



PATHFINDER "THURSDAY THOUGHTS"

Good, Better Best! Never Let It Rest, Until Good Is Better And Better Is Best!" January 2008

LET'S MAKE A DATE:

JANUARY 18

HALF DAY OF SCHOOL
Dismissal at 11:34 a.m.

JANUARY 21

Parent Group meeting at Daisy Brook

JANUARY 22

Family Fun Night 6:30 -7:30 p.m.

JANUARY 25

Brainstormer Assembly

JANUARY 28

Hearing re-checks

JANUARY 30

Report cards sent home

FEBRUARY 1

Winter Olympics
9:30 a.m.—3rd graders
1:15 p.m.—1st & 2nd graders

FEBRUARY 5

Family Fun Night 6:30 -7:30 p.m.

FEBRUARY 11

Early Release—Dismissal at 1:10 p.m.

FEBRUARY 12

Release Time Bible Class

FEBRUARY 14

Valentine parties

FEBRUARY 18

Parent/Teacher Conferences
5:00 p.m.—8:00 p.m.

FEBRUARY 19

Parent/Teacher Conferences
5:00 p.m.—8:00 p.m.

FEBRUARY 21

Parent/Teacher Conferences
3:45 p.m. - 6:15 p.m.
Next issue of "Thursday Thoughts"

FEBRUARY 22

NO SCHOOL

COMMENTS FROM MR. CASSIDAY

Riding in Cars with Kids!

There were always many advantages to being a child in the 60's: a quick game of baseball could be played every time the sky was clear; bikes had only two gears-go and stop; snow was plentiful and deep-which made good sledding; and drive-in movie theaters were the best deal going for family entertainment. Most Saturday evenings, while my two brothers and I took quick baths and put on our pajamas, Mom and Dad would load several grocery sacks of snacks and a cooler of drinks, along with several blankets and each of our pillows, into the back-end of our Chevy station wagon. Then, with everyone loaded-up, we'd head off down the highway to Saginaw where we'd gawk like tourists on vacation and shout excitedly when the entryway to the Twilight drive-in finally came into view!

For six, seven, and eight year-old kids, sitting on the roof of a land yacht parked in the third row of an open air theater, staring up through the twilight at ice-cold tough guys like Paul Newman in Cool Hand Luke, and John Wayne in The Green Berets, the gravel and grit of their voices clawing a path through speakers lodged on window ledges of cars parked all around, was the bomb! We acted out every slick and powerful move the stars made and imitated their walk and talk until dropping unexpectedly to sleep in the cavernous back end of the car. When the double feature ended Dad would point the nose of that neighborhood cruiser home and the three of us would be sprawled out amongst piles of blankets and tangled limbs, breathing contentedly without a care in the world.

Now a days most folks don't have a memory for those large rectangular living rooms on wheels. As wide as a country lane and longer than a commercial fishing boat, with all the comforts of a reclining sofa chair, the smooth ride and enormous windows made viewing the countryside a traveling extravaganza. Today's SUVs can't begin to match the comfort and style of a Bel Air station wagon; closest they come is my suburban and unfortunately not too many folks are blessed with such good fortune to own a jewel of the road as that!

Yep, life in the sixties was good! There were so many wonderful cars to see cruising down the road as people from all over drove the new four lane highways on vacation, or drove themselves through town to work or their children to school. Now a days much of a car's attractive styling includes the mundane functionality of "safety features" like front and side impact air bags, all wheel drive, traction control, ABS brakes, On-Star emergency systems, and seat belts. No wonder it's so hard to find a good sized, comfortable car these days; seems like every car maker is expecting to prevent an accident. Well, in the sixties we didn't have all these safety gadgets and we survived just fine! Or did we?

A 2002 study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that over 9,100 children are treated in hospital emergency rooms (176 per week) due

Riding in Cars with Kids! (continued)

to non-traffic incidents in a one-year time period. Some of the deadliest months for children killed in noncrash incidents occurred in 2007. In July, 2007 alone, 34 children died in non-traffic incidents, followed by 31 fatalities in August and 26 fatalities in April.

The website **KidsandCars.org** is a phenomenal resource for educating parents, care-givers, and children about the perils of being unsafe around and in cars. There are statistics, legislation, links to related sites, and personal tragic testimonies of parents who've lost children because of preventable accidents. KIDS AND CARS maintains a national database tracking deaths and injuries to children left unattended in or around motor vehicles. Currently no federal or state agency is collecting information related to deaths and injuries that occur as non-traffic incidents on private property.

“Every week at least four children needlessly die in and around cars,” said Janette Fennell, president of KIDS AND CARS. “By taking simple, common sense steps using technology that already exists at low cost, we can make our cars safer for our children and protect them from these deadly, avoidable accidents.”

These statistics and other related facts are from the KIDS AND CARS database. Please visit this and other sites for more information on how to prevent tragedies from happening.

YEAR	INCIDENTS	CHILDREN INVOLVED	FATALITIES
2007 (as of 12/17/07)	725	942	231
2006	598	742	219
2005	454	553	226
2004	502	607	174
2003	610	762	189
2002	435	602	133
2001	403	524	124
2000	353	452	92

These data vastly underestimate the true magnitude of this public safety issue.

By reading information on this site and several related sites, I discovered that cars don't have to be moving in order for children to be injured or killed. “Backovers now account for half of all non-traffic fatalities involving children.” The Cameron Gulbransen KIDS AND CARS Safety Act of 2007, sponsored by Senators Clinton and Sununu and Representatives Schakowsky and King, is named after a toddler who was backed-over in his own driveway as his grandpa moved the car.

Other features of the CGKAC Safety Act directs the U.S. Secretary of Transportation to:

- Ensure power windows automatically reverse direction when they detect an obstruction to prevent children from being trapped, injured or killed;
- Provide drivers with a means of detecting the presence of a person or object behind their vehicle;
- Provide for the vehicle service brake to be engaged to prevent vehicles from unintentionally rolling away; and
- Establish a child safety information program to disseminate information to parents about these hazards and ways to mitigate them; as well begin collecting data about non-traffic incidents.

I'm in the business of children; protecting them, teaching them, and enjoying them-as are all the people working in the Fremont school district and in every school district in every state. My concern for the well-being of children goes beyond my own four and the five-hundred some here at Pathfinder. It encompasses the children I know as well as the ones I'll never know. Who they are is less relevant than the fact that all children deserve the right to grow-up loved and protected. My niece narrowly missed a tragedy of this sort. She left her three toddlers unattended and strapped into their car seats while she ran into a store "for just a minute". Her three year-old son managed to wiggle free and while the other two children cheered him on in gleeful fascination, "Houdini" thrust the idling van into reverse where it quickly crossed the mall parking lot and backed into the street full of evening commuter traffic. Fortunately, only the van was dinged up in the ensuing crash!

I have no idea how my brothers and I survived childhood as well as we did, but I'm pretty sure our Mom's very relieved to have turned that responsibility over to our wives! Of course Mom's hair turned silver in her 20's and she developed an eye twitch but all in all you barely notice it.

Children are evidence of hope in a bright future and our own enduring legacy.

COUNSELOR'S CORNER

A parenting class called TransParenting will be offered at Grant Primary Center on February 4th and 11th from 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. The class is directed at those parents who have divorced and/or separated. It is aimed at teaching parents skills that will enhance the child's ability to transition during this difficult time. The goal of the class is to lessen the negative impact of divorce and parental separation on children. The fee is \$10.00 and you may call Deb Miller at 834-7382, ext. 104 to register.

Also, just a reminder that Camp Henry summer camp scholarships will be arriving in my office shortly. These scholarships are made available to our school to assist those that may not be able to afford the cost of camp. As a guideline, families that qualify for free and reduced lunch, typically, are able to use these scholarships. Please contact me at 924-7265 if you are interested.

Dave Wojcicki

News from the P.E. Office

Your child will be participating in Pathfinder's Hoops for Heart Day on February 28th, 29th or 30th during their regularly scheduled physical education class. They will have a "free day" where they have an opportunity to shoot baskets, practice dribbling and ball control skills. Your child will be given an envelope the week of Feb. 4th and will have a chance to collect money for the American Heart Association. The money will go toward research and development in the fight against heart disease, which is the number one cause of death in the United States.

Although the money goes toward a great cause, your child is not required to collect money. Furthermore, students do not need to collect money in order to participate in the Hoops for Heart "free day". Students can earn prizes which are shown on the collection envelope but **it is strictly voluntary**. I would like to encourage students to participate, however, because every little bit helps. For example, if each student collected only \$4, a total of more than \$2,000 would be raised at Pathfinder Elementary School. The money will be used to help fight against heart disease and cardiovascular disease which is the number 3 cause of death for children under age 15. Furthermore, I will also invite any student who raises more than \$50 to a pizza party in the gym where they will have lunch with me and have an opportunity to play games afterwards. If you decide you would like to have your child participate in this service learning project, please stress to them the main goal of the Hoops for Heart program is to help people who are in need. Although I feel it is fine for students to be excited about winning prizes, I would like them to also understand the importance of helping others.

Envelopes need to be returned to me by March 3rd. If you have any questions, please feel free to stop in my office during parent teacher conferences. I may also be reached by phone at 924-7258 or email at milynch@fremont.net.

TOMORROW (FRIDAY, JANUARY 18TH) IS A HALF-DAY OF SCHOOL! Dismissal is at 11:34 a.m.

A FRIENDLY REMINDER FROM OUR NURSE . . .

Due to the large number of sick children this time of the year, we want to remind parents not to send them back to school too quickly. If a child has a fever, we ask that they stay home until they have gone a full 24 hours without a fever. This means 24 hours without medication (Tylenol, Motrin, etc.) that will keep the fever down. The same rule would apply to vomiting. Please keep the children home until they have gone 24 hours without vomiting as well. If your child does come to school with either a fever or is vomiting, we will be calling you to come and pick them up. This is to help prevent the spread of colds and flu to other students and staff members. Thanks for your help with this!

REPORT CARDS

Report cards will be sent home with students on Wednesday, January 30th. Be sure and check your child's backpack.

WINTER OLYMPICS

Our winter Olympics will be held on Friday, February 1st. Scheduled times are 9:30 a.m. for 3rd graders and 1:15 p.m. for 1st and 2nd graders. Please make sure your student comes to school with the appropriate warm clothing. In case of bad weather, we will reschedule.

A GENTLE REMINDER!

Please make sure that when parking at Pathfinder, you only park on the pavement, not the grassy areas. We are trying to save the environment one lawn at a time! Thanks!

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Mark your calendars! Our winter parent/teacher conferences will be held on Monday, February 18th (5:00 p.m. — 8:00 p.m.), Tuesday, February 19th (5:00 p.m. — 8:00 p.m.), and Thursday, February 21st (3:45 p.m.—6:15 p.m.). More information will be sent home at a later date.

FAMILY FUN NIGHT

Our next Family Fun Night will be Tuesday, January 22nd from 6:30 —7:30 p.m. We hope you can join us for games and fun!

BRAINSTORMERS ARE COMING!

The Brainstormers are returning to Pathfinder once again this year! Their kick-off performance will be Friday, January 25th. They will return again in May and will be performing some of our students' very own stories! This assembly is always one of the favorite assemblies for students and staff.