



The Giving Tree



Richmond Friends School

An Independent
Quaker School
Established 1971

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Marcie Roberts, School Coordinator

I am so pleased to again be presenting this April publication to you. It is just our second time publishing the *Giving Tree* in the spring, but no less important than our fall appeal when we acknowledge our annual fund, in kind, and endowment donors. Why is it important? We want to take this special opportunity to honor and thank all of our Readathon donors. Our Readathon is a parent fundraising initiative with a purpose. We aim to have educational value in everything we do at Richmond Friends School and the Readathon is no exception. This is no pizza sale, this is an opportunity for students to dive further into reading, to celebrate literacy, and make a philanthropic connection that benefits their school. This year we had over 180 donors and approximately 40% of you are new supporters! Because of you and your generosity, we have once again surpassed our \$10,000 parent fundraising goal and our students collectively read over 100,000 minutes in one month. This is no small feat and without you, we wouldn't have made it. So, whether your gift was a few dollars, or several hundred, we appreciate your support! I would also like to thank our Parent Committee who helped to organize our month of activities and fundraising logistics, our families who do some 'heavy lifting' as far as helping their children read, keep track of units read, solicit sponsors and then collect the hard earned cash, and last, but not least, I want to thank our teachers who not only facilitate many reading opportunities inside and outside the classroom, they also have regular check-ins and motivational challenges for the students to keep them going for our month long endeavor. This fundraising initiative truly is a group effort in every sense of the word.

While we change things around a bit year to year, some traditions we continue and cherish. The first school day of the month, students come to school dressed up as their favorite book character – some are human and some are not! Throughout the month classes take literacy related fieldtrips and welcome special guests to the school. This year all classes had tours of Morrison-Reeves Library. We had the privilege of having two local, published authors join us to share their books and talk about the publishing process. Thank you Mary Ann Gregg and Connie Wooldridge! Parent, Librarian and storyteller extraordinaire, Jennie Kiffmeyer, joined us almost weekly for stories and fun. Co-founder of the school and someone we still call to substitute teach from time to time, Chris Nicolson, joined us again for her wonderful author studies. Thank you Jennie and Chris! The last day of the Readathon actually happened in early March thanks to so many snow days. We celebrated in our favorite way, by wearing our pajama's to school and eating pancakes together. The upper elementary students set up for the breakfast, cooked and served all of the food and then cleaned up – what a feat (especially considering some of their slippers!), not to be overshadowed by the PreK-K class tapping the maple tree out front and making our own syrup for the occasion.

The Readathon is... Fun? Yes. Meaningful? Yes. Educational? Yes. Hard work? Yes. Productive and profitable? Yes. A philanthropic service connection? Yes. What more could you ask for out of a school fundraiser? These students, our readers, totally understand what this money they raised helps to pay for. When I recently congratulated them on their efforts and posed the question about where the money goes, they told me, "It helps pay our teachers and buys stuff like horses." Indeed it does. It purchases supplies like toy horses, real horses are not in the budget! It also funds scholarships, pays for our

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A Very Special Thanks to our 2010 Readathon Contributors!

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Pat Wright

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building costs and a variety of other things including professional development. These dollars are a part of our overall operating budget. Did you know that tuition only covers 70% of our operating expenses? The other fundraising budget line item that also offsets operating costs is a \$40,000 annual fund goal. We are not quite there yet, but luckily still have a few months to achieve this last remaining goal. So, if you haven't given yet this year or if you have and want to do so again, please take this opportunity to make a gift to our unique and special school. Richmond Friends School is a place where our students truly love school and have a love for learning. It is a place where I had to remind one fifth grader this year that his voracious reading could not happen at the expense of his sleep no matter how motivated he was. It is a place where we all work together - students, teachers, parents and supporters alike. Thank you to all who support RFS and its mission in big and small ways.

Readathon Testimonials

From parents, students, and teachers

We all know that fundraisers are part of life with kids. Every activity has one attached, it seems. We have all been on the selling or being sold pizza/wrapping/paper/candle/bread/magazines. It is a necessary evil to raise the money to support our kids' activities. One of the exciting things about the Richmond Friends School is that we don't have the typical fundraiser. I felt pretty good asking friends, co-workers and family members to support Lilly's reading! Reading! Who can say no to that? Not only were we raising money for a cause we really believe in, but by the end of February I saw a marked improvement in her reading skills. She was making herself sit down and do extra reading because she wanted those extra units! Her reading was coming faster and easier and she actually was enjoying silent reading! Lilly was also quite proud when I told her how much money HER hard work had raised for HER school! There was real ownership in the whole process! For us, Readathon was a win-win. I hope others had similar experiences!

-Laura Hinkley, Parent and convener of the Parent Committee

I'm glad that we get a reward at the end of the Readathon. It's called Pancake Day and we get to wear pajamas and eat pancakes.

I have a good feeling when we do that because it means we are celebrating that we did a great job of reading and being a group. Two groups actually. No – three groups! Home, school, and our classroom.

-Ben, First Grade

The Readathon has changed me in many ways. First of all, reading books for school is now just as fun as reading fun books. I find myself reading for fun now rather than reading because it is for homework. Second of all, it helps the school buy things like books, and it helps us so that we can pay the great teachers in the school.

-Natalie, Sixth Grade

I think that the Readathon is a great way to raise money for our school. Not only does it help our school, but it's helped me in tons of ways. One example of how it has helped me is to read eight times as much.

-Michael, Fifth Grade



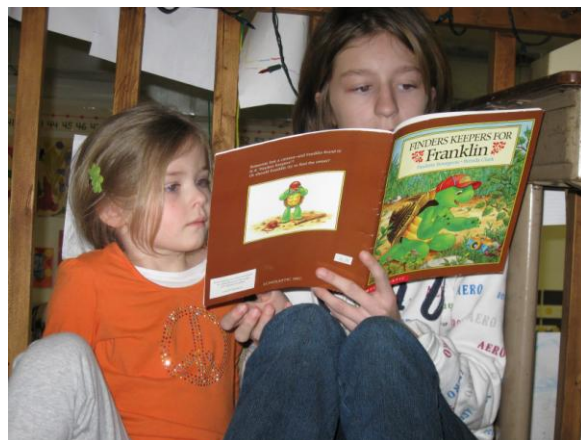
Students from Marianne's PreK-K classroom dressed up as their favorite book character as part of the Readathon!

The students in the PreK and K love all the aspects of the Readathon. During this time we saw increased interest in reading, being read to, and looking at books independently. A favorite time during the Readathon is the 10 minute stop, drop, and read portion where everyone is quietly engaged with a book on their own. These are magical moments as I watch children independently choose a book and eagerly sit down to explore its pages – content and happy in their own private world of the book.

-Marianne, PreK/K Teacher

The best part was making a goal. That way you know what you are trying to reach. And When you get there, you know you really DID something. Plus, reading is good for your brain.

-Justin, Second Grade



Hannah reads to Mary Grace as part of the pen pal reading activities.

The Perfect Pie

By Jonathan Graham, RFS Board Member

Last fall, Steven Mickey faced a culinary emergency. He had lost his recipe for the perfect apple pie. With Thanksgiving approaching, this would not do. Mickey, a former Richmond Friends School parent, remembered that he had obtained the precious recipe from a fellow parent. So he did what any desperate pie maker would do.

"I got this call from Steven, who now lives in Oregon," recalls school coordinator Marcie Roberts. "He was talking about his favorite apple pie and the perfect pie crust, and this fellow parent who had taught him both. So with the help of (co-school founder and former teacher) Chris Nicholson, we helped him reconnect with Becky McMillan."

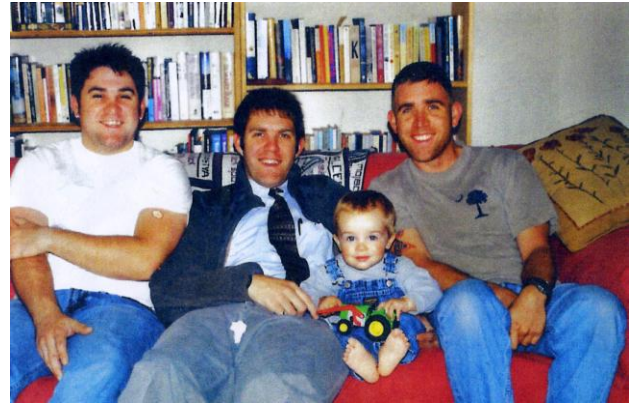
McMillan, who remains in Richmond, was happy to share the recipes. It turns out that she is something of an evangelist for the power of perfect crust and delectable filling. In a recent interview, she told the story of how, as a college sophomore, her grandmother taught her to make pies, with her diabetic grandfather as designated critic. Later, it turns out, her courtship with her future husband revolved around her pies and his appetite.

By the time she met Steven Mickey, McMillan was an experienced pie maker. So when their sons befriended one another and began playing together at her house, Mickey had ample opportunity to sample her pies. For the record, the vaunted pie crust recipe was originally published in McCall's magazine. The apple pie recipe was likely passed down through McMillan's family, which may well have a pastry chef marker in their DNA. Family lore has it that McMillan's great grandmother, a farmer's wife, made two pies every morning of her married life.

"She'd start making small pies first thing in the morning while her husband was feeding the livestock," McMillan reports. "He'd have the first one for breakfast and put the other one in his lunch bucket, and head into the fields."

Looking back at her days as a parent at RFS (then called the Children's School), McMillan recalls with fondness the friendships she formed with fellow parents. She notes that all three of her boys have thanked her for making the sacrifices she and her husband made to send them to the school.

"They tell me, 'I know we didn't have much, but I'm so glad I got to go to school there,'" says McMillan. "The school was a real blessing. It made them worldly in a small place. They have gone on to travel all over the world, and they are comfortable talking to anyone. I don't think they would have gotten that in Richmond's public schools."



Becky McMillan's three sons, Joel, Tyler, and Peter all attended RFS while enjoying her apple pies!

Perfect Pie Crust (from McCall's Magazine)

Mix: 1 T sugar
2 t salt
4 C flour
Set aside.

Blend: 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ C shortening (Crisco or any all-vegetable shortening) into flour mixture.

Mix: $\frac{1}{2}$ C cold water
1 egg
1 T vinegar
Beat with fork until lemony.

Blend shortening mixture into egg mixture and work together to form a ball. Chill half. (It can be kept in the refrigerator for two weeks or freezer for two months.)

Becky McMillan's Apple Pie

While pie crust is chilling in the refrigerator ...

Peel and slice thin five large apples (or the equivalent) and mix with the following.

Mix: $\frac{1}{3}$ C flour
 $\frac{3}{4}$ - 1 C sugar
2 t cinnamon
1 t nutmeg (ground)
2 T butter

Roll the pie crust to large circle. Line the bottom of the pie plate. Fill lined pie plate with apple mixture. Cut 2 Tablespoons butter in cubes and dot the apples before adding top crust. Roll out top crust and place over apples, trim edge and fold edges (together) under, leaving room to crimp edge. Crimping is done with thumb of the right hand pressing between the space of left index finger and thumb. Go all round the edge. Bake at 375 degrees for one hour.