

The Daily Walk

Transformation

Pam Tieszen



As our nation continues to recover from economic crisis, Freeman Academy is prayerfully riding out the storm. Difficult financial times have been experienced before as part of our history, and we know we can weather the times with careful consideration, fiscal responsibility and God’s grace. From an economic perspective, I can’t help but look back at the year and recognize the graciousness of our constituents. Your commitment of time, prayers, and financial assistance has been overwhelming. Your generosity changed students’ lives. Twenty-two seniors graduated with plans and dreams developed here over the years. You have helped meld them into God’s plan.

The coming year holds significant change for Freeman Academy. New responsibilities and challenges for parents and staff are necessary to provide a more secure future for our school. Tuition increased by three percent and parents were asked to refrain from using tuition reduction hours. Tuition reduction can be earned when parents provide 90 hours of volunteer time assisting Freeman Academy with a variety of tasks that would otherwise need to be hired. While this program is very useful and many of the parents take advantage of this opportunity, it does reduce the tuition dollars we receive.

Staff salaries were frozen and retirement benefits were forfeited to meet a balanced budget. The board decided to reduce faculty by one full-time employee. Social studies and Bible classes are collapsed, meaning courses will alternate every other year in the schedule.

We anticipate increases in utilities and health benefits, and while we make adjustments and become creative about meeting budget for the new year, we rely on the prayers and generosity of our constituents. As of early August, 67 students are registered for the new school year. These changes impact our school community. Growing in God requires transformation on our part.

Occasionally, teachers share student writings with me. Fifth graders to seniors write about life- altering experiences and events, and share how friends at school, teachers, or a Bible class touched their lives. Our classroom size lends itself to diverse conversations, but student writings articulate the depth of students’ questions and discoveries about God and relationships. This is a community where relationship is encouraged and we support each other in the transformation process.

Ultimately, Freeman Academy is about transforming lives and providing an education where students have the opportunity to develop an intimate relationship with God. At Alumni Banquet I heard repeatedly that Freeman Academy and Junior College changed their lives. Our institution has impacted lives for over 100 years. I want to affirm that your contributions make a difference!

COMMITTED TO Pray

Amy Waltner—Board Member

Board of Directors’

Corner

The Board of Directors is so very grateful for all Freeman Academy supporters. Do you immediately think of only finances when you read that statement? How else might you support the school? Of course we need your financial support or the school may need to close its doors. The budget is always a concern for the board and administration. That discussion can cause some late board meetings as we try to determine where to find funding.

For a moment, I would like to focus on the importance of prayer support in the life of Freeman Academy. I will be the first to admit that my prayer life isn’t what it should be. It’s not “Do I pray?” but “**How** do I pray?” that is important. I find myself talking to God in short sentence prayers throughout the day, but I used to spend time early each morning in devotions and prayer before anyone else was awake. Those were special times with God. We had a chance to truly build a relationship. I miss that “communion” and intend to return to that “praying habit.”

As Christians, we know that prayer is essential to our relationship with God. We count on our constituents – our “supporters” – to pray for FA as students’ lives are changed! I would like to challenge all of you to spend special time in prayer for the school, possibly for specific teachers, classes, or activities.

The new school year began on August 27. Join me in committing a specific time in prayer to bless the work that is carried on in Christ’s name. Maybe it will become a habit!

Alumnus Reflections

Jay Waltner
Freeman Academy Class of 1984



By Jay Waltner

Recently I drove out to Freeman for my 25th Class Reunion and the 2009 Alumni Banquet. On a beautiful Friday morning, I looked over the grounds of the school from the South Freeman road. What an amazing transformation Freeman Academy has undergone since I graduated!

The first thing to cross my view was the Arboretum. What a blessing for current students, alumni, the Freeman community and the surrounding region! And what a tribute to our Creator to showcase so many of His wonders and tend them with such loving care. As good as it looks now, I can only imagine the impact in 10 or 20 years when all those trees have matured.

As my classmates and I began painting a shed at the south edge of the campus, I saw the neatly mowed soccer field receiving its morning watering. The lush, level patch of deep green was a far cry from the hard, uneven patch of stubble (and gopher holes!) where FA soccer teams had honed their skills back in “the day.”

Over lunch I walked around the new maintenance garage with its high ceilings, smooth concrete floor, walk-in cooler, gas range and industrial-grade electrical. Overbuilt? To the unknowing observer, maybe – but I knew that come Schmeckfest, the entire building would be used to the max.

As we wrapped up our work on the shed, I looked north again and saw the white bell tower of the Music

Hall rising above everything and standing in brilliant contrast against the blue midsummer sky. It appeared the hall had recently been repainted with skill and care, and it thrilled me to see that building – where everything began – given a place of prominence and honor even among the larger, more modern facilities surrounding it. I hope and trust that in a similar way, we younger alumni will give respect to the older ones who have given so much to make our school what it is today.

And there was still more to come. On Saturday my classmates and I enjoyed an afternoon of food and conversation in the Arboretum Visitors Center, then toured Sterling Hall as well as seeing the wonderful refurbishments to Frontier Hall.

Clearly, the spirit of stewardship is alive and well at Freeman Academy! Administrators, faculty, staff and students – present and past – are building on the work of those who have gone before and are positioning the school for an exciting future. My compliments and sincere thanks go out to all who have contributed their time, talents and treasure to make the campus of Freeman Academy a joy to come home to!

Many, Many Thanks!

We are grateful for the class groups who have taken time to work on campus during the past year. The Academy Class of '99 gathered to wait on tables during Schmeckfest 2009. Scraping, priming, and painting the soccer storage shed consumed the whole day on July 31 for the Academy class of '84. The 50 year anniversary Academy class of '59 spent Saturday morning August 1 assisting Donna Ries with filing in the instrumental department. There are always jobs that can be accomplished with the help of our friends! Contact me anytime to arrange for a work project with your former classmates. Blessings to all who have volunteered their time and enjoyed fellowship along with the work! Vernetta Waltner

Help Solve a Mystery!

While visiting with some alumni who graduated in the early 1950's this summer, they asked what had happened to the statue that used to be at the bottom of the stairs entering the Administration Building. They thought that it was a replica of the Statue of Liberty! Anyone with information as to its existence or its disappearance should contact me at vwaltner@freemanacademy.org or Vernetta Waltner, Freeman Academy, PO Box 1000, Freeman, SD 57029. Thanks!