

August, 2009

Dear Goshen Friends Families:

We are beginning a big year for Goshen Friends School. Founded in 1959 by Barbara Dixon in order to meet the needs of farming families in the West Chester area, the school commences its fiftieth year, proud of its rich and historic past and looking forward to many more years of teaching and mentoring young children. We guided each day by our Quaker belief that there is that of God in every student and in all members of our community and the world.

When you study our school's past, you see passion and loyalty which still permeate Goshen today. When the school was started," Meeting members collected materials, sanded blocks, painted and refurbished and gave the School committee a \$400 loan to help the school "get on its feet." Two Quaker teachers opened the school doors to twenty kindergarten children in September of 1959, and additions and modifications to the site were made in both the 1960's and 1970's and as most recently, 2006, as the size of the student population grew. Throughout these past decades, the school community, faculty, General Committee members, alumni and parents encouraged "fidelity to principles of truth, simplicity and respect for all persons." I believe strongly that our Quaker values remain an unwavering part of who we are, and we are always mindful of and true to our Quaker soul.

When fifth grade students graduate from this school, I ask them what makes this school special. It is not easy for them to answer, because it is difficult to describe feelings and thoughts which are intangible. But, so many speak about being allowed to be themselves, to be encouraged to explore their social, academic and spiritual horizons without reproach, to talk freely about their hopes and fears, to speak to God. We honor Barbara Dixon and those who have built our foundation, who have lovingly and passionately opened the path of light to all who have attended and worked here.

Thank you for your support of Goshen Friends School. Your belief in our school continues to help make us a vibrant community where children, guided by Quaker values which we teach and embrace each day, love to learn.

Tom