

St. Mary's School Newsletter

Catholic Schools - "Light the Way"

August 2008



Administrator's Corner

By Jerry Kent

St. Mary's School will begin the 2008-09 school year with a projected 350+ students in the K-8 program plus a full preschool program of approximately 55 students.

We have two new SMS staff members. Lisa Stewart is a graduate of MN State at Mankato with a BS in Life Science in 2005 and has completed her Masters in Educational Leadership from Southwest MN State at Marshall in 2007. Lisa is a member of the OHS class of 1991. She has experience teaching earth science and life science as well as language arts. She will be teaching both science and language arts at St. Mary's School. Jody Hovden is also a graduate of OHS in 1996. She has a degree in fine arts from MN State at Mankato, which she completed in 2008. Jody will be teaching art to students in K-6.

The custodial position that was so ably manned by Richard Perry these past few years is now open and will be filled prior to the start of the new school year.

During this past school year the curriculums of Social Studies and Physical Education have been reviewed and updated. During the 2008-09 school year the curriculums of Religion and testing programs at St. Mary's School will be reviewed. Also during this year we will have an on-site visit by Minnesota Nonpublic School Accrediting Association. St. Mary's School will undergo a reaccreditation review during the 2008-2009 year. We are asking

parents to serve on committees if asked and also complete the surveys requested.

The annual stakeholder letter, which highlights the results of the Minnesota Nonpublic School Accrediting Association Improvement Plan for the past year, will be distributed at the First Day Program on August 28, 2008. This document is one piece of information that the school must provide each year as they move towards reaccreditation.

Included in this newsletter will be information on the hot lunch program and pricing for the 2008-09 school year. Additionally information will be forthcoming on the diocesan policy concerning background checks for all teachers, staff, and volunteers. This information will either be in the student handbook presented at the First Day program or included as part of the newsletter of September. All Catholic schools in the diocese must inform parents and guardians of the school's background check policy. Currently it is policy that all schools in the diocese must perform regular background checks on all employees as well as volunteers who have regular unsupervised contact with minors.

St. Mary's staff has been very busy this summer. All teaching staff has been taking at least two sessions in use of the smart board technology that will be available at all grade levels for students at St. Mary's School. This training is part of the technology plan and use of technology and using gift monies received specifically for the technology program. This training is mainly led by the technology team with Cheryl Kasper doing most of the training to our staff. St. Mary's teachers have also been working hard towards their Masters in education programs from either Southwest State University or St. Mary's University. At present we have seven teachers who are working towards completing their Masters. Those include Anne Nylund, Sue Gerdts, Lynn Peterson, Cheryl Bastyr, Stacy Wobschall, Lynn Lattery and Lori Haarstad. In addition to the St. Mary's teacher, Tammy Barnes and Brandi Vieths have been undergoing the Hands On Science Teacher Program at Arkema in Blooming Prairie, MN. I had an opportunity to visit these teachers

while they were taking the class this past week and was very impressed with the exciting materials that the school and classroom will be receiving to provide exciting and fun learning in our 6th grade science classrooms. I thank Brandi and Tammy for their willingness to participate in this program during the summer.

Hopefully all of you will have an opportunity to come up to school on Monday, August 11th between 4:00-6:00 PM to attend the Meet Your Teacher Program sponsored by the Home and School Association. As everyone knows Steele County Free Fair is here. Please remember we will have a number of activities going on at the Fair. We will conduct our 10th annual Spelling Bee at 2:00 PM on Thursday, August 14th followed immediately by the Senior Spelling Bee involving competition between Senior Place Owatonna and the Mankato Senior Center. St. Mary's School will also have students participating in the Are You Smarter than a 6th grader. This is a sesquicentennial event that will be held during the Fair on Wednesday, Aug. 13 from 5:15 to 7:00 PM in the Grandstands. St. Mary's School also will offer an information booth in the Four Seasons Building to proclaim and talk more about St. Mary's School and Catholic education. Please stop by the booth and pick up a prize. I also urge you to play Bingo at the Bingo Tent sponsored by St. Mary's Home and School Association. If you are asked to volunteer your time for this or to man the booth in the Four Seasons, please be generous with your time.

Note as a reminder that St. Mary's School will begin conducting its Magazine Drive at the start of the new school year in September. St. Mary's will also be participating in the statewide marathon to support non-public education. More information on these two activities and events will be forthcoming in mailings or newsletters.

As administrator I hope to see all of you coming to school on the 11th to meet your teacher.

B-I-N-G-O! By Bingo Committee

Attention Parents and Teachers!

Mark your calendars for Fair Week – August 12 thru 17th. We will be calling SMS families and teachers to work at the Bingo Stand.

Please consider working at least one 2 hour shift. It's a lot of fun!

Please contact Katy Kruetter at 455-1247 or Bonnie Ebner at 455-2876.

Hope you're having a great summer!



St. Mary's Carnival News

Thank you for supporting this St. Mary's School family activity. The Carnival is intended as a day of **fun and fellowship**. We are looking forward to seeing you there!

With the start of the new school year and some new carnival committee members. We have many exciting games and attractions planned. Some of them include The Goldfish Pond, Knights Castle and some returning games such as Plinko, Packer Passer, Fishing hole and the Cake Walk. Please make note of the new date and time of the Carnival it will be on Saturday October 25th from 4pm – 7pm.

This year's carnival will be held on **Saturday October 25th** in the school gym and cafeteria, from 4 pm until 7 pm. The theme this year is "Ghostly Gathering". Food will be available. Since the carnival is an all school event, we are asking that **each family** donate items to the General Store and The Cake Walk.

1. **For the General Store** - A few suggestions are Books for all ages, stickers, puzzles, board games, stationary, bubbles, playing cards, jump ropes, stuffed animals, and Misc. toys for Boys and Girls. **NEW ITEMS ONLY, PLEASE.** The General Store is the most popular game at the carnival and prizes go quickly. So please be generous when donating because prizes run out early.
2. **For Cake Walk** - one or two cakes or pies, or baked goodies ... homemade go over the best but we are not picky. These items can be brought to the school cafeteria on Friday October 24th from 4pm – 7pm or Saturday from 9 am – 12pm. We have run out of baked goodies early in the past and have had to shut the game down before the carnival end so please be generous. Also please put your goodies on/in pans, tins that don't need to be returned.
3. In order to make the carnival possible, we ask every parent to donate Two hour of time to work a game booth. (We will have sign up sheet at Meet the Teacher and The First Day Program.) Please note the end of this article, the Mark your Calendar Section – and please donate some time!
4. We need help to make the carnival look like Halloween. If you have pumpkins that you'd be willing to let us use, please contact a carnival committee member. They are listed below. If you wish the items be returned to you, they can be picked up or delivered to you after the carnival.

Ticket Sales: Thursday 10-23-08 & Friday. 10-24-2008 at 7:30 - 8:00 am in hallway at St. Mary's. Presale tickets are 5/\$1.00. Tickets purchased the day of the carnival are 4/\$1.00.

If you have any questions or comments regarding the carnival, feel free to contact any of the members of the carnival committee: Co-Chairs –Shelly Rohwer 528-2392, JoAnne Hartmann 446-8299 & Tammy Ginter 451-8929; Publicity - Joann Matejcek 446-8790; Purchasing Committee – Kandee Mullenbach at 444-9207 and Wendy Dahl 455-3331; Decorating - Janice Higgins 451-1247, Susan Gebur 455-3658, and Doris Domeier 451-4438; Food - Sara Borgerding 451-7150.

Mark Your Calendar!

- October 17th, Start sending donations for General Store to be dropped off in the school office
- October 23 & 24th, purchase presale tickets!
- October 23rd, Parents set-up 6:30 PM until? We need as many people as we can get to help haul chairs and set up things in the gym and cafeteria. We would appreciate some people who have helped in the past to help again.
- October 24th, Decorate and set up games from 4pm – 7pm.
- Saturday October 25th from 4pm – 7 pm. Enjoy the Fun! We would appreciate help tearing down after the carnival.
- 6, 7, and 8th graders can work at the carnival and receive ELC hours.

Magazine Drive

Please save your magazine orders for the St. Mary's Magazine Drive this fall. The kick-off date is Friday, Sept. 5.

Students in grades 5 and 6 as well as an optional program for students in 7 and 8th grade will be selling QSP magazines and music selections. There are hundreds of items available and they all make money for the operation of our school. Thank you.

Home & School News.....By Shannon Prostrollo, President

It's almost that time of year again for our annual **"Meet Your Teacher Day"**! Join us on Monday, August 11 from 4-6pm to meet your new teacher and cool off with a Popsicle!

While enjoying a delicious Popsicle, we hope you will consider signing up for one of the many volunteer opportunities that we have available: room parents, carnival workers, and Bingo volunteers during the fair. These volunteer opportunities are a great way to get involved with our school and meet other members of our St. Mary's family.

Our SMS clothing line will also be available at "Meet Your Teacher Day", if you are interested in ordering.

We are hopeful that attendance at our Home & School meetings grows this year. Please join us on the second Monday of each month at 7:00pm in the cafeteria. Our first meeting will be held on Monday, September 8. Childcare is provided for each of our meetings.

If you have any questions or concerns, please let me know. I look forward to working with you this year!

Nurse's Notes.....By Mary Herzog, RN

A quick note for things that need to be taken care of before school starts.

7th Grade Immunizations – There are a number of students who have not turned in their shot records to me. All students need a tetanus booster. Some students need a second MMR and Varicella (chickenpox). I would also recommend a vaccination against meningitis although this is not mandatory. Please call or drop me a note at school. (This information is **not** forwarded from your doctor.) It is a state law that children are not able to start school without these immunizations.

Medications – If your child will need medication during the school day, now is

the time to get the Doctor's Medication form filled out and medications refilled. Renewal forms for those children with asthma were mailed out this summer. Please make sure they are signed and returned. I will not be able to give any medications until I have a doctor's OK to give them.

Kindergartners – Your health records and immunizations are due **now**. Please do not wait until the first day of school to turn them in. Your child will not be able to start school unless these forms are turned in. Let me know if your child has any allergies

or special health needs that I should be aware of.

Sports physicals – Physicals have been set up for Tuesday, Aug. 19 for boys and Wednesday, Aug. 20 for girls at the Owatonna Clinic 26th Street location. Both days will start at 6:00 p.m. You **must** wear **shorts and loose fitting t-shirts** or you will not be able to have your physical done. Don't forget to wear your glasses or contact lenses. Physical forms will be mailed out to you. The parent section **must** be filled out and signed before coming to the Clinic. I will need a parent volunteer for both evenings. If you are interested, please call me at school or at home (451-0552).

State Winners in CDA Education Contest....By Sue Wacek, Education Contest Chairperson

We received the good news that six entries from Owatonna have placed in the Minnesota Catholic Daughters Education Contest. Three of those will now go into national competition.

Paige Miller, grade 8, daughter of Joe and Tonia Miller, has placed first in Division II Art. Her younger sister, Brooke, Grade 7, placed first in Division II Computer Art. Mark Hanson, Grade 4, son of Jonathan & Margaret Hanson, placed First in Division I Computer Art. All of the First place entries in Minnesota go on to national.

Other entries that won awards at state include Sadie Schroeder, Grade 10, daughter of Wade and Mary Schroeder. Sadie won 3rd place in Division III essay competition. Brody Hudson, Grade 7, son of Jerry Hudson and Christina Sheppard, won 3rd place in Division II poetry. Jake Buswell, Grade 7, son of Wendy Halliday, won Honorable Mention in Division II poster. Prize money and awards were given at the May Owatonna Catholic Daughter meeting.

The Catholic Daughter Education contest is held annually. This year's theme was "Light of My Life". 35 Minnesota cities participate in this contest with hundreds of entries from Owatonna alone. Congratulations to all who entered the contest and best of luck to those who are still in the running for national recognition.

Scrip

Each St. Mary's family is asked to generate a minimum of \$200 profit from the Scrip program each year. This is a continuation of a policy that St. Mary's has had for a number of years. After a family exceeds its goal of \$200, they can direct excess funds to other school activities or towards the new school building. Excess funds can also be directed towards your parish. This only requires a change in buying patterns; it does not cost any additional dollars to come from people's pockets. I urge all St. Mary's families to reach their goal of \$200 and urge you to be supportive of this in the two parishes, and encourage friends, neighbors, and fellow parishioners who are not part of the SMS school family to consider doing this, if not for the school, for their parish.