



ST. MARY'S SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

"Character, Compassion, Values"

SEPTEMBER 2007

Administrator's Corner

By Jerry Kent

Welcome students, staff and parents to an exciting 2007-2008 school year. I pray daily that this will be a wonderful year for all members of the St. Mary's School family and that we will follow our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, each day.

St. Mary's School begins the year with 366 students in the K-8 program and 54 students in the preschool program giving us a combined enrollment of 420 students with a potential of additional students joining us yet. This is an increase of approximately 16 students in the K-8 program. It is great to see new families joining us each year.

Dee Johnson and Kathy Chatelaine will once again assume the position of Staff Development Coordinators for St. Mary's. This year the principle of Best Practice will be collaborative efforts, working on collaboration to improve learning as opposed to competition or individualist approaches. This will be the sixth principle of Best Practice that we have concentrated on in the past few years. Other areas of concentration in previous years have been experiential, authentic, reflective, democratic, and developmental. Personally I believe that the concentration of Best Practices has pushed the St. Mary's staff to not only improve their teaching techniques but also to go back to school themselves and look for additional new ways to improve their educational skills. At present we have four teachers at St. Mary's will begin work on their Master's this year. We have two teachers who will be completing their Masters and we have two who completed their Masters during this past the past year. At present, over 50% of the St. Mary's teachers have already or are working to complete their Master's programs. This speaks very highly of the quality of educators at St. Mary's School.

Please check out the new St. Mary's website and read about the educational background and experience of the St. Mary's teachers. More information will be forthcoming as these teachers complete their websites.

The St. Mary's School Board in their most recent meeting began to set some goals for the

2007-2008 school year. This information will be shared soon with members of the school family. St. Mary's School, likewise, will be going through a reaccreditation visit during the 2008-2009 school year. The team has already begun meeting composed of St. Mary's teachers to head up the reaccreditation plan and develop the document, which will be presented to the visiting team next year. Input will be gathered from all members of St. Mary's School family to make this document complete. When you are asked to complete surveys and/or be part of this process, please help us as much as possible.

The St. Mary's building project moves forward with three sessions open to the members of the parishes as well as staff and parents of St. Mary's School. By this time you should have received a letter from the pastors in preparation for these upcoming meetings to explain the plan we are presently considering.

Recently in the Owatonna People's Press they have listed the late start days involving District 761 staff and students. Please note that St. Mary's School will **NOT** be participating in the 2-hour late starts. If you rely on busing, your students will simply arrive at St. Mary's 2 hours late on those days. It is hoped you will be able to find alternate transportation to get your students here at the normal start time of 8:00 A.M. Once again, SMS will NOT be participating in the six 2-hour late starts during the year which are slated for Oct. 9, Nov. 13, Dec. 11, March 12, Apr. 9, and May 14.

Enclosed in the student handbook is a copy of the revised Pet policy at St. Mary's School. Please be advised to contact administration to receive approval for pets to be brought to St. Mary's School. I realize that pets are very important to children and the opportunity to share is likewise enjoyable. Difficulties arise, however, because some students are very allergic to pets and pet hair and some students are very scared of pets. Please contact the school, know the policy, and if possible accommodations will be made for you to bring your pet to school.

Thanks to all of the student, staff, and parents who participated with the Home & School Association's Bingo operations at the Steele County Free Fair. Final numbers are not yet

available but I am sure the numbers are down substantially from the previous years due to having two days washed out by the floods. I thank everyone for his or her efforts. We also pass along our prayers for all the families in Steele County and surrounding areas who were devastated with loss of lives and possessions in these floods.

Information concerning the annual report submitted to MNSAA for the 2006-2007 school year was included in the First Day packets presented to parents. Please take time to review that information. Parents are asked also to note the new guidelines for students staying after school that was handed out during First Day.

Parking

When you are visiting St. Mary's, please park your vehicles south of the Sacred Heart Parish Center or facing the basketball hoops. This will allow full use of the parking lot for our physical education classes and recess.

Please do NOT park in the bus-loading zone on Cedar Avenue. Thanks for your cooperation.

2007-2008 Asbestos Notification

As a result of recent Federal legislation, each primary and secondary school in the nation is required to complete a stringent inspection for asbestos and to develop a major plan for all asbestos-containing building materials. St. Mary's School is in full compliance with this law. St. Mary's School continues to maintain a safe and healthful environment for our students, staff, and parents.

Asbestos was used extensively during World War II in the construction industry and was also widely used in many factories, building and hospitals across the nation. In all cases, asbestos products work very well to provide fire safety. Since then, concern has been raised that, with time, asbestos-containing materials can break down and allow particles into the air. Heavy exposure to asbestos particles has been linked to certain forms of cancer. Earlier Federal laws were passed requiring school districts to identify areas at which materials containing friable asbestos were used. More recent legislation (AHERA) required identification of all asbestos-containing materials and a plan to manage those materials.

In keeping with this legislation, accredited inspectors inspected all building owned or leased by the school districts and independent laboratories

analyzed samples. Based upon these inspections, the school prepared and the state approved comprehension management plans for handling asbestos located within buildings.

St. Mary's School has asbestos containing materials within it, which are either under repair, removal, or being maintained on a regular basis.

Federal law requires periodic walk-through called surveillance every six months of each building containing asbestos. The last inspection at St. Mary's was in May 2007. Also the law requires that all buildings be re-inspected each three years.

Short-term workers (outside contractor's example, telephone repair workers, electricians and exterminators) are provided with information regarding the location of asbestos that they may come into contact with. All short-term workers shall contact the head custodial maintenance person before working within the building.

St. Mary's School has a list of locations; types of asbestos containing materials found in the school building and a description and timetable for the proper management. A copy of the Asbestos Management Plan is available for you to view in the school office. Copies are available at \$.10 per page. Questions related to the plan should be directed to Dan Johnson, a designated asbestos management programmer through the Institute of Environmental Assessment under contract with Southeast Minnesota Cooperative at 507-281-6662.

Notice Of Pest Control Materials

St. Mary's School utilizes a licensed, professional pest control service firm for the prevention and control of rodents, insects, and other pests in and around the school building. Their program consists of:

1. *Inspection and monitoring* to determine whether pests are present, and whether any treatment is needed.
2. Recommendations for *maintenance and sanitation* to help eliminate pests without the need for pest control materials;
3. Utilization of non-chemical measures such as traps, caulking and screening; and
4. Application of *EPA-registered pest control materials* when needed.

Pests can sting, bite, cause contamination, damage property, and spread disease; therefore, we must prevent and control them. The long-term health effects on children from the application of such pest control materials, or the class of materials to which they belong, may not be fully

understood. All pest control materials are chosen and applied according to label directions per Federal law.

An estimated schedule of interior pest control inspections and possible treatments is available for review or copying at each school office. A similar estimated schedule is available for application of herbicides and other materials to school grounds. Parents of students may request to receive, at their expense, prior notification of any application of a pest control material, should such an application be deemed necessary on a day different from the days specified in the schedule.

Director Needed

Stacy Mulet has come forward and will direct the Jr. High play that is normally conducted during March. We are still in need, however, of somebody to come forth and direct the elementary play scheduled for November. We hope that someone will come forward and direct that play so we can continue the strong tradition of offering drama to all levels of students.

New Staff

St. Mary's School has four staff changes for the 2007-2008 school year. Emily Borgerding will be taking a one-year teaching position for Julie Schultz in Kindergarten, who is taking one year off to spend with their new daughter. Emily is a graduate of the University of MN Morris and is working towards her Masters Degree at MN State University Mankato. Emily and her husband David have a young daughter named Abigail.

Gina Pohlen a present St. Mary's family member will be taking over the position of school social worker. Gina is a graduate of the University of MN Mankato. Gina and Jason have two children at St. Mary's, Abby in grade 3 and Adam in 1st grade.

Melinda Mracek will be assuming an 8 weeklong term sub for Mrs. Nylund when she goes out on maternity leave. Anne and her husband, Andy, will be adopting a child on or about Sept. 15th. Melinda is a graduate of MN State University Mankato and she and her husband, Tait, have a three-month-old son, Brody.

St. Mary's School also welcomes back Jeanna Pipitone. Jeanna will be assuming the position of 2nd grade following the resignation by Angie Jones this summer. Jeanna and her husband, Michael, have twin boys, Luke and Michael. We welcome Jeanna back to St. Mary's School.

September Liturgies

- Sept. 12 - 8:30 AM All School Mass at St. Joseph's Church
 - Sept. 19 - 8:10 AM All School Mass at Sacred Heart
 - Sept. 26 - 8:05 AM Spirit Groups
- Parents and guests are welcome.

Science Fair

By Mr. Simon

This is the year for science fair projects for students in grades seven and eight. Students in grade 7 may do their projects with a partner, but 8th graders must work by themselves. Information on projects plus a time schedule will be presented to the students as the year progresses.

The Science Fair will be held in late January.

2007-2008 Hot Lunch Prices

Grades K-5 - \$1160 a day / \$8.00 a week
Grades 6-8 - \$1.70 a day / \$8.50 a week

A note from the kitchen

You are always welcome to come and have lunch with your child. It would be really helpful if you could please call the office by 8:30 AM if you are planning to eat lunch that day.

*I am also looking for subs for the kitchen. The hours would be 10:00 AM to 1:15 PM. If you are interested please call me at school or e-mail me at fisher@stmarys-owatonna.org.
Rita Fisher*

School Board Members

Sacred Heart

Mrs. Carla Kern	455-1544
Mr. Robbe Kniefel	455-2371
Mrs. Cheryl Rohwer	451-5449
Mrs. Holly Liebl	455-9013

St. Joseph

Mr. Chris Herzog	451-2890
Mrs. Dawn Ritter	451-8199
Mr. Brian Bunkers	455-3186
Mr. Jon Hanson	455-1689

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** – a **“Welcome back to school” for the whole family**. We are looking forward to seeing you there!

We have many new and exciting games and attractions planned. Some of them include Lightning Ball, Rhino Toss and Pop Toss, and some returning games such as Moon Walk, Plinko, Packer Passer, Fishing hole, and Knights Castle.

This year's carnival will be held on **Sunday, September 23rd** in the school gym and cafeteria, from 11 AM until 2 PM. Lunch items will be on sale in the cafeteria. Since the carnival is an all school event, we are asking that **each family** donate items to the General Store and The Cake Walk.

- For the General Store** - A few suggestions are Books for all ages, stickers, puzzles, board games, stationary, bubbles, playing cards, jump ropes, stuffed animals, crafts 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. Please be generous when donating, because prizes run out early.
- 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 Saturday, September 22nd from 8 AM until noon or Sunday morning before the Carnival from 9 AM on. 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.
- In order to make the carnival possible, we ask every parent to donate one hour of time to work a game booth. (Your room parent will be contacting you if you have not already signed up during the First Day Program.) Please note the end of this article, the Mark your Calendar Section – and please donate some time!
- We need help to make the carnival look like a fall festival. If you have pumpkins, Indian corn, gourds, etc. that you'd be willing to donate, please contact a carnival committee member. They are listed below.

- Ticket Sales:** Wed. 9/19/07, Thurs. 9/20/07 & Fri. 9/21/07 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 & Lynn Gorski 456-1725; Purchasing Committee - Dawn Betti 446-1014 and Wendy Dahl 455-3331; Decorating - Janice Higgins 451-1247, Susan Gebur 455-3658, and Doris Domeier 451-4438; Food - Sara Borgerding 451-7150; Scheduling – Jami Johnson 330-2744.

Mark Your Calendar!

- By Sept. 14th, send donations for General Store to be dropped off in the school office
- Sept. 19, 20 & 21 purchase presale tickets!
- Sept. 20th, 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.
- Sept. 22nd, decorate and set up games from 8 am until noon. Baked goodies can be brought in until noon.
- Sunday Sept. 23rd - Carnival from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm. Enjoy the Fun! We would **really 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. 7

Students in grades 5 through 8 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!

Nurse's Notes

By Mary Herzog RN

Welcome back everyone! I am so excited to see you all again!

I am in need of 15 volunteers for grades 1-8 Hearing and Vision screening which will be held on

Friday, September 21. There are many different opportunities for volunteering including vision screening, hearing screening, checking heights and weights or being a runner. Repeat volunteers are most happily welcomed. Screenings are done between 8:00 and 1:00. If you cannot volunteer for the entire time, you are welcome to help for any portion of the morning. I will also need about six volunteers for the following Friday, September 28 to help with screening the kindergartners. This screening lasts from approximately 8:00 to 10:15. You can call me at school between 8:30 and 2:30 (446-2300) or anytime at home (451-0552).

If anyone has permission forms signed by their doctors for administration of asthma inhalers at school, please get them in to me as soon as possible. I cannot give out these medications without a doctor's signature. If your child is going to be carrying his/her own inhaler, I will need a waiver form signed by both parent and student. Please stop in my office for this form.

From the Counselor's Office

By Gina Pohlen

Greetings, My name is Gina Pohlen and I am the new counselor at St Mary's School. My husband, Jason and I have lived in Owatonna for the past five years. I previously worked as Executive Director of Steele County Transitional Housing. Two of my three children attend St. Mary's and we absolutely love the staff and school. I feel very fortunate that I am able to work here with all of your wonderful children. I am looking forward to meeting and getting to know the staff, students and parents better throughout this school year.

Some areas I will be focusing on this fall will be the Life Skills program, Peer Helper Program, and Relationship groups. The Life Skills program will be presented to grades 5-8. This program addresses the following topics: conflict resolution, drug awareness, anger management, social skills and self-image. St. Mary's school will continue to be involved in the Big Brother Big Sister sponsored Peer Helper Program. The Peer Helper case manager and I will match OHS Peer Helpers with St. Mary's students. If you would like to know more about this program, please contact Mrs. Pohlen at 446-2300

My office hours are M, W, Th from 8:30am-2:30pm. Please stop by my office if you have any questions or concerns related to your child or the happenings at St. Mary's.

Have a great year!

Welcome Back

By Sharleen Berg

We have added many new books to our library collection thanks to the generosity of our Home/School Association and some personal donations. A number of students volunteered this summer to re-label and reorganize portions of our collection. Thank you, Thank you!

Birthday Book Club

Attached to the newsletter is our Birthday Book Club membership form. Last year over 40 new books were added to our collection through this program. These books are labeled with special bookplates and spine labels, shelved with the rest of our collection, and available for checkout to all of our students.

Library Website

Check out the library page on our new St. Mary's Website: stmarys-owatonna.org. Information you will find there:

- Library hours and procedures
- Sites for some of our favorite authors and books
- Homework sites/tools grouped by subject
- Maud Hart Lovelace reading lists
- Chapter book suggestions listed by genre
- Blog for book discussion

MN State Book Award

Students in grades 3-8 are invited to participate in this program, which runs from Sept. – Mar. When a student has read 3 books from the selected titles they earn the "right" to cast a vote for their favorite. Votes are tallied here and sent to the MN Youth Reading Association. **If you read the books to your child that counts too!** We have multiple copies of each title, and our Public Library will also shelve the same books. Students reading 6 or more of the books become part of the "Scholar's Club" and celebrate in the library when the state winner is chosen (Apr. 2007). Listed below are the nominated books for this school year. Or you can visit our school Website and find the list and book summaries.



Maud Hart Lovelace 2007-2008 Nominated Books

Division I

A Bear Named Trouble by Marion Dane Bauer

Halfway to the Sky by Kimberly Brubaker Bradley
The Magician's Boy by Susan Cooper
Ruby Holler by Sharon Creech
Blackwater Ben by Will Durbin
Last Shot by John Feinstein
Ida B by Katherine Hannigan
Lulu's Hat by Susan Meddaugh
Made You Look by Diane Roberts
Shredderman: Secret Identity by Wendelin Van Draanen
Locomotion by Jacqueline Woodson
Millicent Min by Lisa Yee

Division II

Halfway to the Sky by Kimberly Brubaker Bradley
Code Talker by Joseph Bruchac
Al Capone Does My Shirts by Gennifer Choldenko
Ruby Holler by Sharon Creech
Red Kayak by Priscilla Cummings
Blackwater Ben by Will Durbin
Last Dog on Earth by Daniel Ehrenhaft
Last Shot by John Feinstein
Goose Girl by Shannon Hale
The Schwa Was Here by Neal Shusterman
Drums, Girls & Dangerous Pie by Jordan Sonnenblick
****Emako Blue*** by Brenda Woods

*Title for mature readers. The nominee lists are not intended to be an automatic recommendation of the books.

Thank you again for your support in making our library a vibrant component of our school. We have a school population supported in its desire to read. Have a wonderful school year!

New Volunteer Coordinator

Kim Degen has assumed the position of Volunteer coordinator at St. Mary's School. She and her husband, Rick, have 2 children attending St. Mary's, Danika in grade, and Samantha grade 2. If Kim gives you a call to assist St. Mary's School teachers or programs, please say YES and help us out. Volunteers are very important and a necessary component of St. Mary's School. Welcome, Kim, for assuming this position!
 Sincerely,
 Jerry Kent
 Administrator

5th Band Lesson Schedule

Monday	1:35 PM Saxes 2:05 PM Flutes
Tuesday	1:35 PM Trumpets 2:05 PM Trombone/Baritones
Wednesday	1:45-2:30 PM - ALL BAND
Thursday	1:35 PM Percussion 2:05 PM Clarinets

The first ALL BAND rehearsal is on **Thursday, Sept. 6 from 1:45-2:30 PM.** Band lessons begin the second week of school.

Kindergarten News

By Mrs. Borgerding, Mrs. Lambaere, Mrs. Wolfe

We are pleased to announce the addition of Mrs. Emily Borgerding to our Kindergarten staff. She brings a youthful enthusiasm to our program.

We have been busy getting our rooms ready for the new year. The only things that need to be added are the smiling faces of our Kindergarten students. We are excited to begin the Kindergarten experience with parents, as well as students.

News from 1st Grade!

By Mrs. Connor, Mrs. Haarstad, & Mrs. Peterson

It's been a fantastic start to our first grade year. We've met new friends and are adjusting to our schedule and to the life of a first grader. We've spent time getting to know each other and our teacher and we especially love our lunch and recess times!

We enjoyed our first all-school mass as first graders.

Because the weather was so warm, we cooled ourselves off with a Popsicle!

To get to know each other better, we had to bring in a bag with items that tell others about us. It was fun to learn about each other!

We're looking forward a fabulous faith-filled year!

Grade 2 News

By Mrs. Bastyr & Mrs. Pipitone

Welcome to second grade! It is going to be a year of faith, learning, and fun. It is a very special year for us in preparing for Reconciliation and the First Eucharist.

We welcome back Mrs. Pipitone. She is returning to 2nd grade. It is a pleasure to have her back.

In reading our first theme is about pets. We will be writing and reading all about pet's people have or would like to have. In religion we will be discussing God's creation and how we should follow Jesus. Math will involve numbers and routines.

Tie those sneakers. Great ready to jump into a great year!

Please feel free to stop in or call if you have any questions or concerns. Thanks!

Grade 4 News

By Mrs. Wobschall and Mrs. Gerdtz

Welcome to another school year. We are very excited to be teaching your child this year. We will be covering many interesting topics this year. We will learn about multiplying, division, fractions, and decimals in math. In language arts we will be reading many stories and doing lots of writing activities. In social we will learn about our fabulous fifty states and all of their state capitals. In science and health we will learn about our bodies as well as insects, oceans, and the Solar System. In religion we will learn more about the rosary and our Christian faith. We are looking forward to an exciting year.

5th Grade News

By Mrs. Lattery & Mrs. Kasper

Welcome Back!

It was great meeting everyone at the First Day Program. We are excited to start a fun filled year of learning. The Big excitement for the 5th graders will be the kick-off of the SMS Magazine Drive. This is the first year the 5th graders will be able to join in on the fun. This fundraiser benefits the school, and participation in the drive is optional.

Band lessons will start the week of Sept. 10th. Remember to check the day your child has lessons. All band is on Wednesday. Every student will need to bring his or her instruments on Wednesday in addition to their lesson day.

Please return Multiple Intelligence inventories to your child's teacher as soon as

possible. We will be introducing the different ways of learning in our classrooms throughout the next few weeks.

Thank you for checking the planners nightly. Next week look for the "5th Grade News" in your child's Friday folder for more in depth information on what is going on in fifth grade. Again, please feel free to contact us with questions or concerns anytime throughout the year.

6th Grade

By Mrs. Barnes and Mrs. Vieths

Helpful tips and reminders for a wonderful year!

- Check to see that your child's homework is done and then initial the planner each night.
- 6th graders are required to read 20 minutes each night. Please initial minutes read on the Reading Log each night.
- Please send a healthy snack with your child each day. No pop, candy, chips, or cookies.
- Book orders come home the first Tuesday of each month and are due the same Friday morning.
- Wednesdays are usually Mass Days. Please dress appropriately...no shorts.
- Gym shoes are required for PE.
- Band meets Tuesdays and Thursdays. Be sure to have your instrument!
- Feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns. bvieths@stmarys-owatonna.org and tbarnes@stmarys-owatonna.org

We are looking forward to an awesome year with you and your child!

Mrs. Nylund's News

I am so excited to be back for my second year teaching junior high at St. Mary's! However, for most of the 1st quarter, I will be on maternity leave as my husband and I will be adopting a baby who is due to be born sometime in the middle of September. Melinda Mracek will be my long-term substitute teacher during that time.

7th Grade Language Arts

The 7th graders will be starting the school year dividing class time between grammar and literature. Our first literature unit of the year is *Resolving Conflicts*. The stories in this section show a range of problem-solving behaviors and look at ways to resolve different problems in life. Nouns, pronouns, and verbs will be the exciting grammar topics we will be covering this month!!

7th Grade Math

Our first 7th grade math unit is *Accentuate the Negative*, which examines the world of positive and negative numbers. Students will be working on operations with integers through a variety of hands-on techniques.

8th Grade Math

The 8th graders start the year studying symmetry and transformations in their first unit called *Kaleidoscopes, Hubcaps, and Mirrors*. They will use hands-on tools to determine how different figures are symmetrical as well as how to transform designs.



Mrs. Slotsve's News

I'm very excited to begin the new school year! I would like to welcome back the 8th graders as old friends and I anticipate getting to know the incoming 7th grade students. I'm sure we will have a very educational and fun year.

7th Social Studies

We will begin the year with a quick review of general geography skills. Next we will focus on the lifestyle of the earliest humans – the food gatherers of the Paleolithic, or Old Stone, Age. Following the Paleolithic Age is the Neolithic Age. During this Neolithic, or New Stone, Age we study the beginnings of farming, the domestication of animals, and the formation of villages.

8th Social Studies

We pick up our studies where we left off in 7th grade with the end of the Roman Empire and the beginnings of Christianity. We will discuss the rapid growth and appeal of Christianity during 1st century. Our next unit will be the Early Middle Ages. We will begin by studying the Germanic peoples who replaced the Roman Empire with their own kingdoms.

8th Language Arts

Our first unit in Language Arts is short stories. While enjoying the short stories we will analyze plots, learn new vocabulary and grammar, and write stories of our own. During September, we will read Mona Gardner's "The Dinner Party", Edgar Allan Poe's "The Tell-Tale Heart", and Stephen Crane's "An Episode of War".