Dear Parents,

I extend my heartfelt appreciation to our school community for your support of Saturday’s Health Fair and Dance 4 Health fundraiser. It was a wonderful community event and your generous support for our school is overwhelming. We raised over $14,000 which will support technology and fund many innovative instructional programs here at Island Creek. Thank you so much.

This April marks five years since our school’s dedication ceremony. In reflecting on those five years I am honored to be a part of the growth of our rich community of learners. I have learned a great deal and developed a sincere affection for the staff, students and families of our community. I am fortunate to be a part of this very special adventure.

On May 1st, Island Creek will pause to express appreciation to our dedicated volunteers with a lunch in their honor. Please mark your calendar to join us. The assistance of this vital support makes a difference in the lives of the children we teach. Schools really are community partnerships; we are linked together by our shared commitment to children, our investment in the future.

As we take time to honor all the volunteers who make our school a special place, it is a good time to think about how we teach. Parents and teachers teach all day every day. Teaching children new skills at home is similar to teaching skills in the classroom. Parents may use the same step-by-step teaching procedures to help their children learn. Consider the following procedures that you can use to increase successful learning:

- Identify the steps involved to break a task into its smallest segments:
- Explain each part of the task by showing children what is required. Teachers demonstrate and give examples to students and explain why this task will be important to them.
- Help children develop confidence. Teachers ask questions about learning, how they are proceeding and drawing links between this skill what information was learned earlier.
- Have children complete the task while you supervise. Teachers circulate around the room while students practice skills at their desks.
- Have children attempt the task independently. Teachers carry out this step by assigning homework to students.
- Praise and reward children for their efforts. Teachers use encouraging remarks, stickers, and other rewards for good work.
- When fine-tuning is needed, show patience and take additional time with children. Teachers accomplish this by working with students in small skill groups and giving extra support.
- Remember to explain expectations clearly. Make sure children know what constitutes a successfully completed task. Teachers are specific in their directions for fulfilling assignments.

Thank you for your contributions to your child’s learning and to our shared efforts. We recognize and appreciate our volunteers.

Thank you for being our partner in your child’s education,

Susan Z. Owner
# April 2008

## Upcoming Events
- **May 1 (10:30-1)** - Volunteer Luncheon
- **May 1** - Chorus and Beatmasters Concert
- **May 2** - SCA Sports Day

## National Volunteer Week - We Love Our Volunteers
- **May 1**
- **May 2**

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## National Library Week - Read a Good Book
- **May 1**
- **May 2**

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## Arbor Day
- **May 1**

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<td>7:30-8:15 Gr. 2-3 Writer’s Block</td>
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<td>7:30-8:15 Gr. 2-3 Writer’s Block</td>
<td>6th Gr. Pyramid Band FT, Hayfield</td>
<td>2:45-4 Helping Hands</td>
<td>6th Gr. Field trip, Planetarium (Berman, Vaughan) 7-9PM PTA Basket Bingo, Café (doors open at 6)</td>
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<td>6th Gr. Panoramic Photo Kindergarten Registration Kick-off, Café</td>
<td>7:30-8:15 Gr. 2-3 Writer’s Block Rising 7th Gr. MS Tour, Hayfield 3:15-4:00 Chess Group, Café</td>
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National Library Week
April 13th-19th
Celebrate National Library week by visiting a library or reading a good book. Remember, Island Creek students and staff are “Wild About Books and Reading”!

Did You Know?
As of the end of March our collection includes:
- 9,366 Nonfiction titles
- 3,997 Everybody titles
- 3,216 Fiction titles
- 1,447 Biography titles
- 505 Audiovisual titles
- 417 Professional titles
- 316 Reference titles

March Library Happenings
It has been a busy and fun time in the library this month. Here are just a few of the highlights:
- Kindergarten classes have been learning about sequencing when retelling a story. After listening to a story, students have put pictures from the story in order to aid in their retelling and comprehension.
- First grade classes have been learning about books that end where the story begins. By using a circular sequence chart, students are more easily able to retell the abstract parts of a story.
- In a special project, Mrs. Fay’s 2nd grade class came to the library to learn about diamante poems. They learned that these poems have seven lines and are shaped like a diamond. The poem can be about one thing or it can compare and contrast two opposite things. The students wrote their own diamante poems!
- Third grade classes have been learning about online databases and how to access them from the library, the computer lab, the classroom and home. They are using these databases to research famous people and important holidays.

6th Grade Book Club
The second to the last meeting of the 6th Grade Book Club is April 17th at 7:30AM in the library. You can either read either Last Shot: A Final Four Mystery by John Feinstein or Gold Dust by Chris Lynch. As you can see we are reading a sports fiction book. Come with your ideas for a classic book to read in May. See you there!!

Library Catalog
You can access the Island Creek library catalog from home: http://libcat.fcps.edu/uhhtbin/cgisirsi/x/0/0/57/49?user_id=429WEB
THE HEALTH & FITNESS FAIR WAS A GREAT SUCCESS

A great big THANK YOU to all Island Creek students, parents, staff and community members that volunteered their time and/or donated to our Dance 4 Health fundraiser. We raised over $14,000 which will support technology, and fund many innovative instructional programs here at Island Creek.

Thanks again, we couldn’t have done it without you. Teamwork and cooperation carried the day.

MESSAGE FOR PARENTS OF CURRENT 5TH GRADERS

Effective July 1, 2006, all students in Virginia must receive a booster dose of Tdap vaccine prior to entering sixth grade, if at least five years have passed since the last dose of tetanus toxoid-containing vaccine (DTP, DTap, DT or Td).

Please check your child’s immunization records carefully. If your child is required to have a Tdap booster, we ask that you provide documentation to the school office. This documentation can be a copy of your child’s immunization record, or a note from your physician listing the date of their most recent Tdap booster shot.

The Tdap booster can be obtained from your child’s physician. Immunizations required for school are also available at the Fairfax County Health Department at no charge. Clinic locations and walk-in hours are online at http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/hd/hdclinicsite.htm. Students receiving immunizations at the Health Department must be accompanied by an adult, and students should bring their immunization records to the Health Department with them.

It is most important that you plan ahead to attend to this matter. Sixth graders cannot begin school without documentation of having had the Tdap booster or having had a tetanus-containing vaccine within the past five years.

Please contact Gail Acker, the school public health nurse, at 703-704-6100 or gail.acker@fairfaxcounty.gov, if you have any questions.

New Face of FCPS’ Summer School of 2008

The FCPS summer school program this year will be significantly different than students and parents have experienced in the past. A limited number of enrichment opportunities for students in grades 4 - 12, such as the Institute of the arts and tech Adventure Camp, as well as Extended School Year for some special education students, will continue to be offered. However, due to budget reductions, the traditional morning summer school that many Island Creek students have attended in the past will not be offered. Encore 2008, the summer school programs booklet, will be available in the late spring to families of FCPS students through the mail, at public libraries, in FCPS administrative offices, and at www.fcps.edu/news/summer.htm. Elementary, middle, and high school programs are contingent upon final approval of the FCPS budget by the school board on May 22.
REGIONAL PARENT MEETINGS

Child care for children, ages 1 - 12 will be provided at all meetings.

Parents are invited to learn about:

Instructional services, including what your child is learning in language arts, math, social studies, science, health and physical education, foreign languages, and fine arts.
Curriculum areas, including English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), gifted and talented (GT), Advanced Placement (AP), and International Baccalaureate (IB) courses.
Special education
Helping your child with his or her education.
Available services to support families with children in Fairfax County Public Schools.
Community resources available in Fairfax County.

Parents will also have an opportunity to share their feedback on FCPS curriculum and services.

Due to space restrictions, preregistration is required. Register online at www.fcps.edu
Safety is the featured character quality for the months of April and May and we discuss many types of safety during this time period. This month we are focusing on Internet Safety.

Computer Safety is one of our major ongoing concerns for our children in our rapidly changing times. We have come to rely and depend heavily on computers for our everyday lives and particularly for academic endeavors. We often forget that this powerful learning tool can also have negative uses and connotations. As parents and educators we must do our best to try to keep up with some of the more popular forms of social interaction networks/sites on the internet.

Cyberbullying is an ongoing problem for all people, particularly young children. It is easy to bully someone when you don't have to face them, and when a child is bullied in this manner, it's not just between them and the bully, if they are on an interactive website, anyone can access their transaction and participate in the bullying process. Often the child will be too humiliated to admit to the bullying, remember to speak with your children often and ask them directly if anyone is bothering them on line.

The number of people in social interaction networks is exponential. For example, MySpace as long ago as September of 2006 had 106 MILLION members, and continues to add 230,000 new members daily which adds 1.25 million more subscribers to date and that is just one of the social interaction networks currently running on the internet.(Wikipedia).

YouTube is another very popular site on the internet. It is a video-sharing website where users can upload, view and share video clips. Few statistics are publicly available regarding the number of videos on YouTube. However in July 2006, the company revealed that more than 100 MILLION videos were being watched every day, and 2.5 BILLION videos were watched in June 2006. 50,000 videos were being added per day in 2006, and this increased to 65,000 by July. (Wikipedia)

A relatively new and very popular computer component is Webkinz. Webkinz are a series of small stuffed toys that come with a code to become interactive on the internet. They do have very solid parental controls in place for limiting your child's access to their services and chat rooms. Webkinz access to chat is limited and your child must submit your e mail address. When your address is submitted the parent company will send you an e mail asking your preferences whether your child is allowed to access the KinzChat chat rooms. When the e mail arrives you have only to click one button to decline or allow your student to access their KinzChat rooms. They also have a built-in screening device which automatically deletes certain information from being transmitted. One example they use is "I'm going to punch you" The word punch would be blocked. Another example of their control is "I live at 7855 Morning View Lane, call me." In this example, the control automatically blocks the address of the child from being transmitted. The parental controls are there, please investigate and use them for the protection of your children and your peace of mind.

The websites and their particular uses are changing constantly and it is overwhelming at times to keep up, but following a few simple rules will help with any and all internet interactions.

Be aware of when and where your child is logging on to the internet.

Monitor their time and supervise their computer use. Remember to talk to other parents about your rules before allowing your child to access the internet from a friend's house.

Discuss which websites are allowed and which are off limits. Use any and all parental controls available.

Inappropriate material/conversations. Remind your child NOT to respond to e-mail which they receive on line if it is not from a face-to-face "known" friend. Many predators pose as children to lure our children into dangerous situations. Teach them to report to an adult as soon as possible.

The number one safety device for the internet is TALK TO YOUR CHILDREN. Keep an open communication about this topic as you would any other. The more you talk to your children, the easier it will be for them to be open with you and allow you to help them to stay safe.

Your partners in character education,
Virginia Hulke
Steff Shelesky
School Counselors