

Foothills Focus



Foothills School provides a vibrant learning community where students develop personal, academic, and social responsibility – leading to a lifetime of discovery.

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Join us on the Orient Express!!!

The auction event of the year is just around the corner! Join us for a fun-filled evening as we take a Journey on the Orient Express. The train departs for France in the Rose Room at 6:00 p.m. on November 13; the journey ends at 11:00 p.m.

Don't worry about finding a sitter. Just drop your children off at Foothills on auction night and they're guaranteed to have a great time at the auction sleepover party.

Have you purchased your tickets yet? If not, do so today! You should also know that although the purpose of the auction is serious (it's our major fundraiser for the year), the event is anything but. In fact, the most important purpose of the auction is to get people together to have a great time. You'll enjoy great food and drink and have a chance to meet new Foothills families. You'll find the room filled with laughter and friendly conversation; even among the most competitive bidders. I'm especially excited this year as we have a spectacular selection of trips, packages, parties and gifts for every budget. Here are a few of the fabulous items that will be available:

● **Guided Mackay Wilderness Salmon River**

Trip for Four People!

Did you know the Salmon River is the longest free flowing river system in the continental United States? During this six day float trip, you will explore 105 miles of the most inaccessible and awesome country in the world. While on land, you get to sun bathe on pristine white sand beaches, swim in a river eddy, explore forested canyons, and see abundant wildlife. Your professionally trained guide is there to please, and will set up your sleeping tents, cook delicious Dutch oven meals, and entertain you with campfire stories and music. Purchase this trip, and you'll have the bragging rights to tell your friends you've "been there, done that!"

● ***Murder on the Orient Express Sign-up Party***

Join hosts Mike and Kelli Hajjar for a delightful soiree, but beware, strange things are afoot. It always seems that when unusual characters congregate together, strange things are bound to happen, and this party is no exception. Take care when biting into that scrumptious hors d'oeuvre...has it been poisoned? Keep an eye on that strange man behind you...what does he have in his hand? Use your best judgment to stay out of trouble and help solve the

mystery. (Note: No people or animals will be harmed during the making of this party!) The Murder on the Orient Express party will be held on Saturday, April 16. Look for the party sign-up table during the auction event to see lots of great social offerings that support our school and build our community!

So join us on the Orient Express as we travel from Boise to Paris, Rome and Istanbul on November 13. See you there!

And something new this year – we're adding an online auction this year.

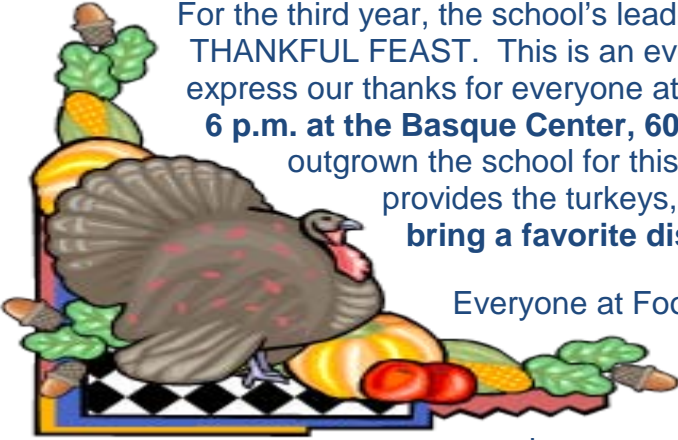
Anyone can bid on some wonderful items at <http://foothillsschool.afrogs.org> from November 6 to 20. You will receive an email about the online auction on Friday, November 5. The email will include a list of online items, and the catalog of silent and live auction event items. We hope you will forward the online auction email to friends, family members and coworkers. We have a lot of great items for early holiday shopping, and this is an easy way for our extended community to support Foothills School!

This year's event is going to be great! Please plan to be a part of it however you can!

**Coree Carver
2010 Auction Chair & Parent**

Happenings at Foothills School – Don't Miss 'Em!

THIRD ANNUAL THANKFUL FEAST FILLS THE BODY AND THE SPIRIT!



For the third year, the school's leadership and Board of Trustees are hosting the **THANKFUL FEAST**. This is an evening of celebration for our community where we express our thanks for everyone at Foothills! The event is on **Thursday, November 18 at 6 p.m. at the Basque Center, 601 West Grove Street** (we have it here because we've outgrown the school for this all-family community event!). While the school provides the turkeys, we ask everyone in the community to **pitch in and bring a favorite dish to share**.

Everyone at Foothills is invited, and we also welcome Grandparents and special family friends to this special event.

During the first week of November, the school will issue an e-vite to the **THANKFUL FEAST** and we

hope you will make sure to **RSVP** so we can plan for the right

amount of turkeys! As always, we are also in need of a great corps of volunteers who can help us set up and clean up after the event – if you're able to help in any way, please email Piers Lamb, Director of Student Life (plamb@foothillsschool.org).

In addition to the celebration of the dinner, we use this as an opportunity to help others. We will have **two large bins for food donations and hope to fill one entirely with peanut butter and jelly** – a great treat for families and kids in need. We will also have special sales to benefit the school – so get your holiday shopping checkbook out. A few special performances are in the works, and we will offer some activities for the kids following dinner.

We are thankful for everyone in our community and this great evening is one way we show it!

Fall Celebration and Open House a BIG Success!

Thanks to everyone who was able to join us for the Fall Celebration and Open House on October 6. Not including our own faculty and staff, we had 41 families attend (122 people including 14 new folks), and most importantly, people reported having a really great time! If you missed this Open House or have friends who might be interested in the school, our Spring Open House will be on February 3, so mark your calendars! And prospective families are always welcome to contact our Director of Admissions, Katy Young, at @foothillsschool.org for a tour of the school at any time.



Remember our Community Standards for 2010-11

Be Responsible

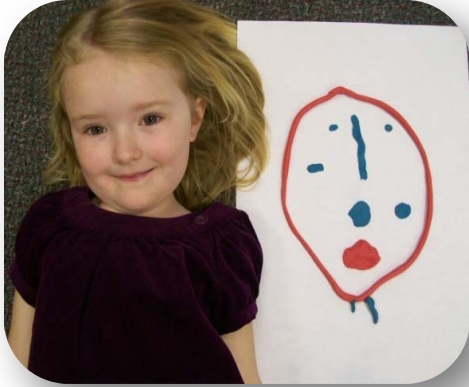
Be Respectful

Be Your Best

Contribute to Community

Class News

The word “portrait” is now a familiar term commonly used in the **Early Learner Community**. The EL’s have had many opportunities to create self-portraits and portraits of others over the past few weeks. All of the children are being encouraged to visit the art studio and use either markers or clay lines to create a portrait. Although it is common for us to begin the year by asking children to create self-portraits, this year the experience has been unique. The very first day the children were encouraged to look at their face in the mirror and draw what they observed, and several children not only drew themselves but also included members of their family. Now many children are asking that we take pictures of their baby brothers and sisters, moms and dads, grandparents and friends so that they can look at them and draw what they see. Alastair even came in with a toy train and then created its portrait. Creating portraits has traditionally been an exercise in drawing what one sees rather than what is in one’s mind. However, now that the children feel confident in their abilities to draw and represent what they see, many have moved on to representing images that are in their minds.



As a young person you can’t help but wonder *how does your body work?* This fascinating question is what **the Primaries** are investigating in science. Each week the Primaries have been introduced to a new system of the body. This has been done in multiple ways: through media and websites, books, drawings, personal experience, movies and movement. They have become more familiar with the skeletal, muscular, cardio-vascular and nervous systems. With each new system the students learned about they added body parts to a traced drawing of their bodies. As a culminating project for this unit, the students will be working in small groups to construct a model of one specific system.



“You have been begging your parents for a NEW PET and they finally said OK. For the next 15 minutes, write a description of your new pet, where you got it, what you do with it, and how you take care of it. If you can’t think about what to write, write about not knowing what to write.” **If you were given the journal prompt, would it be easy or hard?**

The Juniors are developing writing stamina and creativity through 15- to 30-minute journaling sessions. Writing takes the integration of many skills. Although, sometimes deciding what to write is the trickiest part. Ideas are expressed on paper using handwriting, spelling, grammar, and voice. Having just learned many of these skills, the Juniors are working on writing for several consecutive minutes non-stop. The only requirement for their journaling time is to write. At a later time they can organize, edit, illustrate or develop their ideas.

The Intermediates are considering their question, “Why Explore?” through the lens of their personal experiences, contemporary explorers, and The Corps of Discovery, headed by Meriwether Lewis and William Clark. Defining explorers, looking at their own explorations, examining a trunk loaded with copies of artifacts from the Corps of Discovery, translating President Thomas Jefferson’s instructions to Lewis, and researching the Corps members and expedition are a few of the highlights Intermediate students will experience through this inquiry unit. As a culminating project, each student will select a member of the Corps to research, and then assume that member’s character as they record journal entries related to actual events that occurred during the expedition. On Tuesday, November 23, students will participate in “Museum Comes Alive,” where they’ll dress in costume and present a journal entry to an audience of their peers. To step back in time and relive some experiences shared by members of one of the greatest expeditions of all times, consider yourself welcome to attend! Exact times will be posted on the Intermediate web site during the second week of November.



In **the Seniors’** Life Science class, students have been investigating and learning about plant and animal cells, their structures and functions, the differences between them, and why those differences exist. In addition to readings, activities, and group investigations, students prepared onion, potato, elodea, cheek, and epidermal cell microscope slides. From these prepared slides, students were able to observe such organelles as cell walls, cell membranes, nuclei, and chloroplasts, and identify differences among the varying cell types. To demonstrate and communicate their understanding of cell structure and function, students created such products as web pages, posters, children’s books, poems, and three-dimensional models; the artifacts exhibited each student’s unique talents, passions, and knowledge gained in the Life Science program.

Scientific method follows the laws of logic first defined by Greek Philosopher Aristotle. Aristotle perfected observation and classification based on analysis, and set the stage for theory based on observation, which remains today’s standard for scientific thought. Guess what **the Nines** are doing this year? With Aristotle as the clue, we’re sure you guessed correctly! Taking two science courses this year, the Nines are stretching their minds into new ways of thinking. In a recent experiment, two teams of budding scientists made observations of a common substance and its various states of existence (solid, liquid, and gas). During lab, these scientists made observations, recorded data such as temperature, and ultimately developed a poster to share their results with the other team. In summary, they watched the temperature change as water went from a solid to a liquid and finally a gas. While this may not be a very complicated experiment, it did help the students learn to observe, identify errors, as well as how to present data graphically, analyze, and develop new questions for further inquiry.



Experiential Learning is Vital to the Foothills' Program

By Susan Wolfe, Director of Education

We may live in a digital age, but that's not the only way that education ought to be delivered. Everyone knows there are a wide range of virtual experiences available online – websites, images, video clips and other forms of digital media – that enhance student learning. While these offer teachers new tools, it is concerning that classrooms around the country are relying too much on their technology toolbox in an effort to engage students. Granted, there is a certain allure and temptation to replace real, live exploration and observations with virtual projects. However, research supports students learn best when they are provided opportunities to practice skills through inquiry and experientially-based instruction.

Aristotle once said, "For the things we have to learn before we can do them, we learn by doing them." It is not uncommon for Foothills faculty to receive letters and comments from past alumni. It is always interesting to hear what students



The Junior Class learns about the environment at the McCall Outdoor Science School.

remember about their school experiences. Long term investigations, service learning projects, and the "out in the field" experiences brought education to life and are, not surprisingly, what many remember most. It was all about touching, seeing, and feeling education, rather than imagining it. Virtual field trips are cost effective and take less planning than an actual out-in-the-field experience, but do not provide the concept development that research tells us is optimized through active explorative experiences. Field experiences not only expand children's learning by providing them with hands-on experiences, they also increase children's knowledge and understanding of the world in which they live. This is "experiential learning."

Experiential learning gets children away from their classroom environment and into a new mode of learning, and can be as simple as taking a class of children out on the school grounds for a lesson in observation or as detailed as a curriculum integrated out-of-state/country

visit to a particular field site. Foothills faculty implement wonderful and memorable learning opportunities by looking to the community, near our school, for integrated enrichment. The school's downtown location is rich with learning opportunities outside the classroom. From the local cemetery to the river or park next door, Experiential Learning design uses children's natural passion and curiosity to make sense of the world. By studying an authentic topic or problem in depth, and looking at implications in community, history, and their own lives, projects are designed with specific skills and content. This teaching style not only meets standards, but it's also a natural and authentic learning method.

One example: Junior students spent a week at the McCall Outdoor Science School (MOSS), in McCall, Idaho. The 11-acre facility is located at the University of Idaho's McCall Field Campus and borders Payette Lake and Ponderosa State Park. The students learn through hands-on experiences; they study the six different ecosystems related to birds and arthropods (marsh wetlands, grassy meadow, sagebrush meadow, ponderosa forest, streams, and lakes), conduct experiments, collect data, and learn about water chemistry, canopy and ground cover, and soil characterization. Later, students engage in lab work to explore and analyze the meaning of their observations. MOSS camp days are 13-and-a-half hours long, yet students remain interested, engaged, and proud of their final inquiry project presentations. But this learning is not just a culminating Spring Trip for every class. Foothills faculty critically examine our environment (school, downtown neighborhood, nearby parks, marshes, gardens!) for opportunities to meet their objectives throughout the year.

Experiential Learning provides reason and purpose for reading, writing, math, and many other subjects. Value-laden content tied to planned expeditions makes learning come alive, inspires students to become experts on a topic and dabble in prospective career paths, and empowers them to "get off the couch" regarding their learning! Our students don't sit passively while someone imparts knowledge; they get out there and discover for themselves! In a school year with the usual (worksheets, reading aloud, spelling tests) and the unusual (bugs and other critters, the classroom clown, expeditionary learning trips), what will students remember? I believe Foothills students will remember their class trips and the field experiences that dovetail into instructional practice.

The CHOICE Elective Series Another Unique Aspect to Foothills

By: Piers Lamb, Director of Student Life

Shawn Shepherd's vision of a curriculum based on choices is starting its third year. Originating with the considerable academic research that demonstrates that students who experience a wide range of offerings taught by passionate professionals in their fields learn more, CHOICE is a favorite of students and parents alike. The CHOICE elective program is back in full swing with offerings from B.U.G.S (Boise Urban Garden School), Ceramica, The Foothills Learning Center, and Soccer Shots, just to name a few.

One prime example of a perfect combination of passionate teachers and inspired learners is happening during this CHOICE session at The Foothills Learning Center with the Intermediate class. Operated by the City of Boise Parks and Recreation Department, The Foothills Learning Center focuses on education and information about the Boise Foothills and the surrounding high-desert environment. It is a place for learning through direct experience with the outdoors. Science comes alive for students and other visitors to the Foothills Learning Center. The heart of the Foothills Learning Center program is their school-age education program. This fall, Foothills students are working with several National Science Foundation fellows from Boise State University's Geosciences Graduate program along with F.L.C. staff. The Fellows are studying the Halls Gulch Pond area, with the students learning pond ecology. The model will take a close-up look at the ecosystem of a pond – the plants, bugs and other critters that live there – and the role of this particular pond in the larger watershed. The group will translate what they learn into an artistic masterpiece as they paint the top of a picnic table that will stay on the grounds at the Center.



The CHOICE elective program is constantly expanding throughout the community, and there are great partnerships on the horizon. Piers Lamb, Director of Student Life, is busy making connections with Boise organizations for future CHOICE classes. The Discovery Center is currently working on a science curriculum for a spring class, and there are some great art and theatre classes in the making. With the goal of incorporating intellectual and academic pursuits, creative and productive thinking, leadership, and visual and performing arts into the CHOICE curriculum, and pairing those opportunities with teachers who love teaching and students who love learning, we certainly have a great year ahead!

Any parent interested in teaching a CHOICE class in the Spring is strongly encouraged to email plamb@foothillsschool.org.

This Month's Alumni Feature:

Language Passions Ignite Volunteerism for Freedman



Hayden Freedman attended Foothills School for nine years, from Kindergarten-8th grade. She is currently a senior at Boise High School and is in the process of applying to colleges. She's applying early action to Stanford University and is also applying to Georgetown University, Vanderbilt University, University of Virginia, and Emory University, where she's been offered a spot on the soccer team. Hayden has a 4.2 GPA and is taking six AP (Advanced Placement) classes this year. She is a Commentated National Merit Scholar and AP Scholar with Distinction. She **plays varsity soccer** (Boise High just won State for the second year in a row), plays club soccer (her team has won State Cup twice), plays piano, and she sprinted varsity track last year. Hayden is **fluent in Spanish and French** (and is learning Russian this year) and is interested in studying foreign languages in college. Last year, Hayden initiated a volunteer project, similar to an independent study project, at Head Start and has continued it into this year. Hayden **volunteers several times a week at Head Start** to help Spanish-speaking students communicate better with their teachers and other

children in the class, and translates information into Spanish for Spanish-speaking families. She also started a program where kids in Spanish class at Boise High come in and have lunch with the Head Start students once a week. We're very proud of Hayden and the amazing young adult she's become!



The Counseling Corner

By Jennie Ritter, MA, LPC; jenritter@gmail.com

Now that school is well underway, it may be a great time to revisit a concept called “Resiliency,” and ways of teaching or modeling this way of living for young people. Briefly, resiliency is simply one's capacity to “bounce back” or recover. Medically, it is known for a fact our bodies are genetically designed with a built-in capacity for healing and overcoming attacks from sickness and diseases. Lesser known, however, is a theory on resiliency that states we also have a genetic capacity to overcome most social and situational adversities. Human beings have the innate ability to play, laugh, and experience hope and joy, all of which are powerful forces that facilitate healing. We have the innate ability to grieve and cry when heavy emotional pain needs to be released, and a sense of intuition and a conscience to guide us in knowing right from wrong. Finally, we have the innate ability to learn from our mistakes and grow from failure.

As significant and natural as these abilities might be, they are often hindered by negative experiences before our kids reach adulthood. Daily events happen in life that carry the potential to shame and strip us of hope, take away our laughter, forbid us from crying, and teach us not to try in order to avoid failure. By the difficult years of adolescence many youth have given up on their own inherent abilities to direct their future in positive ways, and instead look to alcohol, drugs, and intense relationships to dull their fears and pain and give them an alternate (less fulfilling) sense of belonging and purpose.

Children need to experience over and over again through our relationship with them (parents, caregivers, teachers, neighbors, counselors!) that they’re tremendously valuable just as they are—regardless of what has happened in their past. With this basis, they are likely to trust in a well-boundaried environment (e.g., home and community environments), providing protection and securing them while they grow. They will likely feel more comfortable playing, laughing, crying, trusting their conscience, and taking risks that could result in failure—they’ll learn they’re not “bad” or “good” children, but “perfectly imperfect” human beings! Teaching resiliency is about teaching youth how to stretch their comfort zones. The Search Institute has developed an Asset Checklist I’ve used in my practice to help identify specifically how and where caregivers can focus their time and energy in order to increase their child’s protective factors and reduce risk factors. If you’d like a copy, simply send me an e-mail and I’ll respond with a copy of the checklist attached.

FALL PARENT SATISFACTION SURVEY COMING THIS MONTH

We care about how we’re meeting your family’s needs at Foothills – that’s why we seek your feedback regularly throughout the school year. In the Fall, we generate classroom-level satisfaction surveys using www.SurveyMonkey.com. The data we gather in this survey is part of the midyear evaluation of faculty and staff. It also helps us identify areas where there are academic concerns that need to be addressed by our academic leadership; and generate ideas for community programs and CHOICE classes for the remainder of the year. **Your feedback matters** and we ask you to help us improve our program and services by letting us know what we can do better. We also really appreciate hearing that we’re doing some things great – so use this as a chance to brag on the school, too. Watch your email for a special survey link in mid-November and please take the time to complete the survey as soon as you get it.

DON’T FORGET: Get your tickets to this year’s Auction Event by completing your reply card or calling Cassie Angelos at 208.331.9260 with your order!

News from the Board of Trustees

In October, the Board of Trustees and administrative leadership team at Foothills School held their annual retreat – and this one set the sites very high for accomplishments for 2010-11.

In addition to working with Board members and school leaders to understand their role in providing important social capital – or contacts – to the school's benefit, the group focused on goals for the coming year. The major goals of the school this year include:

- Launch a community wide strategic planning and long-range financial planning process to assure a sustainable school for the future.
- Increase parent engagement and involvement throughout the school, attaining a goal of 75% of parents involved.
- Reduce attrition from 22% to 15% or lower with continued emphasis on family retention school wide.

The Board of Trustees is also pleased that it works through a set of committees that focus on accomplishing great things with the help of other leaders, and – even more critically – parent volunteers. There are four ongoing committees of the Board that annually seek parent involvement, and if you are interested in serving any of these working groups, please contact Ed Zimmer, Board Chair, at ezimmerglacier@gmail.com:

- Finance Committee – reviews school financials and assures long-term sustainability through strong financial operations
- Development Committee – sets direction and provides support for major fundraising activities of the school
- Building Committee – assures our school plant helps us meet our mission and recommends improvements regularly
- Governance Committee – provides support to the Board of Trustees operations and, most notably, offers nominations to the Board for coming terms

The Board and staff are looking forward to accomplishing our goals this year – and it will be even easier with *your* involvement!

Meet Foothills Fabulous Faculty:

Jude McDougall, **Intermediate** **Instructor**

The Intermediate class is thrilled to have the amazing teachers that they have, and one in particular is Jude



McDougall. Jude has

been teaching at Foothills for three years and is very excited about this year. When she's not teaching, Jude stays busy pursuing her other passions, which include massage, teaching Yoga, and hiking. Jude recently co-organized a weekend Yoga retreat at Miracle Hot Springs and over 25 people attended. This was the 5th year she has been involved in organizing the event, and it keeps getting bigger and better every year. In addition to Yoga and massage, Jude and her husband Mike tackle a lot of the amazing whitewater that Idaho has to offer. This past summer they ran the Lower Main Salmon, a six-day stretch beginning just outside of Riggins on the Salmon River and ending in Lewiston on the Snake River. They also spent time on the Main Payette and the South Fork of the Boise. On the home front, Jude and Mike are creating a community garden project in their backyard for kids and the community. The garden will consist of numerous raised beds, a potato bin that uses hay instead of soil, an herb garden, berries, apples and cherries. Jude McDougall – an amazing person and an exceptional Foothills teacher.

Student-Led Portfolio Conferences

Student-Led Portfolio Conferences occur twice a year at Foothills School. Through the Portfolio Conferences, the student is able to share his or her understanding of skills and concepts, set academic goals, gather data, select specific works and celebrate learning growth. This type of assessment practice creates an opportunity for students to make connections and demonstrate a sense of their learning in a formal setting. We believe that when teachers and students share the responsibility for imparting this information to parents it allows the child to accept greater responsibility for personal learning. **These conferences are slated for the last week of November** and your child's teacher will provide you with sign up information.

NOVEMBER FOOTHILLS CALENDAR

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
BE SURE TO DONATE A BOTTLE OF WINE FOR THE AUCTION!!!	1	2 Love & Logic Class 3:30-4:30 pm (meeting weekly)	3	4 Picture Re-Takes! 9:00 am Auction Committee Meeting @ 2:00 pm Early Learner Parent Meeting 6-7 pm	5 CHOICE DAY - SESSION FOUR	6
7 Daylight Savings! 	8	9 Musical Theater 3:30-5:30 pm Love & Logic Class	10 Veterans Concert 2:00 pm in the Music Room 	11 Auction Committee Meeting @ 2:00 pm	12 CHOICE DAY - SESSION FIVE	13 Annual Auction: Journey on the Orient Express 6:00 pm @ The Rose Room
14	15	16 Executive Committee @ 12:00 Musical Theater 3:30-5:30 pm Board of Trustees Meeting @ 4 pm	17	18 Finance Committee Meeting @ 12:00 pm Thankful Feast 6:00 pm @ The Basque Center	19 CHOICE DAY - SESSION SIX	20
21	22	23 Musical Theater 3:30-5:30 pm Love & Logic Class	24 No School-Thanksgiving Break	25 No School-Thanksgiving Break 	26 No School-Thanksgiving Break	27
28	29	30 Musical Theater 3:30-5:30 pm Love & Logic Class				
Coming Soon...	Dec 6th Lower School Winter Performance 6:00 pm @ Foothills School	Dec 9th Musical Theater Performance 6:00 pm @ Prairie Dog Productions	Dec 10th Upper School Winter Formal 6:00 pm @ Foothills School	Dec 14th Upper School Winter Performance 6:00 pm @ Foothills School	Dec 17th Early Release @ 1:00 pm	Dec 18- Jan 9th No School- Winter Break

Next Month: FOOTHILLS FOCUS will cover December and January; be ready for lots of news! If you have news to submit, email plamb@foothillsschool.org.