



St. Mary's Academy

December 2008 Newsletter

Volume III

Number 2

News from the Director - Sister Susan Wikeem



expanding the vision

Our capital campaign is on-going. The project was well received by all who took the tours. If you were not able to come in October but would still like a tour please call Sr. Susan or Diane McGowan. Thank you to those who have sent in their pledge. The design work is in progress and we are still on schedule to begin construction of the library in the summer.

International Day was a great success thanks to the organizational skills of co-convenors Debra Marr and

Audrey Glidden, the generosity and hard work of the pavilion convenors and their many, many workers. Net income is approximately \$20,000. I have presented my "wish list" to the Guild which includes purchasing instructional equipment and the new reader board. Thank you Parents' Guild.

May God bless you and your families with peace, love and happiness during this holy season and in the New Year.

Junior Debating & S.M.A.C.K.E.D. - Mrs. A. Stefanyshyn & Mr. J. Burg

Our Junior Debaters have been very busy over the last couple of months competing in various Junior events and hosting a very successful tournament here at SMA. They attended a learning evening at St. Paul's High School in early October, hosted a tournament on October 18th and competed at an event at St. Paul's on November 18th. In all tournaments, we have entered at least six enthusiastic teams from Grade 7, 8, and 9 which bodes well for the future. Many of our debaters are "first time" or novice debaters, but most are now ready to move up to the "open" category.

November was an exceptionally busy month for S.M.A.C.K.E.D. Kirstyn Koswin and Samantha Hale participated in the North American Qualifiers at the U of W Collegiate on Nov. 9th where they earned a spot at the NorAMs held at St. Johns Ravenscourt on November 28th and 29th. Congratulations girls on placing 14th overall. Congratulations to Katharyn Burczynski who

participated as a member of the Manitoba Provincial Team at the Western Seminar in Langley, BC, November 7-9, where she placed 12th overall - a remarkable feat for a Grade 10 student. Nine Grade 10 students participated in the Rupert's Land Public Speaking Tournament at Balmoral Hall on Nov. 16th where Alyia Ahluwalia won a prize in Parliamentary Debating and Emma Dacquisto won a prize in Persuasive Speaking. From Nov. 20 - 25, Kirstyn Koswin attended the CSDF National Seminar in Calgary as a member of the Manitoba Provincial Team, coached by our own Mr. J. Burg. The Manitoba delegation did fantastic, with each member scoring averages over 90%. Congratulations to Kirstyn who also placed 7th overall in Cross-Examination debate, and had a Top 20 overall finish in English Speaking debate. Finally, congratulations to Kirstyn Koswin, Kayla Ketcheson, Sam Hale, and Andrea Jackson for their fine performances at the Asper Cup, held Nov. 30 and Dec. 1 at Gray Academy.

A Day in the Life of a Healthcare Professional - Miss Angela Verrelli

On November 7th, the University of Manitoba held its 12th annual Discovery Days in Health Sciences at the Brodie Centre. Students and teachers from all over Manitoba were able to attend a day of information sessions in the healthcare system, which is sponsored by Pfizer Canada and the Canadian Medical Hall of Fame. The day commenced with two keynote speakers; Dr. Marica Anderson, president of the Indigenous Physicians of Canada, and Pamela Wener, an occupational therapist. Throughout the day, students attended two workshops. Each workshop was given by a variety of professors and doc-

tors. I personally went to a presentation about neurosurgery with a Gamma knife, and a presentation on oral health professions. I discovered that the Gamma knife in Manitoba is only one of three in Canada. I really enjoyed the workshop on oral health professions, not only was a professor presenting, but dentistry students aided us in completing hands-on activities. In the afternoon, a career panel was established with a Q & A session about the health care system. The entire day was very worthwhile and the experience was amazing. Both myself and Jeonga Gim felt quite fortunate for the opportunity to attend the Discovery Days in Health Sciences.

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Dates to Note:

Dec. 11 - Christmas Caf  3:30 - 6:00 pm in cafeteria Colour Day

Dec. 12 - Come & Go Reconciliation Service in Holy Names Chapel 12:35 - 1:35 pm

Dec. 17 - Choir Caroling @ Despina Residence (Sisters of the Holy Names)

Dec. 19 - A Journey from Advent to Christmas Service @ 11:35 am

Dec. 22 - January 2 - Christmas Break

Jan. 5 - Classes Resume

Jan. 6 - Jan. 9 - Grade 12 ELA Standards Exam

Jan. 15 - SMA Open House @ 7:00 pm

Jan. 16 - 2:30 pm Dismissal

Jan. 22 - Jan. 30 - Exam Period

Feb. 2 - Term 2 Begins

Feb. 13 - Catholic Schools In-Service No School

Feb. 13 - Report Cards & February Newsletter Mailed

Christmas Café

The Special Events Team will be hosting the 3rd annual Christmas Café on Dec. 11th from 3:30 - 6:00p.m. in the school cafeteria.

All students from St. Mary's Academy and St. Paul's High School are invited to attend.

The evening will include song and instrumental performances by students from both schools. During the day, students are encouraged to get into the spirit by participating in the colour day with a donation of a non-perishable food item for Winnipeg Harvest.

Is It a Mood or ...?

In December and early January Grade 10 to 12 students will be attending a two hour grade level presentation with Tina Holland of the Mood Disorders Association titled "Is it a Mood or a Mood Disorder?" Ms. Holland has presented to a number of schools about signs of depression, bipolar disorder and suicide prevention. If you have any questions about the presentation please contact the guidance counsellor, Ms. Sigurdson @ 478-6044.

IMPORTANT GRAD DATES

The following is a list of important dates for the 2009 Grads to remember.

January 9 - 2:30 pm - 7:30 pm
Individual Grad Photos

January 12 - 2:30 - 7:30
Individual Grad Photos

January 13 - 2:30 pm - 7:30 pm
Individual Grad Photos

January 14 - 2:30 pm - 7:30 pm
Individual Grad Photos

February 10 - 11:30 am - 1:30 pm
Grad Group Photos

February 10 - 2:00 pm
Grad Photo Retakes

Special Flames Hockey Opportunity

Members of the Flames Hockey Team will have the opportunity to participate in a three day hockey camp during the Christmas break. The participants are fortunate to have Sami Jo Small as the instructor for the camp.

Impaired Driving - Why Take the Risk - Ms. D. Sigurdson

On Nov. 20th the Grade 10 and 11 students had a presentation on impaired driving by Mr. Michael Buckingham from Seattle, Washington. The presentation was sponsored by Manitoba Public Insurance and focused on the impacts of driving under the influence of alcohol or other drugs. Mr. Buckingham shared his personal story as a state trooper who was seriously injured in an accident involving an impaired driver. The presentation included an activity using dice in a game of chance for the students to consider the

risks they take for themselves and others if they drive under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

When students were asked if they would drive after one drink, the speaker asked them to consider if they would want to go to a doctor, dentist or fly in a plane when the pilot had one drink. Mr. Buckingham emphasized that impairment begins with just one drink and that even the smallest risk is not worth taking when it involves the lives of our friends, others and ourselves.

"Heaven Is ..." - Mrs. M. Franz

In term two, Grade 7 and 8 students will have an opportunity to audition for the junior years production of "Heaven Is...". It's a delightful show about a group of young people on a quest to discover the true meaning of heaven. Auditions will take place during the second week of February.

There will be two performances, one on May 24th at 7:30 p.m., and a second on May 26th at 2:00 p.m. Senior students are encouraged to help out and gain some real backstage

experience in the theatre. Please speak with Mrs. Franz or Mrs. Danylchuk if you would like to be involved.

Good luck to all the Grade 7 and 8 girls planning to try out in February. Break a leg!



On A Mission - Ms. L. Dart & Sister M. Gibney

With the arrival of Advent, we began our Christmas hamper campaign and thus weekly collections were suspended.

The very special personal hampers were organized in homeroom classes for those who attend the soup kitchen at the Immaculate Conception Drop In. Thank you for the generosity shown and care that was put into each 'gift'. Once again Red River Packaging provided the gift bags and we thank the company for its kindness.

Since September many students have contributed to our weekly collections for different agencies to support those in need. Well done.

We exceeded our goal for the UNICEF campaign. We also had a successful Blind Auction which provided both substantial funds as well as entertainment, thanks to the antics of our wonderful auctioneer, Alice Charles.

Our girls continue to care as they hold high the torch.

We Welcome the WORD - Ms. M. Garlinski

What comes to mind when you hear, "December"? How about cold, dark, and busy! The good news is that we are also WAITING and HOPEFUL - because it is Advent. We, as People of Hospitality, have focused on *Welcoming the WORD* this Advent. It is tough to get ready for Christmas if you don't make room in your heart for Jesus. So that is what we are trying to do. Each Campus Ministry representative decorated a mat that says "We Welcome the WORD". During our Advent services, the mats were blessed and placed in homerooms. During the service, each participant was given one line of Scripture as food for thought on the Advent journey. Campus Ministry representatives

helped us by further defining WORD, **W** is for **Waiting**, **O** is having an **Open** heart, **R** is **Reflecting**, and **D** is being a **Disciple**. Advent is like a, "pre game show" - it is important because it sets the stage and prepares us for something that is yet to come. It is not the game, but it leads us to the game. We will be ready to celebrate the Nativity of our Lord if we take the time to prepare and wait in joyful hope!

G.I.F.T. - Growing In Faith Together is a process of faith renewal and formation in the Archdiocese of Winnipeg. Take a minute to check out the website www.archwinnipeg.ca and take advantage of the **GIFT!**

Career & Personal Counselling - Mrs. S. Matheson & Mrs. D. Sigurdson

Congratulations to Emily Ashley and Allison Alvero on receiving a *Verve Girl Magazine* Scholarship. Emily and Allison were selected based on their overall involvement, and for the work they are doing to help and inspire those in our school and community. Each girl receives \$250.00 and another \$500.00 will be donated to a charity of their choice. Emily and Allison have chosen to donate this \$500.00 to the Winnipeg Pet Rescue Shelter. They will also be featured in the next publication of *Verve Girl Magazine*.

A weekly electronic newsletter is now available through the Career Counselling office for all Grade 12 students. This letter contains information about scholarship updates, and important dates or programs regarding career planning. Students are reminded to check their school email regularly.

On February 18th, our Grade 11 students will be attending **University of Manitoba Info Days**. This event offers students the opportunity

to get a tour of the U of M campus and to find out more about programs, faculties and the offerings at the university. St. Paul's College is our "host", and provide its facilities as a "home base" for the day. Grade 11 students are expected to provide their own transportation to and from St. Paul's College where attendance will be taken at the start and at the end of the day. St. Paul's College students also serve as tour guides for the campus tours. More specific guidelines and directions will be provided in January.

Twenty peer counsellors attended a two-day Red Cross training session in September to prepare as facilitators for bullying and harassment prevention workshops to be delivered to Grade 7 to 9 classes. Since then these counsellors have delivered two one-hour bullying and harassment prevention workshops, called *Beyond the Hurt*, to all ten of the Grade 7 to 9 classes. This month they are delivering information on body image and self esteem to their assigned classes.

Volleying The Ball - Mrs. J. O'Leary & Mrs. C. Rewniak

Nine teams, ninety-five athletes, two teachers and ten volunteers have neatly folded and put away volleyball uniforms, stored knee pads on the top shelf and hung up their volleyball court shoes. As of December 1st, the 2008 St. Mary's Volleyball season came to a close. All teams experienced a wide variety of success and positive experiences on and off the court whether it was establishing new relationships or maintaining old ones, learning about volleyball extensively and developing active healthy lifestyle practices.

Fifty Grade 7 athletes participated in three developmental, friendly tournaments within the Pembina Trails School Division. The Grade 7 Traveling Team participated in the Grade 8 "B" league and made it to the semi-final league match. The Grade 8 Team finished in 1st place and won the Pembina Trails Championship Banner. The Grade 9 Team finished in 1st place; won the Pembina Trails

Championship banner; and finished in 4th place at Provincials on November 28/29.

The Junior Varsity Team finished in 1st place, winning the West Winnipeg Athletic Association Championship and followed up with the Silver Medal at the Manitoba High School Athletic Association Provincial Championships. Alicia Ogoms and Danika Picklyk were named to the Provincial All-Star Team. The Varsity Team won the Bronze medal at the West Winnipeg Athletic Conference championships.

A significant amount of time, effort, commitment and dedication were devoted to the 2008 volleyball program and the Athletic Department would like to thank everyone who supported the athletes and coaches in their quest for success. If you have any questions, concerns or if you are interested in getting involved in our programs please don't hesitate to call 477-0244, Ext. 238.

Let's Talk Science - Ms. J. Dyck-Lyons

Since September, our Grade 7 & 8 students have been working hard to begin their Science Fair projects for March 2009.

Let's Talk Science (LTS) is a volunteer science outreach program that has partnered with our school to provide mentoring to all students on their projects this year. The volunteers, several of whom are alumnae of St. Mary's Academy, are graduate students in the Faculty of Science from both the University of Manitoba and the University of Winnipeg.

In October, LTS introduced its program to our students, educating them in scientific process

and providing them with opportunities to receive mentoring on their chosen topic.

Through this program, our students have received not only individual mentoring during LTS visits to our school, but also lab equipment, access to labs at the university and the ongoing support of their services through email contact. This will continue as our students develop their projects through the winter.

We are excited about our partnership with LTS and look forward to seeing the enrichment this program will provide our girls in our Science Fair this year!



As you gather with family and friends this Christmas for a meal, special time or exchange of gifts, consider sharing this prayer.

This Christmas

May we set an extra place at the table this Christmas,
As we remember the hungry,
the poor.

May we wrap an extra gift this Christmas,
As we remember the lonely,
the confused.

May we give an extra hug this Christmas,
As an expression of love to those
around us.

May we spend extra time in prayer this Christmas,

As we remember all of the blessings we have received.

(Norma Woodbridge)

Roots of Empathy

The Roots of Empathy program, an award winning evidence based classroom program that has shown dramatic effect in reducing levels of aggression among school children while raising social/emotional competence and increasing empathy, has been implemented in all three Grade 7 classes, with Mrs. L. Danylchuk, Ms. M Garlinski and Mrs. D. Sigurdson and the Grade 7 homeroom teachers facilitating 27 sessions throughout the year.

Special Volleyball Recognition

Special congratulations go out to varsity volleyball team member Sarah Vadeboncoeur, who was selected to this year's Graduating All-Star Team. Sarah will be attending the awards banquet and she will play in the all-star game together with twenty-three other Grade 12 players from across the province. Great job Sarah!

Once Upon A Mattress

A very special thank you to everyone who helped make this year's drama production such a huge success!

On October 22nd, seven St. Mary's students and Mrs. M. Klus attended the Student Stream of the Business of Science Symposium, held at the Fairmont Hotel. The event was hosted by the Sanofi-Aventis BioTalent Challenge, an annual science fair of sorts, so the seven attendees were chosen from the St. Mary's students participating in the SABC. The symposium was designed to give students the opportunity to learn more about the different aspects of biotechnology and the careers associated with the field. The day was all about spending time with SABC participants from other schools and learning what the future holds for the field of biotechnology. For the St. Mary's students, the day began with a session explaining DNA bar coding and the ethical issues surrounding it. After a quick break and complementary pastries, the group moved on to an interesting presentation involving hands-on biotechnology where they learned how to make a proper set of Standard Operating Procedures.

After the second session it was time for lunch and the opportunity to network with members of Winnipeg's biotechnology field. Lunch also featured a key-note speech delivered by Jeffrey Friedman, whose research with the hormone, leptin, has led to much progress in the study of the genetic contributing factors of obesity. After a short question and answer session with Dr. Friedman, the students attended a session detailing the promise and availability of careers in the biotechnology field. The day ended with a presentation on the various aspects of genetic testing that could be a part of our future. The day was a wonderful, informative experience for all participants.



A Green Perspective - Miss Mary Furgale & Miss Erin Shklanka

On November 4th, members of the Green Team had the pleasure of representing St. Mary's Academy at the *Polar Perspectives Conference* held at the Manitoba Museum. This conference was in recognition of the International Polar Year, also known as the IPY. The question, "What does the Arctic mean to you?" was the focus for the day and before we began the activities, we did not know what to expect.

We were placed in groups to discuss culture, health, conservation, and sovereignty of the Arctic. Our group chose culture. Much to our surprise, our group leaders had lived in the Yukon and Nunavut for most of their lives and gladly shared their experiences of growing up there and cleared up any misconceptions we had of the North. It changed many of our perspectives on Arctic life.

We were fortunate to participate in a webcam conversation with a family from Nunavut. This family didn't live in an igloo, they lived in a house, just like us in Winnipeg. Their

lifestyles, childhood, and activities, were discussed, and questions about how climate change is affecting their every day lives were asked. It came to our attention that much of the global warming is caused by the southern populace and those who live in the North are most affected by them.

Although we can't visibly see the changes in climate, some traditions in the Arctic are disappearing because of it. An interesting question was asked, "What do you do now, that you think your children won't be able to do, in the future?" Global warming is making hunting more difficult, if not impossible, because the ice is thinner and there is a possibility of falling through. Animals such as polar bears are also becoming extinct, and the snow consistency is changing, making it difficult to build an igloo on hunting trips.

To think of all the children that might lose their cultural traditions and lifestyles, motivates us to want to do more to save the environment.

New Sportswear at Corner Store!

Drop by soon to see our new line of fleece sportswear co-ordinates!

What's New?

Pullover Hoodies with chenille design Torch or "St. Mary's Academy" in Classic Navy, Oxford Grey or Flames Red - \$60

Zip-Front Hoodies with new "St. Mary's Academy 1869" logo in Classic Navy, Oxford Grey or Flames Red - \$55

New "SMA Flames" closed-bottom sweat pants in Classic Navy, Oxford Grey or Flames Red - \$45

"SMA Flames" Capri pants in Classic Navy or Oxford Grey - \$40

Volleyball shorts (for under your kilt!) in Classic Navy - \$30

In addition to our new items, we are still offering our Plaid Hoodies, Flannel PJ Pants and the classic "Flames" line of sportswear.

Pictures of our Corner Store items are now displayed on the St. Mary's website. Look under "Parents" and "Corner Store". The Corner Store is conveniently located in the SMA cafeteria and is open each Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday from 12:30 to 1:35 pm.

Please remember that we are unable to accept debit cards or credit cards but will gladly accept cash or cheques (made out to SMA Parent Guild).

We Look Forward to Serving You!

FROM THE ACCOUNTING OFFICES

Charitable donation receipts for the 2007-2008 school year, for inclusion with your 2008 tax return, are being prepared and will be mailed in late January. Receipts for the 2008-2009 school year, for inclusion with your 2009 tax return, will be issued in *January 2010*.

Good news!!!! Legislation making elementary and secondary school bursaries and scholarships non-taxable has been passed. As such, we will no longer be preparing T4A's for bursaries or scholarships awarded by the school for tuition. We do, however, still have to issue T4A's for post-secondary scholarships. Those slips will be mailed to the recipient of the award in January 2009.

The accounting office will be closed between

December 25, 2008 to January 4, 2009.

If you need to contact us during the Christmas break, Brenda Van Raes will be available as follows:

Monday December 22nd – Wednesday, December 24th
@478-6042

Tuition payments will be withdrawn from your account on January 5, 2009. If you require any changes to your payment, please notify us by Tuesday, December 23rd.

Tuition cheques will be cashed on January 2, 2009.