



FOS Deeds & Needs

The Latest News from Friends of Onancock School – February 2009 – Number 5

For Your Calendar

- The **Master Naturalists** have a work day on Monday, February 9th, from 9 am to noon. You don't have to be a Master Naturalist to help build the nature walk by the creek. For more information, contact **Donna Ware** at **787-7845**.
- **Elizabeth Hunt**, whose pottery studio is now at Onancock School (Rm 116, next to Dragonfly Studio Gallery) offers adult and children's classes in both handbuilding and the wheel. There is an ongoing Tuesday adult class from 1-3 pm, for both beginning and intermediate students and a home school class on Thursdays from 10:30 to 11:30 am. Both classes are open for enrollment. Elizabeth is also interested in starting an after school children's class on Tuesdays from 4-5pm. Contact Elizabeth at **442-3831** (h) or **709-1288** (c) or via email at **ehmadpotter@verizon.net**

Deeds

- Last fall, a committee of the FOS Board selected **Becker Morgan Group** of Salisbury, MD (www.beckermorgan.com) as the architectural design firm to help us develop renovation plans for our buildings and grounds. We are currently working on grant funding to support this effort.
- **Joe Ware** and "**Steamhead**," an expert on steam heating from Baltimore, have begun a project to improve performance of our antique steam heating system. Most of the steam distribution system is 1920s vintage, designed for an original coal furnace, while the current oil-fired boiler dates from 1978. Additional radiators and other modifications have made this system complicated and inefficient. Currently, the furnace costs about \$12 per **hour** to run, so any improvement in efficiency will pay off. That's more than 500 gallons of oil per month!

New vents have been installed on the main steam lines and on individual radiators to improve steam distribution so that the limited heat we can afford is better balanced. (**Note:** When their rooms receive new vents, tenants will be given a notice explaining how to use the vent.) Anyone who can identify the room where the vent shown is located gets to help Joe work on the system. Call in your selection to Joe at **787-7845**.



Adjustable radiator vent



- **Vince and Dawn Erato** donated a bag of hand tools for the school's tool box. Practical donations are always welcome.
- With the arrival last week of potter **Elizabeth Hunt**, FOS has now rented all but one of our long-term rental classrooms. There's still other space available, however, so take a look at our rate card at www.onancockschool.org
- **Chris Rice** and crew have finished repairing the north wing corner, where we had had water infiltration. After making repairs, they added a concrete extension to the existing sidewalk to keep water out in the future. Soon they

will install guttering and downspouts on the north wing of the building to prevent the problem from developing again.

Needs

- A volunteer who likes working on a ladder is needed to change light bulbs and check ballasts in fluorescent lights. Call **Russell Jones** at **302-0330** or **Haydon Rochester** at **787-2097** to help us.
- Have a commercial or other high-quality vacuum cleaner in working order you don't need? How about a working shop vac? FOS could certainly use one. Please call **Russell Jones** at **302-0330** and let him know where to pick it up.
- And, as always, if you can donate money to assist us with our heating, electric, and groundskeeping bills, please send your check to **Friends of Onancock School, P.O. Box 467, Onancock, VA 23417**. Contributions are tax deductible and greatly appreciated.

Board Meeting Report

The FOS board did not meet in December. At the January meeting, the board reviewed accomplishments since we became fully operational on the school property in September 2007. These include:

- Two very successful PigNic events involving scores of people and raising funds for badly needed school repairs.
- Leasing of nearly all available long-term rooms in the main school building, as well as the old shop building, with paid use of the field for two different soccer programs. We now host an art gallery, several individual artists and craftspeople, table tennis, dog training, bluegrass sessions, and band and orchestra rehearsals.
- Selection of a design firm (Becker Morgan Group of Salisbury, MD) to help us define the options for renovation and reuse of the school buildings and grounds for the future benefit of people of all ages from our region and visitors as well.
- Numerous minor and major repairs and cleanups to the grounds, including repairing and painting steps on a couple of side porches, elimination of one of the deteriorated handicap ramps, furnace improvements (ongoing), and installation of air conditioners in several rooms.
- Significant progress on the Master Naturalists' nature walk along Onancock Creek including planning the route and removal of greenbrier, tires, fallen trees, and numerous other items to open up the site.
- A new brick barbecue grill and three picnic tables on the south lawn, with firm plans for a picnic pavilion to be erected this spring.
- Removal of defective playground equipment in preparation for upgrading the playground.
- Removal of the old press box and garage to make the site safer and eliminate these eyesores.

For 2009, the FOS board selected its top three priorities, as follows:

1. **Membership and Volunteer Participation** – Devise a formal membership program and secure a volunteer coordinator.
2. **Fund Raising** – Begin capital campaign planning, including both large-scale (foundation) and small-scale (event-based) fund raising.
3. **Grounds Improvements** – Get the playground and picnic pavilion projects moving so that by the end of 2009 we have highly visible progress to show to the public and potential funders.

Don't wait for us to call! If you would like to work on any of these three priorities, reply to the newsletter e-mail (info@onancockschool.org) with a short description of how you would like to help and your contact information. We'd love to have you on the team.

Subscription Information

FOS Deeds & Needs is an **E-MAIL** newsletter of the Friends of Onancock School. It is also posted on the FOS website at <http://www.onancockschool.org/>. E-mail reports of your deeds and needs to Haydon Rochester at hrjr2@verizon.net. Be sure to include all relevant dates, contact info, number of participants, and other details. To **subscribe** or **unsubscribe**, send an e-mail to info@onancockschool.org. Please include your name, postal address, phone number, and class year if you're an alum of Onancock School. Unfortunately, we cannot offer a printed, postal mail version of FOS Deeds & Needs at this time.