



Newsletter

NEWS

Information for St. Mary's Academy parents and friends

December 2013

Director's Message

Sister Susan Wikeem



Congratulations to all who contributed to the success of **Grease**: the cast, crew, musicians, teachers, parent volunteers, sponsors and, of course,

Laura Davey, Director and Martha Franz, Producer. Spirits are still high despite the fatigue of months of evening and weekend preparation and four intense performances. Fortunately we had the new production area this year which allowed rehearsals and set building to start earlier in the fall and not conflict with other events in Alumnae Hall. Peace has been restored to our community!

Congratulations also to the Parents' Guild and Convener Janice Beveridge for another successful *International Day*.

It takes many, many volunteers working weeks in advance to put on the day. Mark your calendar for the next one on the first Sunday next November.

In a few short weeks it will be Christmas – the anniversary of the coming (advent) of Jesus Christ in human history. On a deeper level, for Christians the Incarnation is God “pitching a tent among us” and sharing life and love. Advent is a time for considering what this means for our relationship with God and with others. In the true spirit of the season, staff and students reflect on how we prepare the way of the Lord by creating space in our lives for God. And we share life and love with the less fortunate by making gift bags and distributing them at the Immaculate Conception Drop-In on Sunday, December 15th. The Mission Club counts on the continuing generosity of our SMA families.

May this Advent season bring you a renewed sense of God's presence and love. And may your family have a peaceful, joyful Christmas.

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Principal's Message

Mrs. Connie Yuyk



Blessings to everyone! This is indeed a wonderful time of the year!

Our call to be a people of community has resonated with students

and staff since September, demonstrating abundant care and empathy in what it means to be Christ-like for each other.

At the extra-curricular level, our sports teams have held high the torch in Volleyball, Cross-country running, Ice Hockey

and Golf, our Junior and Senior Debate teams continue to compete competitively and our musical production of Grease was sold out for all performances. All our in-school groups and organizations continue to plan meaningful activities for the student body. Truly a gifted and generous group of young women, faculty and staff!

At the curriculum and program level, I write this message as our students prepare for mid-year assessments (schedule posted on SMA website) starting in December and ending January 2014. All assessments are common and cumulative in nature, worth 15% of your daughter's final grade for students in Grades 9 – 12, and for students in Grades 7 and 8 the value is 10% of their final grade. Kindly remember not

to book family vacations during this time, as a missed assessment may adversely affect your daughter's progress and growth. If you have any questions or need clarification, please call me at 204-478-6033.

Wishing you all God's abundant blessings during this ADVENT season of faith, joy, love and hope! Merry Christmas and may you all have a happy and healthy 2014!



December 2013



Honouring Sister Susan Wikeem

A special reception in honour of Sister Susan Wikeem will be held on Friday, June 6, 2014 at St. Mary's Academy between the hours of 4:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Please "save the date" and join SMA in celebrating Sister Susan's devotion and service to St. Mary's Academy.

Campus Ministry

Ms. Michelle Garlinski

"...just give them the news" is our focus this Advent. It's the basic message that God gives angel Gabriel to tell Mary all that will happen. And so this season of waiting, preparing, joy and hope has guided our journey to Christmas. We have focused on the significant scripture

people, saints and events of the season.

As people of community through Angels on the Bridge, Taize prayer, Come and Go reconciliation, gift bags, Christmas cafe and visiting Résidence Despina - we have tried to ready ourselves for the birth of Christ. So we pray that all families will have a blessed Christmas and may God continue to walk with you throughout 2014!

A Christmas message from Ms. Garlinski

I was watching the Christmas episode of Glee, and auditions were held for the role of Mary in the Christmas pageant - I was reminded that none of us is ever worthy to play that role. Yet we live our "yes" to God in so many ways in our lives. When we pick up and drop off our kids even though we are tired after a difficult day at work; when we care for aging or ill parents; as we spend time helping a neighbour, friend or stranger in need when we have limited time for ourselves; when we juggle multiple jobs to provide for our family. This is how we say "yes" to God and bring Jesus into the world. It is in and through these daily acts that we live the Advent message of, "...just give them the news." Let us pray this Advent, that like Mary, we can trust in God enough to keep saying yes, and when Christmas arrives we can greet the Christ-child again with hearts filled with peace and love.



Angels on the Bridge

Cross Country

Mr. Demetro Danyluk

Junior Team

The Junior Varsity cross country team finished the season with a strong showing at the Manitoba High School provincial championship held at Spruce Woods Provincial Park. The team came home as provincial finalist finishing a close second. The teams runners are Amanda Ludlow (Conference Overall Champion), Sierra Sutherland (2nd Overall conference champion), Tiffany Fernando, Melissa Dredger, Adaro Lesage, Lineal Cox and Maia Idzikowski.

Varsity Team

The Varsity Cross country team competed hard and finished in fourth place at high school provincials. The team's runners are Mady Soubry, Belinda Guerra, Anna Zryini, Elizabeth Wilde, Melissa Indome, Mackenzie Spellman, Chantale Bosc and Megan DaCosta.

Thank You

Thank you to all the athletes for all their efforts. The work they put in made the season memorable and fun. Winter workouts were handed out to students who are interested in competing next year. Stop by the gym to get these workouts if you did not receive them so you can start to work on your fitness.



SMA Junior & Varsity Cross Country Runners

December 2013

Volleyball

Ms. Jen O'Leary

8 teams, 80 athletes, 3 teachers and 12 volunteers are putting away volleyball uniforms, storing knee pads and hanging up volleyball court shoes. As of December 2 the 2013 SMA Volleyball season came to a close. All teams experienced a variety of success and positive experiences on and off the court whether it was establishing new relationships or growing old ones, learning about volleyball and developing active healthy lifestyle practices.

Season Synopsis:

> Forty-two Grade 7-12 students participated in Mike Burchuk's (former Canadian Women's National Team coach) St. Mary's Volleyball Academy.

> Sixty Grade 7 athletes participated in three developmental friendly tournaments within the Pembina Trails School Division with high school students as mentors, role models and coaches.

> The Grade 7 traveling team participated in the Grade 8 Diggers League and finished in 1st place claiming the championship banner.

> The Grade 8 Team finished in the top 4 in the Grade 8 Spikers League with the Pembina Trails Athletic Association coached by teacher Mr. Lorne Hess.

> The Grade 9 Team finished in 1st place with the Pembina Trails Athletic Association claiming the championship banner.

> The Junior Varsity Team won the silver medal in the West Winnipeg Athletic Association Championship and won the silver medal in the Manitoba High School Athletic Association Junior Varsity Provincial Championships in Virden. Congratulations to Darby Coughlin and Laura Hill who were chosen as provincial tournament all-stars.

> The Varsity Team won the silver medal at the West Winnipeg Athletic Conference Championships and then finished in the Top 8 in the Manitoba High School Athletic Association Championships.

Congratulations to Rachel Hill and Nicole Bailey as they were chosen by Volleyball Manitoba as graduating all-stars!

"It takes a village to raise a child." With that in mind, a **HUGE thank you** to all the volunteer coaches, parents, teachers, administration, fans and athletes who so generously supported our Volleyball program this year. An overwhelming amount of time, effort and dedication was devoted to the 2013 Volleyball program. Thank you for supporting Athletes and Coaches in their quest for success!



Mission Club

Ms. Teresa Uruski



Gift Bags from the Heart

Every Sunday at **Immaculate Conception Parish Hall**, volunteers, including students, have been serving a hot meal

to over 300 people who come from the Inner City. For many of these people this is not only an opportunity to have a wholesome meal but a time to enjoy a sense of community that has formed at the Drop-In. Each week a different church or organization brings food to the hall and volunteers assist with serving.

Many St Mary's Academy students have become part of this honour of assisting those less fortunate in our community by not only volunteering at the Drop-In but

by participating in the annual time of gift giving.

Students and staff were invited to prepare gift bags for a specific gender and age. Students from the Mission Club will distribute the gift bags on Sunday, December 15 to all those who come to the Drop-In Centre.

Thanks to the Leadership Council who baked over 500 cookies to be delivered with the Gift Bags.

Special Colour Day

The Mission Club along with the Human Rights Team hosted a *Special Colour Day* on Tuesday, December 3 to raise funds to support relief efforts in the Philippines. Thanks to the generosity of students and staff \$1500 was raised and because this was done before Dec 23, our donation will be matched by the Federal Government. These funds will be donated to the **Canadian Catholic Organization for**

Development and Peace who have workers currently in the Philippines delivering food packs, water, clothing and medical supplies.

Mission Club Monthly Focus

January: Grade 10 Mission Reps will be invited to organize major fundraising activities for programs offered at the **Holy Names House of Peace**. The **House of Peace** is located in the heart of Winnipeg and it offers a unique living space that assists women in transition along with providing a space for various organizations that build peoples' strengths.

February: The Grade 11 Mission Reps will plan activities that will assist us in focusing our efforts to raise funds to support our sister **SNJM schools in Lesotho, Africa**.

If you would like to make a donation to any of these organizations – please contact Ms Uruski at the school for assistance.

December 2013

From the Career Counsellor

Ms. Teresa Uruski

Take Our Kids to Work Day

Thank you to all parents, hosts and students who contributed to the success of *Take Our Kids to Work Day* on November 6. Over one hundred Grade 9 students participated in the day which provided them with an opportunity to gain exposure to the skills required in today's workplaces and to begin career discussions with adults about the work they do.

This day was created through the philosophy that awareness leads to knowledge. The more students understand about the job of their parents, relatives or other adults, the more informed the decisions about their own future career will be. As a follow-up to the day, in our Career Development Class, students continued to reflect on their skills, interests and values. Each student will prepare and present a 'Me Box' as a final project during our last classes in January.

PSAT – offered again at SMA

On October 16, 2013, Grade 11 students who registered in Grade 10 had an opportunity to write the PSAT. The PSAT is a standardized test administered by the College Board in the United States and for a second year – St. Mary's Academy has been granted the ability to offer this test to our students. The benefits of taking the PSAT is to get practice before a student writes the SAT in May/June of her Grade 11 year or October/November of her Grade 12 year.

Universities in the USA require an assessment score as an integral part of their application process. Students currently in Grade 10 will have an opportunity in May 2014 to register for the PSAT with Ms. Uruski if they have plans to apply or attend a University in the USA.

Post-Secondary Planning

Grade 12 students are reminded to check the SMA Career Information website for regular updates on admission/scholarships/presentations.

Note the following deadlines for Grade 12 students:

January 15 – U of M Faculty of Music admission application deadline
- Recommended date to apply to all universities in Ontario via the 'Ontario Universities Application Centre' (OUAC)

February 21 - U of M Early Admission Deadline for automatic Entrance Scholarship consideration based on February Grade 12 marks

March 1 - U of W Early Admission Deadline for automatic Special Entrance Scholarship consideration based on final June Grade 12 marks

Ms. Uruski will be offering a 2nd round of 'Online Application Workshops' during the last week in January – please sign up.

Grade 11 students: Planning For Your Future

During January Grade 11 students will be attending an *information session* presented by Ms. Uruski which provides an overview of Post Secondary options. Representatives from the Universities of Manitoba and Winnipeg will be at SMA to meet with students to present program, admission and scholarship details.

In March students will be attending a *Scholarship & Volunteering Workshop* to learn about available scholarships, requirements and application tips along with hearing about the value of spending more time volunteering in the community. Students will be guided in preparing a 'scholarship resume'.

Campus Tours: Grade 11 students will be attending the University of Manitoba Info Days on February 19. **Attendance is mandatory** as this event offers students the opportunity to not only get a tour of the U of M Campus but also to find out more about the programs offered at many universities across the country. The students will also receive information about the advantages of becoming an affiliate of St. Paul's College at the U of M. Watch for parent permission forms and more information to come home in late January.

Students will **have the option** to attend the Open House at the University of Winnipeg February 19 from 4-8pm and at Red River College on February 18 from 5-8pm.

GREASE

Ms. Laura Davey

On November 29th to December 1st, Alumnae Hall travelled back to 1959 for the SMA Drama Production of *Grease: The High School Version*. Playing to three excited crowds, the cast and crew, (totaling near 150 students!) sang, danced

and acted their way into the hearts of our guests. Patrons left Alumnae Hall humming classic favourites such as "Summer Nights", "Greased Lightning" and "We Go Together."

The students and faculty involved had been working very hard for the past three months in preparation for this big weekend – and what a fun time we had! As a people of community, we truly came together in collaboration for this musical – we had direct involvement from SMA

students, faculty, parents and alumnae on stage, behind the scenes and in the rockin' pit band. We were graced with three sold out houses, standing ovations and boisterous applause when the infamous "Greased Lightning" first made its way onto the stage.

A big thank you to the cast and crews and everyone involved who made this production happen. Congratulations to all who were involved. **A-wop-bam-a-lu-mop and wop bam boom!**

December 2013

Parents' Guild

Mrs. Kathleen Reid

International Day

Thank-you to everyone who participated in this wonderful event either by attending *International Day* or by volunteering. Bringing together the widespread and diverse community of parents, students, family and alumnae is one of the main goals of the SMA Parents' Guild. All who contributed their time or talent for this event helped the Guild accomplish this goal.

International Day volunteers came together to provide delicious ethnic food, top notch cultural entertainment, a variety of artistry in the art auction, wonderful gifts in the rainbow auction and many treats to choose from at the bake table. There was also a host of volunteers who helped behind the scenes with

organization of the many areas, set-up & clean up of the event, parking lot traffic and food handling.

A **special thanks** to Janice Beveridge whose warm personality permeated all aspects of the coordination of this event, making the volunteer experience a great one for all.

New at International Day

The SMA Green Team partnered with International Day to promote an environmentally friendly experience by providing compostable plates & cutlery and free water. Many thanks to the Green Team for helping make International Day more environmentally friendly.

Cash Raffle

Thank-you to Carolyn Meadows for the many hours she spent organizing, promoting and administering the cash raffle.

Dates To Note

December 2013

- 12-16 Mid-Year Assessments
- 18 Taize Prayer in the Chapel at 8 a.m.
- 18 Christmas Café
- 18 Students at Résidence Despins
- 20 Christmas Service & Last Day of Classes

January 2014

- 6 First Day of Classes
- 7-10 Gr. 12 Provincial English Exam
- 9-14 Individual Grad Photos
- 14 2.30 p.m. Dismissal
- 16-21 Mid-Year Assessments
- 31 No Classes, Inservice Day
- 30-31 SMA Varsity Basketball Tournament

February 2014

- 1 SMA Varsity Basketball Tournament
- 1 Sister Strikes Again



Saturday, February 1, 2014

8:00 p.m. in Alumnae Hall
Tickets: \$50 each, available at stmarysacademy.mb.ca or call 204-477-0244

This is a must see show! Sister begins with an overview of heaven and hell and moves onto her proclamation of new sins for the new millennium. And, she provides a list of every celebrity currently sharing digs with the devil. No one is excused from Sister's firm belief that 'sometimes we feel guilty because we are guilty.'

Surprise someone special with a ticket as a stocking stuffer or add Sister Strikes Again to your own Christmas List!



from the Accounting Office



Charitable donation receipts for the 2012-2013 school year, for inclusion with your 2013 tax return, will be mailed out in late January. Receipts for the 2013-2014 school year, for inclusion with your 2014 tax return, will be issued in January 2015.

Holiday Hours

The accounting office will be closed December 21, 2013 to January 1, 2014.

If you need to contact us during the Christmas break, Brenda Van Raes will be available at 204-478-6042 or bvanraes@stmarysacademy.mb.ca on January 2 & 3, 2014.

Tuition payments will be withdrawn from your account on January 2, 2014. If you require any changes to your payment, please notify us by Thursday, December 19, 2013. **No changes can be made after that date.**

SMA Corner Store

Christmas Blowout Sale

The Corner Store is having a Christmas Blowout on select SMA clothing. Great Christmas gift ideas!

The Corner Store is open from 12:35 to 1:35 p.m. on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.

Don't know what to do with your daughter's old, gently used uniforms? Donate them to the Cornerstore.

Wishing you and your family a very Merry Christmas.



Around the Academy



Grease



Grease



Grease



Grease



Grease



Grease



Ms. Uruski & team organizing 'Gift Bags from the Heart'



Kevin Brooks (seated) - MPI speaker raising awareness about the dangers of drinking & driving

