

A publication
for friends of
ACS.

Ames
Christian School
Excellence in Education Through Christ

Issue I

November 2009

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ACS Students Give Back

In the past year, the students at ACS have been busy giving back with special mission projects.

The children in Mrs. Baedke's kindergarten class collected new or gently used baby items to be given to the women and children at Birthright. Over 140 items were collected including clothing, toys and blankets. These items were then delivered by the children to Birthright which gives information and support to local pregnant women.

The 3rd, 4th, and 5th

grade students of Mrs. Earnest collected non-perishable food items for the Ames food pantry, the Help Center, during the Christmas program. The audience members were very generous and donated over 150 non-perishable items. The children then took their offerings to the Help Center where they helped sort and re-stock shelves.

The whole student body par-

ticipated in raising money for World Concern by donating cash in lieu of classroom Christmas gift exchanges. This money was used to purchase goats for families in impoverished nations.



Praising God at the 2008 Christmas Program.



Kindergarten class with items ready to deliver to Birthright.

School Board President's Notes—Jeff Sernett

I want to welcome you to the first edition of our Friends of Ames Christian School (ACS) quarterly newsletter. Our goal with this newsletter is to help you keep up with some of the great things going on at ACS!

Blessings: We have seen so many blessings recently including a great group of new families, our gifted staff, the school's first endowment fund being created and good financial health to name a few. The mission

projects that our students have taken ownership of as well as the largest turnout for Family Fun Night in recent history. There are a lot of great things happening at our multi-denominational school. Because of our desire to

continue growing, the school board voted recently to add a Christian Daycare/Childcare to our program. We will need enough children before we can begin, but our hope is that God will provide families for us.

Learning Outside of the Classroom

Students at Ames Christian School have the wonderful opportunity to learn outside the brick walls of our school building.

All classes, including preschool, have participated in many interesting field trips and have had the chance to engage in exciting “hands on” learning.

Last spring, the 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders visited the Iowa State Capitol. They were given a personal tour by State Senator



Mrs. Earnest building a bird house with her students.

Rich Olive. After touring the capitol, the children went to the Iowa Hall of Fame in Des Moines. It was a day full of fun and interactive learning.

McFarland Park (Story County Conservation) is always a popular field trip destination. The

kindergarten and 1st & 2nd grade classes went to the park in search of “signs of spring”. They were able to go for a guided hike through the park with a conservationist. Many signs of spring were observed and pointed out to the children. The 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students also went to

McFarland Park to learn more about birds. While there, they were able to make a bird feeder, build a bird house and observe birds at the bird observatory.

In May, ACS parents loaded up cars and vans and headed to Pella for the annual Tulip Festival. This all school Iowa history field trip included all classes except preschool. Each class was able to explore the Dutch community at their own pace. Everyone participated in a scavenger hunt. It was a fun way to find the historic

landmarks in Pella and to learn about the Dutch heritage in Iowa.



Mrs. Baedke with a few of her kindergarten students at Pella.

The preschool classes field trips included a visit to the Center Grove apple orchard, Ames Public Library, and CyRide bus barn.



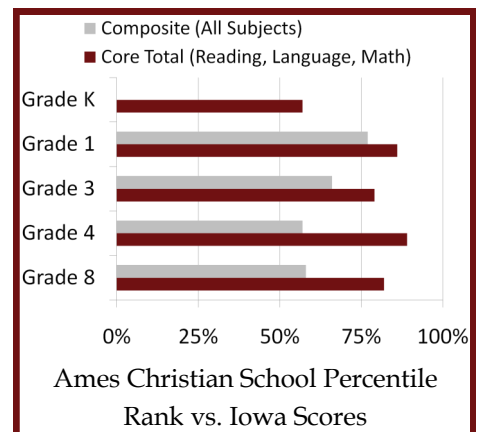
Mrs. Long's preschool class visiting the Center Grove orchard.

Academic Excellence—Iowa Basic Skills Results

Last spring, students at ACS sharpened their #2 pencils and got down to business. Their best effort was put forth and the test results are proof of this. We are proud that our school provides an outstanding academic program where children are challenged according to their own personal abilities and it shows.

The graph at the right portrays how ACS students compared to other students in Iowa. The gray bar

represents the composite (all subjects), the red bar represents the core subjects (reading, language, and math). For example, the ACS first grade class scored higher than 77% of all Iowa students when comparing composite scores and higher than 85% of all Iowa students when comparing the core scores. Only classes with more than 4 students were compared in this graph.



Matching Funds Drive

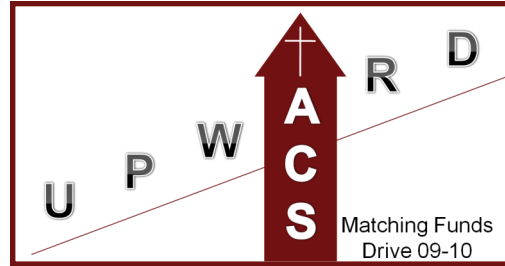
We have been blessed with donations and pledges to begin a matching funds drive for the 2009-2010 school year. The concept of matching funds is really very simple, for every dollar given or pledged to the base, someone else donates a dollar to the match. This turns every dollar you may donate into two! This type of fundraiser has been successful in the past because we have been able to offer scholarships as well as fund our school's mission work in our community.

The donors whom started this drive were aware of our success with this type of fund-

raiser and they are excited to see their base contributions grow this year.

We are calling this drive "Upward ACS" with the primary fundraising goals being to balance our 2009-2010 budget as well as be able to provide scholarships for the 2010-2011 school year starting in August, 2010. Every dollar contributed to this campaign is designed to directly impact our ability to continue providing Personalized Christian Education to each and every child enrolled.

"Base funds" for the matching funds drive are currently being requested. Our goal is to



raise \$100,000 in base funds and we are currently at \$21,000. **If you are interested in donating \$10,000, \$5,000, \$2,000 or more as a tax deductible base donation, please contact our administrator or school board president.** Once we have decided that base funding is completed (hopefully by Thanksgiving), we will then move on to a broader audience to raise the matching funds during the next couple months.

Please consider a donation toward Christian education with academic excellence. If you are willing to give, yet not at the amounts above, we would still appreciate your matching gift. **Thank you for your support!**

Administrator's Corner—Peggy Smith

If you are a grandparent or friend of an ACS student, you may be hearing the term DIBELS. What are DIBELS you ask? Let me explain.

ACS teachers have been assessing each student's early literacy and reading skills by using DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills). They are a set of procedures and measures used to assess early literacy and reading skills from kindergarten through sixth grade. Teachers administer DIBELS individually three times a year to measure each student's skills in phonetic awareness, alphabetic principles, accuracy and fluency with connected text, reading comprehension and vocabulary. DIBELS were designed for teachers to use in identifying children experiencing difficulty in gaining basic

literacy skills in order to offer support interventions early and prevent later reading difficulties from occurring. The teachers at ACS see each child as a unique creation of the Lord with individual needs. DIBELS testing is just one way to help meet those needs. It's part of the "Personalized Christian Education" ACS strives to provide for each child.



Mrs. Smith having fun with guest Dan Wardell from IPTV.

Daily Blessings at ACS!

Since taking on the roll of administrator at ACS one year ago, I've observed many blessings within the school. Let me share of few. We are blessed with parent, college, and community volunteers with servant hearts. The school centers around a Christ-centered, positive learning environment with gifted and nurturing teachers whom care about each student and his/her individual learning and spiritual needs. The staff shares in daily devotions that encourage and equip them. If you haven't stopped by our school recently we invite you to return and see what we have been up to. Our school environment is unique and offers a quiet place for our children to learn!



Upcoming Events

December

- 3 Christmas Program – 7pm Stonebrook Church
- 8 School Board Meeting 6:30pm

January

- 13 School Board Meeting 6:30pm
- 19-23 School Spirit Week

February

- 3 Advisory Council Meeting 7pm
- 5 Parent Association Meeting
- 10 School Board Meeting 6:30pm

March

- 1 ACSI Math Olympics
- 4 Open House Classroom Showcase

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2009-2010 School Board

- Jeff Sernett – President (2010)
- Scott Randall – V.P. (2010)
- Linda Speck – Secretary (2011)
- Ron Helland – Treasurer (2012)
- Keith Papin (2012)



Through the generosity of an anonymous donor, we have been able to acquire a new and improved website. You can access this website at www.ameschristianschool.org. The website has all the upcoming school events, calendar, newsletters, classroom activities, and we will soon be able to accept monetary donations through our website too. Our new website is our main source of information for parents, grandparents, and friends of ACS.

If you know of anyone who is a supporter of Ames Christian School that would like to receive this newsletter, please contact us by e-mailing secretary@ameschristianschool.org or by calling the school.

We are currently updating our Friends of ACS database. Please send us your current e-mail address so we will be able to send future newsletters to you electronically. This will eliminate the need for paper copies and mailing. Your help is much appreciated.

Fundraising at Ames Christian School

If you have driven by the school during a home football game, you are probably wondering, “Why all the cars?”. Currently our largest fundraiser is parking cars at the school during home games. Family friendly, non-alcoholic tailgating is encouraged. A big thanks to Ron Helland and Scott Randall for heading up this very important activity.



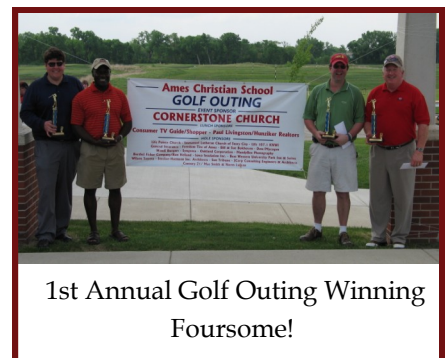
Parking during the Iowa vs. Iowa State football game.

Another fundraiser that we have participated in for the past five years is selling Butter Braid Bread. Butter Braid is a family owned, Iowa product based

out of West Bend. This year we had a huge jump in sales thanks to a high family participation rate. We sold 837 items versus 577 items sold last year – a 45% increase in sales!

Two other on-going fundraisers are collecting Box Tops for Education and Campbell’s Soup Labels. Last year (‘08-‘09) we collected \$575 in Box Tops money. In the past, this money has been used to purchase over 200 new books for the library and classrooms, magazine subscriptions, teaching materials, and preschool playground equipment. We also redeemed over 7000 points from Campbell’s last year. These points, combined with points from the year before, were used to attain PE equipment such as volleyballs and tennis racquets, in addition to playground balls. Thanks to all that clip for ACS – it really does make a difference!

Last May, we held our first annual “Four Person Best Shot Golf Outing,” at Coldwater Golf Links. The event was sponsored by Cornerstone Church and Wilson Toyota was our flagship Hole-In-One Sponsor. A delicious Hickory Park lunch was sponsored by Your Local Consumer and Paul Livingston of Hunziker & Associates. Over 80 golfers enjoyed the beautiful weather and friendly competition. We hope to see you next year on May 28th!



1st Annual Golf Outing Winning Foursome!