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MONDAY MEMO

September 14, 2009

EVENTS CALENDAR

Monday, Sept. 14

Picture Order Envelopes Due
P4 Enrichment Begins
P4 & P5 EDP Begins
Middle School Curriculum Night, Theater 7:00pm

Tuesday, Sept. 15

Grade 8 Leadership Camp

Wednesday, Sept. 16

Grade 8 Leadership Camp
Early Dismissal, 2:15pm
BOT, Parlor, 6:00pm

Thursday, Sept. 17

Grade 8 Leadership Camp

Friday, Sept. 18

Professional Development
No Classes

Monday, Sept. 21

Advanced Band, Music Annex, 7:30am
Private Music Lessons with Mr. K Begin
Grades Preschool - 2, Curriculum Night,
Theater, 7:00pm

Dear Villa Academy Families and Friends,

What a fantastic beginning of the 2009-2010 school year we experienced last week!

As one observant and long-standing educator noted after our first day, "The students looked like they hadn't been away at all...they were just all in the groove." Thank you for sending your children to us rested and ready, as well as excited about learning! Our entire Villa staff values the hard work you do as parents to ensure that we can focus on learning and instilling a "growth" mindset to ensure competence and confidence in our students for now and the future.

Today's letter highlights several "need to know" parent items at the beginning of the school year for your early and ongoing reference. I encourage you to make a point of reading the weekly E- Monday Memo as a primary source of important "all school" information.

In addition to the weekly E- Memo, you will need to use the school's Family Handbook, Directory, and Calendar, 2009-2010, as key sources of information. It is important to reference these documents when you have a question about school policy or who to call about specific topics. Just as you expect us to know

your student, we expect you to know that these references exist to help you on a "need to know basis." Thank you in advance for meeting us halfway in our partnership on behalf of the students.

The Parent-School Partnership at Villa Academy This is a new addition to the Family Handbook and can be found on pages six and seven. It is modeled on the National Association of Independent Schools Principles of Good Practice for Parents Working with Schools/Schools Working with Parents. I think that you will find greater clarity around what you can expect and count on from us, as well as clearly articulated expectations that we have of our parents. Please take time to review this section of your Family Handbook.

Good Health Practices The health, safety and welfare of our students are front and center at Villa Academy. We take our responsibilities seriously in this arena and have done a good job updating our policies on an annual basis to ensure a healthy environment for learning. We have been vigilant in our practices related to **student food allergies**. An important component of our plan is awareness education. Please read my letter regarding safe practices at school and home for ensuring a safe learning environment for our students with food allergies.

The likelihood that the **H1N1** and seasonal flu will impact Villa Academy is a reality. We know the H1N1 virus is still active and the potential for a rapid and widespread outbreak during the school year is possible. If you have been following the news, the outbreak at Washington State University has been an interesting case study.

What is Villa Academy doing about H1N1? We continue to educate ourselves through the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and King County Health Department updates. Additionally, we are participating in weekly information sessions of health care professionals in the area for ongoing information.

We will continue to be vigilant in preventative practices, including all of the following:

- Encouraging sick members of the community to stay home when ill/sending sick individuals home immediately
- Asking that sick individuals stay home until they are no longer contagious;
- Using the King County weekly on-line absentee reporting
- Enforcing hand washing and hand sanitizing practices on a consistent basis
- Cleaning surface areas – desks, door knobs, handrails, faucets/water fountains – on a consistent basis
- Reinforcing covering coughs

What else do we know? The exclusion period for sick individuals is now 24 hours post fever (without the aid of fever reducing drugs). Of course, if the fever is gone or never existed and the child has other symptoms, those symptoms need to be clear before returning to school. The 24-hour rule is the **Minimum** time frame. H1N1 usually presents with a fever that lasts 2-4 days. Please note: This is already our school policy.

Why? The virus is not as lethal as initially expected. It is no more dangerous than normal flu. It is as dangerous to the at-risk groups as any other flu. It will be more widespread because it is a new virus to which we have not yet developed antibodies. It will not be a more severe illness.

What can we expect specific to school closure because of H1N1? We will not close as a preventative measure; this is no longer being advised at any level. In the event of extreme circumstances, for example, if so many of our staff were absent with H1N1 that we were no longer able to operate; a school closure would be necessary. As Head of School, I will make that determination.

In that event, we will continue learning through a close school-home partnership to help ensure that students can stay on top of their work through an extended absence. Our teachers will be committed to continuing the educational process when a student is absent or in the event the school needs to close. We will do this through instructional emails and/or Internet learning, homework packets, teacher to parent telephone calls, and other approaches. Should a teacher be out for an extended period on sick leave, he or she will be in constant professional communication with the substitute.

We will continue to update you specific to our procedures as we know more. Please continue to educate yourselves about H1N1, guide your children to use good health practices, and keep your children home when they are sick.

New protocols for 2009-2010: Please be aware of a couple of new and improved approaches for a smooth and safe approach to before and after school times.

- Before School (earlier than 8:20am) Student Sign in: When a student has permission to meet with a teacher for additional help or for liturgical choir, etc. he or she will be asked to sign in on the sign in sheet located in the ground floor breezeway. In most instances this will be for students in Grades 5-8.
- After School Parent-Student Reunion: When you will be meeting your student/s personally outside the school after dismissal, we ask that you meet them on the patio at

the top of the first set of stairs. This will help the staff get the children at ground level to their cars in the pick up area.

Raise the Roof! Thank you for coming out on Friday for our celebration of the new covered play area!

God Bless,

Polly Skinner

Head of School

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Elephant Stampede- Sunday, September 20, 1:00pm at Magnuson Park

St. Bridget Parish is hosting its 13th Annual Elephant Stampede. The 5K run/walk and barbeque benefits the children of Namitembo, Malawai. Brochures available in the office or register at http://www.active.com/page/Event_Details.htm?event_id=1632504&assetId=20f4a186-3542-4fe1-bf6c-259cb6c2ec36

FROM THE BUSINESS OFFICE

School Supply Fee

As a new service to families this year, the school has purchased in bulk the classroom supplies for the Lower School students. Classrooms are now fully stocked with sufficient supplies for each student in grades K-5. This program has been developed at the suggestion of a group of parents who felt that this service would save parents time and money and allow for consistency of student supplies in the classroom. We piloted it last year for kindergarten, and the feedback was very positive—families loved it!

This year we were able to negotiate excellent pricing from both Office Depot and Costco. Family tuition accounts will be invoiced in September at the following rates:

- K-5 students \$31.00
- Middle School students \$7.00

Middle School families will have provided their student classroom supplies via the supply list on the website. However, we have purchased in bulk the paper towels, facial tissue, wipes and hand sanitizer that used to be included on this list, for the nominal fee referenced above.

Parent Association Classroom Fee

Each fall you are assessed a classroom fee for each child enrolled. The classroom fee for the 2009-2010 school year will be \$40 per child in Grades K-8 and \$35 per child in the Preschool. This fee will appear on your tuition statement. The monies collected support our major annual fundraiser, the Gala Auction, and benefit your child's classroom.

The Classroom Fee supports:

- Classroom Auction Project Materials
- The End of Year Classroom Party
- End of Year Teacher Gift

FROM THE DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

Thank You for Helping Raise the Roof!

What a great time last Friday! Thank you to everyone who came out to *Raise the Roof*. Special thanks to Lendy V. for spearheading this event along with her helpers Kristen P., Holly J., and Marlee A. We're also very grateful to Dick's Drive-In, Chef Don, the Facilities Department, Irv Kellenberger's band Big Dog Revue, and Olympic Eagle Distributing.

Italian Dinner Carnival Coming Up Soon!

Remember to mark your calendars for the Italian Dinner Carnival on Friday, September 25, 2009 from 5:30pm – 7:30pm. Join us in the theatre and cafeteria for an exciting evening with the Villa community. Not only will there be delicious Italian food prepared by our own Chef Don and his crew, but new this year we will have a strolling accordionist while you dine, a bouncy house under our new covered play area, caricature artists and carnival-themed photo banner to help remember the event. Also new this year: you can **pre-register online**.

<https://thevilla.ejoinme.org/MyEvents/ItalianDinnerCarnival2009/Registration/tabid/162819/Default.aspx>! \$40 per family or \$10 per person, *everything* inclusive. This is a wonderful evening to catch up with old friends and meet our new families! Any questions, please contact Nicole Collora at ncollora@thevilla.org or 206-729-0219 x267. Buon Appetito!

Gals' Night at the Gallery! An Event Supporting Villa Academy

This was a sign-up party at the 2009 auction and there's still space to attend!

7:00pm-9:00pm, Thursday, October 8, 2009.

Private Art Viewing and Art Lecture at Winston Wachter Fine Art:

Join Stacey Winston Levitan, owner of Winston Wachter Fine Art, for an evening of food, drink and conversation at the downtown Seattle branch of the contemporary art gallery. With over twenty-five years of experience as an art consultant and gallery dealer, Ms. Winston will give tips on collecting contemporary art - for the novice, the seasoned collector and everyone in between. Topics will include how to build a cohesive collection, what information you need to know before starting out, when to collect emerging, mid-career and blue-chip artists, as well as guidance in navigating the often elusive art business. The evening is sure to be a fun and informative event!

The cost to attend is \$50 per person, benefiting Villa Academy. **Sign up now!**

<https://thevilla.ejoinme.org/MyEvents/GalsNightatTheGallery/Registration/tabid/166592/Default.aspx>. Or submit a \$50 check with "Gals Night at the Gallery" in the memo line to the Development Office.

Donated by Stacey Winston Levitan, Laurie S, and Marlee A.

FROM THE MIDDLE SCHOOL DIRECTOR

Dear Villa Academy Middle School Parents:

This year's daily schedule retains many of the features that were so highly valued by our teachers, parents, and students in the feedback we garnered from last year's surveys. For example, this year's schedule:

- Maintains our effective and hugely popular advisory program designed to meet the social and emotional needs of our students.
- Maintains morning snacks—a big favorite among students. Kudos and thanks to Chef Don.
- Maintains year-round PE classes for everyone, with a second instructor assisting Mr. Lee. *Mens sana in corpore sano*.
- Maintains passing periods to help students stay focused during class and organized between them.
- Maintains parity among academic subjects.
- And keeps the total number of subjects a middle school student takes at any given time to eight (8) by reverting to a music, art, and drama rotation through the trimesters.

Given last winter's inclement weather, middle school classes, particularly morning classes, lost significant instructional time. The 2009-2010 daily schedule has been built to limit the same classes from losing multiple meeting times when this occurs.

In addition, the schedules for days with calendared disruptions (liturgies, assemblies, the Halloween Parade, and early dismissals, for example,) have been revised. The goal is to spread the lost class time among subject areas as evenly as possible.

Teachers have the revised schedules in hand for use in planning their curricula and activities throughout the year. This is advantageous when mapping out the time needed for instruction in a subject.

What does this mean for you as parents? It means that you know better which classes your child missed when s/he misses school due to illness, appointments or high school visits. For those of you who would like more detailed information, it will be available for you to take home at Curriculum Night.

We are delighted to be working with your children again and look forward to our continuing partnership.

Sincerely,

Pat Preib

Middle School Director

Holy Names Academy Open House: Sunday, October 25, 2009, noon – 3:00pm

FROM THE PARENT ASSOCIATION

SCHOOL PICTURE DAYS ARE COMING!!!

SEPTEMBER 28th & 29th 2009

Monday, September 28th 2009- Class Photos (Dress Uniform)*

Tuesday, September 29th 2009 - Individual Photos (Free Dress)

*P3 will have both class and individual photos taken; preschool students wear free dress.



All completed order forms were due to homeroom teachers **TODAY! If you have not done so please turn in ASAP.**

Questions? Please contact School Photo Co-Chairs:

Wendy G. and Kim P.

Villa Parent Association Gift Wrap Sale

Lottery Drawings will be held on September 16 and September 23. Submit your completed sales kit by Monday, September 14 and your name will be entered in both lottery drawings. Lottery prizes include pizza parties, ice cream parties, free dress coupons and more for your ENTIRE class. No minimum sales required!

Did you know that 50% of every purchase supports Villa Academy? Last year, \$14,632 was added to the VPA budget to benefit Villa Faculty Grants. Your participation supports innovation and teaching at Villa. The VPA gift wrap sale ends September 25.

Jeanne B. & Meg O.

Thank You Notes:

While we were enjoying summer, some very busy bees were preparing for the beginning of the school year events:

Thank you Lendy V. for managing the **remodel of the Teacher Lounge** (using the grant designated by the VPA from last year!). Also a big thank you to Kevin Wright & Matt Piro, who went out of their way to help everyone involved. Stop by to see the beautiful renovation!

Thank you to Johnese S. who coordinated the **back-to-school luncheon** for the faculty and staff during their professional planning week. Thank you to Kristi H. and The Confectionary for donating the truffles!

Gina B. and Chef Don prepared a fabulous **back-to-school coffee** for us on the first day of school. Thank you!

Thank you to Jeanne B. & Meg B. for leading the charge on the **Sally Foster Gift Wrap Sale!** This is the VPA's biggest fundraiser and contributes funds so we can continue to award grants to important school projects.

Thank you to Holly J. for managing the **Villa Sweatshirt Sale** on the first day of school and throughout the school year and summer.

Please put Friday, October 2, on your calendar to attend the Villa Parent Association First General Meeting of the school year. **Villa Parlor, 8:45-10:00am.**

Joanne R.
PA President

CYO NEWS

Soccer season is under way! Our 4th-8th Grade teams competed in their first games this past Saturday. Congratulations to all teams for a great weekend of soccer! Our 1st-3rd Grade teams will have their first game this coming Saturday – good luck! Keep your eyes open for soccer balls flying through the air during your end of day pick up.

Cross Country season is just around the corner. The Cross Country registration form is available online. Click on the “forms” link on the Villa homepage and scroll to CYO. You can also pick up a form in the Main Office. The deadline for registration for Cross Country is October 5. Practice will begin today, Monday the 14th. Practice times are as follows: Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from 3:15-4:00pm and Wednesday from 2:15-3:00pm. The team will meet at the gazebo and then run to practice at Laurelhurst Park. This sport is open to all students at Villa in Grades K-8, girls and boys. You ARE allowed to participate in both Soccer and Cross Country, so please sign up today!

Stay tuned for an updated athletics website coming soon . . .

Thank you for all of the parents, faculty and staff who have been so welcoming to me over the past few weeks!

Sincerely,
Shirley Bocian
CYO Athletic Director
sbocian@thevilla.org

EDP NEWS

Welcome back all returning students and new students to Villa's Extended Day Program! We are so looking forward to the upcoming school year and are thrilled to have the playground back. Many of our before and after school classes will be starting late September so be sure to check the Forms page of the Villa website for a listing of classes and registration forms. This upcoming Friday, September 18, is a Professional Development Day for our teachers. EDP will be open 8:00am-5:00pm. Please send in the registration form if your child will be participating.

Sincerely,
Shea Salyer & Tom Doggett
EDP Program
edp@thevilla.org