

Date Wed, 28 Jun 2006 2:16 PM
From "FANS" <fans@fastmail.net>
Subject News

Dear FANS,

1) Our First Meeting

We had a wonderful first meeting last night! Thank you all for making the effort to come.

There are more people who are interested -- I'm getting calls, emails, and lots of encouraging comments. The movement is gaining momentum, but it is up to us to spread the good news about Abingdon. Word of mouth can be much more powerful than stacks of flyers and articles!

Please don't be shy to talk to your friends, acquaintances, babysitters, neighbors, pool buddies, and jogging partners about FANS and what you love about Abingdon. Then let's talk about the feedback you get. What are people concerned about? What rumors are out there? If we don't have answers, we can discuss with Joanne or with parents whose children have been at the school for a while.

2) Parks & Recreation Special Events at Abingdon

The Fairlington Community Center renovation is making it easy for us to achieve our goal of getting more people through Abingdon's front door. Pam Everett, head of the County's programs in the Fairlington Community Center, has already put in a request to relocate all their special events (like Rollerskating Night, the Halloween Party, and the Gingerbread House Workshop) to Abingdon!

3) Abingdon's Energetic PTA

Colleen Weiser of the PTA drew up an impressive list of all the ways the organization helped out the school last year (see attached file). If you are going to be a new parent at Abingdon, please seriously consider contributing your child's education through the PTA.

4) Learning Comes to Life at Abingdon

Former Abingdon teacher, Erin Sonn, spoke at our last meeting about how Abingdon is using a teaching program called History Alive! to make lessons come to life. The Teachers' Curriculum Institute website has many examples of how children in this program learn creatively. For example, if the content is Native Americans, the children:

a. Select a spot in the classroom to "settle" and compare their experience to that of Native Americans.

b. Use visual images and written information to discover why Native Americans migrated to North America and how they adapted to the environments they encountered.

c. Illustrate dictionary entries for the terms migration, environment, and adaptation.

5) An Adventure of the American Mind at Abingdon

Erin Sonn is now a Professional Development Specialist and Arlington Grant Services Coordinator for the Northern Virginia Partnership of An Adventure of the American Mind, a federally funded program that joins educators and students with Library of Congress resources. To find out more about the innovative program and Abingdon's involvement, check out <http://www.aamnva.org/>.

6) Reaching out to Abingdon's Other Neighborhoods

In the hopes of reaching more potential Abingdon families, we have contacted the Claremont Citizens Association (CCA) and the Columbia Forest Civic Association (thanks again to Erin for the idea). FANS is now subscribed to the Claremont neighborhood listserv and will submit a short article to the CCA newsletter (deadline July 15). I'll be attending the CCA meeting tonight June 28 at 7:30 p.m. at Claremont Elementary. Please let me know if you'd like to come along.

7) Superintendent Speaks to FANS

As some of you already know, the Superintendent of Arlington Public Schools is indeed coming to have a Summer Chat with us! The informal question and answer session about schools will be held at my house on July 27 from 7 to 9 p.m. Since it's too late to advertise in the All Fairlington Bulletin, we need to get the word out about this exciting event. Please invite anyone who you think would be interested and have them R.S.V.P. to me (703-820-0656 or fans@fastmail.net). Here is a link with the schedule: http://www.arlington.k12.va.us/superintendent/summer_chats.shtml

8) FANS at the Fairlington 4th of July Parade

Wouldn't the parade be a perfect opportunity to reach young families in a casual, friendly way? I contacted the Fairlington Villages Events Coordinator, and we've been given the OK to set up a table at the end of the parade. We could entice people with free cupcakes, and have handouts for them to take home, including a FANS mission statement, as well as the Diverse Schools review in the Post and the Summer Chat flyer. If you have any other ideas, please let me know. I'd love for some other parents to be there with me to express support for the school. The parade starts at 10:00 at the Fire Station and ends up at the North Fairlington Community Center. Please let me know if you can be there!

If you have any questions or comments about any of this, please feel free to call me at 703-820-0656.

Sincerely,

Amy Suardi

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FANS: Friends of Abingdon Neighborhood School
fans@fastmail.net