all ages are invited and encouraged to participate. [Click here to sign up](#).

Good Friday: Children's Walk to Calvary With Father Wismer
Friday, March 30, at noon, children meet with Father Wismer in the

Wheatcroft Parish Hall to participate in their own journey of the Stations of the Cross.

- This is an interactive experience, and families are welcome to participate with their children.
- This year, we are asking our sixth graders to take on the responsibility of organizing and giving leadership.
- All children and youth are welcome.
- To participate, [sign up here](#).

Holy Saturday Baptisms

Easter Eve baptisms take place at 4:00 p.m. in the church. If you would like to schedule your baptism for Holy Saturday, please contact [Amy Homer](#) at 713.458.6307.

Join Us for Daily Prayer During Lent

During Lent, lay leaders and clergy will lead corporate offerings of the Daily Office in the Chapel of St. Clare.

- **Morning Prayer will be at 7:00 a.m., Mondays through Saturdays.**
- **Evening Prayer will be at 5:00 p.m. on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays.**
- These simple prayer offices, offered without sermons, are about 20 minutes long, start to finish.

We encourage you to enter into this rhythm of prayer as often as you can.