



# Saint Mary School News

October 2008

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## Celebration Corner

We have two very important events that we celebrate this month. First, the Golf Outing was a very exciting day filled with good weather, fun and great food. It netted just about what we budgeted \$6,600.00. Thank you to Rich and Catherine Cleve, the event chairs, as well as their family, all the volunteers and the golfers who made this fundraiser a huge success.

Our second event was the Texas Hold'em Fundraiser that was very profitable and also provided additional revenue for the budget. Thank you Jeff and Lisa Erfourth for chairing this event, to their family members and the volunteers who made this fundraiser a great success also. The hard work and dedication of our parents make Saint Mary Catholic School a special place.

## Golf Outing Golfers

A set of golf clubs was found at Rackham Golf Course following our Golf Outing on September 21st. If you think that this set of clubs may belong to you, please contact the school office at 248.545.2140.

## Principally Speaking...by Greg Carnacchi

At the reading of this newsletter, St. Mary Catholic School has completed the IOWA Testing at grades 1-8. The results usually come back in late November. After teacher and administration analysis we will send your child's results home. The only exception is first grade since their testing is only an ability test, which provides indicators of potential learning. Parents of first graders can discuss the results with their child's teacher.

Our 4th, 5th and 6th graders will be leaving for their Outdoor Education Experience at the Walled Lake Outdoor Education Center on Thursday, October 23rd and returning Friday, October 24th. Please pray for good weather, a safe ex-

perience and much student learning. It is a great opportunity for our students to learn first hand about the environment while covering many of our science objectives.

As mentioned in our last newsletter there are positions open on the School Committee and School Improvement Team. We are trying to be proactive by filling positions that will be vacated by parents of eighth grade students at the end of this year. Please read the description of duties written by Michele Gorecki, one of our School Committee members, in this newsletter to see if this is a role to which God is calling you. We congratulate Dan Jankowski our new member for both the School Committee and the

School Improvement Team.

Fr. Bede at St. Mary Magdalen Parish has again offered the use of their gym for our home basketball games and some of our practices. We have accepted his offer and this will make it much more convenient. As for the practices, using the St. Mary Magdalen gym will free up the Fellowship Center and give us a place to practice during the Warming Center and Lenten Fish Fry's. Thank you Fr. Bede!

I would like to remind parents of the Parent/Teacher Conferences coming November 10th and 13th from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. More information will be coming home with your child.

## School Committee

In last month's school newsletter, our principal, Mr. Carnacchi, expressed the need for new volunteer members of the School Committee and its sub-committee, the School Improvement Team. During a recent meeting of both committees, it was brought to our attention that some parents, especially new parents and PK parents were unsure of what serving on these committees entails.

The School Committee is a group of individuals of up to seven members plus the pastor and the principal. At least one member should be a member of the parish and not have a child in the school in conformity with the archdioc-

san guidelines. The members' term is on a 3-year rotating basis so we have established members to help the newer members at any given time. The meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month in the rectory at 7 p.m.-8 p.m. This committee is an advisory committee. Our pastor in following canonical guidelines makes all final decisions. Other responsibilities of the school committee include facilitating the Beth Julien Awards by helping in the selection and voting process and serving as a liaison with the school community to provide information about school related topics (i.e. the IOWA test scores, open house, etc.).

The School Improvement Team (S.I.T.) Committee is a sub-committee formed to keep the strategic plan current and moving forward. This group also meets on the first Tuesday of the month in the rectory at 6:30 p.m.-7:00 p.m. However, the group does keep a schedule and may have fewer meetings than the School Committee. This sub-committee is also advisory in keeping with the canonical guidelines.

If you have any interest or further questions about either committee, please feel free to contact the school office. We hope to see some new faces on both committees.

By: Michele Gorecki

### **Preschool—Mrs. Hancasky, Mrs. Dylenski, Mrs. Bala**

October has been a very exciting month in the Preschool! We have been learning all about Fire Safety...we've practiced fire drills, "stop, drop and roll", crawling under smoke and dialing 911. We've been on "Safety Patrol"...identifying behaviors that are safe and not safe. The Senior preschoolers made safety books, learned about stranger safety and made bike safety posters that are hanging up around the school!

We will spend some time learning about "obedience"...we don't hear that word used very often anymore. For the preschoolers, it means learning to say, "Yes, I will" when asked to do something by mom or dad or a teacher, and thinking about the consequences of our actions.

We will get our "Handwriting without Tears" program started by singing songs and playing games that will make us familiar with the basic pieces we use to make the capital letters. We will also focus this month on our math topics of sorting objects by different attributes and exploring the numbers 1, 2 and 3.

We will end the month by learning about the wonderful season of Fall and by having some not-so-spooky Halloween fun! November will bring the themes of "Homes", "Families" and "Giving Thanks".

Enjoy the month!

### **Kindergarten—Mrs. Withee**

So long September, Hello October! After completing our theme of Apples/Autumn we ushered in October with the themes of Fall/Fire Safety. We visited and toured the Royal Oak Fire Station and were very impressed with all their gear and fire fighting equipment. We all got to sit in the fire truck and saw all the fire fighters slide down the pole. They in turn commented on how smart the kindergartners were about fire safety and each child received a fire hat, badge and fire safety coloring book. Thanks to those who chaperoned.

We will continue the month with the themes of Farm Animals, Bones/Our Skeleton/X-Rays and, of course, Halloween.

### **Ms. Farrell**

The first graders survived their IOWA Tests. We are definitely happy to have them finished!

We went to the Detroit Zoo for our first field trip. It was a cool day so the animals were active. We graphed our favorite zoo animals. It was a close vote with the tiger being the favorite. We wrote summaries of our trip which helped us practice our writing and spelling skills. We also have been practicing our reading skills with a silly poem called *Zoo Doings* by Jack Prelutsky.

The trip to the zoo was the perfect way to learn more about the wonderful world God created. Take time to enjoy the beautiful Fall season!

### **Second Grade—Mrs. Stanko**

We're falling into some great work habits here in second grade. We're writing daily in journals, learning new math skills and even preparing to say the Prayers of the Faithful at Mass. We went on a great field trip to the zoo and saw the many wonders of God's creation up close. We learned that the IOWA Tests are beastly (did you see our bulletin board?), but with our smart brains and trust in the Lord, we *can* make it through!

### **Third Grade—Mrs. Smith**

I would like to thank the third graders for all their hard work and effort they put into their IOWA Testing. It was a long two weeks and they pulled through like champs. I am very proud of them.

In Math, we have been working on our money skills and are getting ready to add and subtract numbers in the thousands with regrouping. Remember to be working on your basic math facts. We have also been hard at work in Science. We have been discovering

all the different types of landforms that are here on Earth. In Reading we have been enhancing our comprehension skills by making connections to the books we read. Plus, in Social Studies we have been discovering new and interesting things about our wonderful state.

### **Fourth Grade—Mrs. McNish**

We have been studying matter! Ask us about how to tell a physical change from a chemical change; we've been doing experiments to learn the difference. In Social Studies we are learning about the three Branches of Government. We're gearing up to learn about the presidential election next. We're glad we finished IOWA Tests, and we are ready to get back to our normal routine. We want to bless our families and friends for all they do for us.

### **Fifth Grade—Mrs. Sak**

A snail, a crayfish, some fish, a gecko, ants, frogs, a newt and a couple hermit crabs visited with the fifth graders on Tuesday, October 14, 2008. The fifth graders researched, built habitats and observed these animals for over a month. They made posters and gave wonderful presentations on their animals.

All the fifth graders' work will help them learn even more about animals, when they go to Walled Lake Outdoor Education Center October 23 and 24. The fifth graders are very excited to spend time with their classmates and sleep overnight at the camp.

### **Kindness Project**

#### **"Change for Life"**

October is national Pro-Life Month and St. Mary Catholic School is holding a special fundraiser called "Change for Life".

During the month of October, bring in your spare change to help celebrate the precious life God has given us. All change collected will be donated to the National Right to Life organization.

### Sixth Grade—Ms. Kassab

The middle school students have certainly gotten into the swing of things, especially the sixth grade. Juggling from class to class has been a challenge, but they are becoming masters at it.

The sixth grade has been enjoying Math this month by conducting surveys, collecting data and displaying it on various graphs by hand and on the computer. In the following weeks, the seventh grade will also be learning about graphs and conduct their own surveys. The eighth grade has been hard at work keeping the scales balanced as they solve equations.

Science has been a blast for the sixth grade lately as they have been exploring astronomy and rockets. Also, with all the noise middle school students make (just kidding), the seventh grade can now understand how those sound waves travel since we have been studying the properties of sound. Last, but not least, the eighth grade has begun to grasp the complexity of the human body, particularly the digestive system.

God Bless!

### Seventh Grade—Mrs. Martin

Have you seen any of the following things around the middle school Language Arts classroom and wondered what was going on?

- Students lying down reading
- Students chatting together in the hall
- Students working animatedly in the computer lab

Well, while it may look like all fun and games and relaxation, we're actually doing some very exciting work upstairs!

The seventh grade has been taking part in Reader's Workshop. Each child has a novel with him/her every day and spends focused time reading and responding to their reading in a written way. We write letters to each other on a weekly basis to discuss plot, character, storylines and more—

all in the reading response journals which travel around from person to person. It's been very exciting to get a delivery of a journal and have the chance to write back to someone! Though we wish we could lie down and read EVERY Day, we tend to save that for Friday afternoons.

We're also writing in the workshop manner. Both the seventh and eighth grade have written two formal narrative essays and published them. The process went from pre-write to drafting to conference to finalizing. You might have seen some kids writing at a desk or on the floor, some conferencing together quietly in the hall and some typing in the lab. Each child works at his/her own pace, and when one piece is done, each student is told to start another one! Then we work together to pick the one they choose to submit.

Reading, writing, having fun...that's middle school Language Arts this month!

### Seventh Grade—Mrs. Peterson

The sixth and eighth graders have been working hard on the IOWA Test the last few weeks. Eighth grade continues to read *Tom Sawyer*. They are finding it challenging to read different dialects. The sixth grade just finished reading *Hatchet*. They have been spending time comparing the book to a movie and writing a newspaper about all the exciting events of the novel. Look out for book reports that will be coming home soon.

Happy Reading!

### Eighth Grade—Mrs. Irwin

This month has been filled with IOWA Testing.

In sixth and seventh grade Social Studies the students are learning about globalization and the pros and cons of our expanding world. The eighth graders have just completed a history unit on how our nation established a new government.

In Religion sixth grade has been learning about the seven days of Crea-

tion and drawing the event through their eyes. The seventh graders are finishing up their unit on the Israelites entering the Promised Land. The eighth graders have just embarked on a new chapter discussing the importance of life. The eighth graders will also be debating some of the issues of our Presidential Candidates.

The eighth grade is busy working on earning money for their Washington D.C. trip in May. The school store has opened and they thank everyone for their support thus far.

## Halloween

This year Halloween falls on Friday, October 31st. In the past the students have been allowed to wear orange and black on this day. Since Friday is a Mass day, the students will come to school in their Friday, Mass uniform. After Mass, they will be allowed to change into black or orange tops to wear over their uniform bottoms. Students who wear jumpers will put their top on over their jumper. These tops will follow the same rules as our dress code. Any students with tops that are not appropriate will not be allowed to change. Please be sure to send something in for your student to put their uniforms in after they change.

### **Library—Mrs. Carnacchi**

Thanks to all of our St. Mary families for your support of our Author visit last week. We were all disappointed that David Small couldn't attend but Heather Henson did a wonderful presentation on two of her books. Our students were very attentive and asked her some great questions. I think they all gained some insight into the writing process and the need for research and prior knowledge before taking pen in hand. Thanks to all who purchased so many books from BookBeat. It's evident that we are a school of readers here at St. Mary.

Another great event will take place the week of November 10th when our Fall Scholastic Book Fairs rolls into town. The proposed schedule looks like this:

- Thursday or Friday, November 6 or 7—Book Fair set up
- Monday, November 10—Student “preview day” during school hours (no buying). Open for parents between 5 and 8 p.m.
- Tuesday, November 11—Students visit Book Fair with teacher
- Wednesday, November 12—Students visit Book Fair with teacher
- Thursday, November 13—Students visit Book Fair with teacher. Open for parents between 5 and 8 p.m.
- Friday, November 14—Book Fair clean up from 8:30 to 10:00 a.m.

If you can volunteer an hour or so on any of these days, I would be grateful. (No help is needed during the day on Monday, November 10th for student preview day.) You can call me and let me know when you are available (248.545.2140 ext. 229) and I will also post a sign-up sheet near the office during the last week of October.

See you at the Book Fair!

### **F.Y.I.**

Do you shop at Hollywood Market or know someone who does? St. Mary Catholic School is participating with

the “Apples for Students” program during this school year. This endeavor will give our school FREE educational equipment, similar to the Campbell's soup labels and Box Tops for Education programs which we also take part in. Here's how it works: Parents and other school supporters collect register receipts that are issued from Hollywood Markets during the 25 week program. After being collected and counted, the receipts are deposited into an “account” with “Apples for Students”. The receipts will accumulate in this account until we have enough to redeem for our choice of educational awards....from computers to playground equipment to calculators and much, much more. There will be a box in the main hallway where you can deposit your register receipts or just send them to school with your student. Thank you in advance for your support of our school and this program.

### **Candy Cane Outlet**

#### **Coming Soon!**

**December 3rd, 4th and 5th**

#### **Mark your Calendars!**

The Candy Cane Outlet is St. Mary's Christmas Shop. It gives kids the opportunity to do their own shopping for Mom, Dad, siblings, etc... We will need volunteers to help the kids shop and to wrap (gift bag) their gifts. The kids' enthusiasm is the best part of this event. A flyer will be sent home in a couple of weeks asking for help. Please fill it out and return it to the office, or you can call us. We're looking forward to it.

By the way, we're parents of eighth graders and this is our last year at St. Mary. Candy Cane Outlet is a significant PTG fundraiser and the kids will be so disappointed if there is no shop next year. So if you'd like to be the new chair (or co-chair) for this event, we can show you the ropes while we're still around. We've run Candy Cane Outlet for five years and have computer files for reminders, flyers and schedules that we can pass on along with our valuable lessons learned!

Consider joining us this year.

Nancy Hanes 248.632.1505

Barb Pietron 248.548.7348

### **Saint Mary Cub Scouts**

Did you know that Saint Mary has a Cub Scout Pack and offers fun, adventure and programs for all boys in first through fifth grades? Cub Scouting is a 100 year old program that helps boys learn to be tomorrow's leaders and good citizens through many fun and exciting activities. Cub Scouting also promotes family values and provides many opportunities to spend some quality time with your son and as a family. St. Mary Cub Scout Pack has its first scheduled Pack outing (for both boys and their whole families) Saturday, October 18th at a Corn Maze. They will spend the evening exploring these mazes and challenging their skills and sense of direction! A fun Fall evening for all.

The Cub Scouts are also busy selling popcorn, please support them by purchasing your popcorn. The money the boys raise helps fund their scouting activities!

Our Cub Scout Pack has many other exciting events planned for this year. As always, they will have their Pine-wood Derby in February (where the boys are given a block of wood and with their imagination and Dad, they engineer and craft a car that will be raced on a track at this great event!)

Cub Scouts is open to all boys and there is still time to join the Pack. If you are interested or if you need additional information about Cub Scouting, please call Ken Becker at 248.542.9369.

### **Jeans Day**

**Mark you calendars,**

**Thursday, November 6th**

**Will be a Jeans Day**

**This will be for a \$2.00 Donation**

**Remember to Follow the Dress Code**