



ST. SEBASTIAN PARISH SCHOOL'S

# BRICK LOT *Bulletin*

February 2022

## From the Principal's Office



### Thank You, Teachers!

As we enter the second half of the school year, we are once again facing ever-changing pandemic guidelines and cancellations, and I cannot thank our community enough for continuing to come

together and move forward successfully. Our teachers, especially, have been working even harder than ever to provide the best learning environment for our students. Please join me in thanking them and letting them know how much we appreciate them!

### Many More Thanks

On behalf of the school, I would also like to thank the many teachers, staff and parents who shared their time and talents through activities that benefit our students and school community, including Carrie Rea and Jennifer Smee (HASA Readathon), Ashley Woodford-Lawson and her team of elves (HASA Santa Shop), HASA volunteers (monthly staff lunches), the Socials Committee (Five Days of Christmas, Ladies Luncheon, grade-level socials, end-of-quarter appreciation), Scott Mason and Jeff Beshore (band/choir performance, Christmas program), Allyn Rose and Jennifer Bradley (Geography Club), Sally Weakland and Maggi Blischak (Power of the Pen), Scott Mason (Book Fair), Robert Dedinsky, Christina Friedl, Debra Landis, Megan Sanford (Science Fair), Robert Dedinsky, Debra Landis, and Megan Sanford (MathCounts), Booster Club and coaches (CYO sports), Knights of Columbus/Tim Sullivan (Keep Christ in Christmas contest), and Keith Johnson (sacrament preparation).

### Weller, the Therapy Dog in Training

Most of you have probably heard about my new puppy, Weller, since 8-week-old Weller and I visited all the classrooms in January, when I introduced Weller to the students and announced my plan to train Weller to be a therapy dog. Weller and I will begin

training in February, and while there are no guarantees that he is suited to be a therapy dog, we are hopeful that the training will go well and that Weller will start visiting the school as an official therapy dog next school year.

As a golden retriever, he is suited for the job, and the owners of Weller's mother helped my wife and me pick out the puppy who seemed to have the best temperament from the litter. Many people have asked what prompted this idea, and while my puppy is new, I have been thinking about and admiring the work of therapy dogs for years. My family had an amazing dog named Jack, and at some point we realized Jack would have been a great therapy dog, if we had only thought about it early on. As I learned more about therapy dogs, I wanted to see if I could bring one to visit St. Sebastian. This effort was unsuccessful because all the dogs were too busy with visits to places like hospitals and senior centers or unable to visit due to pandemic protocols.

But, things just fell into place when my wife and I found out about a litter of golden retriever puppies, and we realized it was a win-win situation: Our family would welcome a new dog, which would help us move forward after the recent loss of both of our family dogs, and our school would (hopefully) have regular access to a therapy dog, which would help our students and teachers decrease stress and increase smiles.

The school will post regular updates on Weller's progress. In the meantime, I offer you this story. After we visited the kindergarten classes, we decided to stop on the stairwell and invite one of the students to come say goodbye to Weller. The student was having a bad day and was visibly upset, but after petting Weller for a few minutes, she calmed down, her tears were replaced with a smile, and she went back to class ready to learn. This is exactly the impact a therapy dog can have: When you are able to address students' social/emotional needs, they are more successful in learning.



### Strength with Christ Through Kindness and Love

When our faculty chose the theme "Strength with Christ Through Kindness and Love" for this school year, we encouraged our entire community to focus on living their lives for others as we build up the Kingdom of God. We are made stronger by helping others, and I am proud that our school offers service learning opportunities, including students in grades 7-8 making cards for veterans, 5th-graders making "kind clips" for teachers, the whole school donating to the canned food and toy drives, 1st-graders making cookies for the Peter Maurin Center, and 4th-graders creating Christmas cards for the Peter Maurin Center. Like the story I shared above, here's another story of how small, kind interactions can have a big impact. Keith Johnson, our parish catechetical leader, was helping at the Peter Maurin Center when the cookies and cards were handed out. Keith writes, "One older lady sat in a booth by herself, eating her dinner. She pulled out the Christmas card and a big, satisfied smile broke out on her face. Then she closed her eyes and hugged the card to her chest. It was so awesome!" Keep up the kindness and good deeds, Terrier family!

Yours in Christ,

Anthony Rohr  
Principal

# From the STEM Coordinators

## Grades K-3, by Susan Vernon

The kindergarteners have been discovering facts about our solar system. In their study of the planets, they conducted an experiment with the Earth (a marble) and Saturn (a plastic foam ball). When they placed both in a bowl of water, the Earth sank, and Saturn floated!

STEM activities for our students in grades 1-2 took on a festive flair! The 1st-graders made several beautiful ornaments, including a fingerprint reindeer on a rustic wooden disc. Our 2nd-graders enjoyed a "Grinch Day," with math dice games such as "Sum It Up" and "The Mean, Green Bump It Game!" They also made amazing ornaments and Advent wreaths to bring home.



Our 3rd-graders completed a great project in which they planned and created flip books of the moon phases over 28 days. They used only white crayons, colored pencils, black construction paper, and scissors. The books were a great success! The 3rd-graders also visited the Innovation Lab to investigate scientific tools!

## Grades 4-6, by Jennifer Slegus

In November, the 4th-graders read the book *Balloons Over Broadway*, which details how inventor Tony Sarg was commissioned to create the first Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade balloons. After much planning, collaborating, and creating, our students held their own parade in the building, showing off their amazing creations with the help of our Bee-bot robots!

While learning about Prehistoric Native Americans, our 4th-graders also learned about artifacts and archaeology while performing a hands-on "fossil dig." The activity used cupcakes with different hidden items inside to help students understand how items get buried and then brought to the surface by erosion or human interactions.



Before Christmas, the 4th-graders were given a math "CSI" activity that asked them to determine who stole Santa's sleigh. They solved math problems and used problem-solving skills to figure out who was guilty and responsible for almost stopping Christmas. The 4th-graders also completed a fun lesson about the California Gold Rush in which they created a gold-mining town. While creating a map of their town, they followed extensive directions and learned many geometry skills such as types of lines and line segments, shapes, area, and perimeter.

The 5th-grade class created mini biospheres (terrariums) as an extension of their lesson on ecosystems. The students added everything needed to create a fully enclosed terrarium. Our 5th-graders also completed the "Wacky Hall Walker Lab," during which they compared different surfaces to determine which had more friction.



The 6th-graders have been working on many virtual labs in class covering such topics as the rock cycle, renewable and nonrenewable resources, and cell structure and function. During social studies classes, students used hands-on building techniques to plan and re-create an ancient civilization. They also completed a "How-to Thanksgiving Project" where students used problem solving skills to solve a real life cooking task.

## Grades 7-8, by Megan Sanford

In junior high, our students worked hard on their science fair projects during the second quarter. They completed their projects just before Christmas break, and a virtual school fair was judged over the break. All of our students did an outstanding job! We were overwhelmed by the creativity and thorough understanding of scientific inquiry the students demonstrated. Congratulations to our school winners, who are listed elsewhere in this newsletter, and good luck to all who will be competing at the Walsh High School Regional Fair on Feb.12.

In science classes, the 7th-graders have been learning about the different components of weather (temperature, wind speed and direction, humidity, precipitation, visibility, and air pressure) and how to measure them. They have also been learning about predictions and how to connect evidence, explanations, and observations to conduct a logical and knowledgeable analysis.

In 8th-grade science classes, students studied plate tectonics, seismic activity, and the Earth's geologic time scale. Students were tasked with building towers that could withstand an earthquake to demonstrate their understanding of earthquake-resistant engineering processes. Additionally, students made their own mold and cast fossils using plaster and clay, and they practiced carbon dating techniques using M&M's candy.

In November, students in grades 4-8 enjoyed a visit from presenter Thomas Johnson, who brought Thomas Alva Edison to life through a costumed portrayal of one of the world's greatest inventors. The presentation highlighted Edison's early childhood curiosity about how and why things worked and his later career as the inventor of dozens of devices we take for granted every day. Students participated in various demonstrations of static electricity, sending a message on a telegraph key, and operating a hand crank generator to light a series of lightbulbs.





# Students in the News

## Patriotic Essay Winner

Congratulations to Bella Incorvia for winning an essay contest for students in grades 6-8 sponsored by Veterans of Foreign Wars. Her winning essay was on the topic of "How I Can be a Good American." She received a certificate from Post 7791 recognizing her "outstanding achievement and exceptional leadership ability."



## Geography Club

This year's school Geography Club champion is Timothy Sullivan. Timothy emerged as the winner in the grade 7-8 competition in December after 18 rounds of questions! Way to go, Timothy! This year students in grades 5-6 met separately and held their own final competition. Congratulations to Hunter Jopperi for winning the grade 5-6 division!



## "Keep Christ in Christmas" Poster Contest

The St. Sebastian Knights of Columbus held their annual "Keep Christ in Christmas" poster contest again this year. The 2021 winners are Emma Smee, Frances Knauer and Graham Boswell! Seventy-four posters were submitted, which was the largest number ever!



## High School Scholarship Winners

Congratulations to the following students who received scholarships to one of our local Catholic high schools by earning top scores on the high school scholarship exams: **Our Lady of the Elms:** Bella Incorvia; **Archbishop Hoban:** Sebastian Blaser, Colin DiNicola, Alexandria Krohn, and Timothy Sullivan; **St. Vincent-St. Mary:** Jude Rothkopf, Owen Schlueter, Nathan Sparhawk, Timothy Sullivan and Susie Thomas; **Walsh Jesuit** (includes merit and scholarship exam award winners): Sebastian Blaser, Suzana Borges, James Brewer, Jackson Chapin, Joseph Danzy, Peter de Boer, Alexandria Krohn, Jude Rothkopf, Maxwell Sinsley, and Nathan Sparhawk.

## Read-A-Thon

Congratulations to 4th-grader Grant Coleman for being the top reader in this year's Read-A-Thon with 4,250 minutes! Congratulations to 6th-grader Frances Knauer for being this year's top earner. Congratulations to Angelina Gerbick in Molly Karg's 1st-grade class and David Dunn in Sue Vernon's 2nd-grade class for being our two Visa gift card winners. Robert Dedinsky's 6th-grade class won popcorn and a movie as the top-earning class, and Jennifer Smee's 4th-grade class won a pizza party for the highest total minutes read. Every class in grade K-6 earned a pajama and doughnut day for their outstanding levels of participation – what a wonderful show of support! Thank you to everyone who participated. Our school read a total of nearly 110,000 minutes and raised just over \$13,000. Way to go, Terriers! The money will be used to fund HASA's many initiatives, such as teacher stipends, extracurricular activity fees, and student extras. HASA President Carrie Rea offered special thanks to teacher Jennifer Smee for helping again to coordinate the flyers and tally the minutes.



## Science Fair

Our junior high students completed a mostly virtual school science fair again this year, complete with video presentations of their projects as well as classroom presentations. All of our junior high students have the opportunity to enter their projects in the Feb. 12 regional science fair at Walsh Jesuit High School. Thank you to teachers Debra Landis and Megan Sanford for organizing another successful science fair, and thanks also to Robert Dedinsky, Christina Friedl, and Megan Sanford who served as judges. Congratulations to the following students who earned top honors in our school's science fair, and good luck to our Terrier scientists who will move forward in competition!



**7th Grade:** First place: "Vitamin C: Keeping It Cool" by Julia Rea, second place: "Gone with the Wind" by Isaac Sullivan, and third place: "Magnet Shake" by Peter Zografakis.

**8th Grade:** First place: "Name that Color" by Bella Incorvia and Susie Thomas, second place: "The Blood Runs Dry" by Sebastian Blaser, and third place: "Moving to Memorize" by Suzana Borges and Alex Krohn.



# News and Notes

## Thanksgiving Canned Food Drive

Thank you to everyone for the generous donations of canned food and other nonperishables that were sent in before the Thanksgiving holiday. All of the food was donated to the Good Samaritan Hunger Center. Junior high students delivered the items along with a pack of thoughtful Thanksgiving cards for the Hunger Center to distribute to those in need.



## Christmas Toy Drive

Our school collected over 350 toys for this year's Christmas Toy Drive sponsored by our student council. The gifts were donated to Summit County Children Services and Akron Children's Hospital Ronald McDonald House. Thank you to everyone for your incredible generosity and help in making Christmas brighter for others!



## Sanctuary Society Christmas Tea

Thank you to all the ladies who attended the Sanctuary Society's annual Christmas Tea on Dec. 8. Special thanks to all the students who provided entertainment this year as members of the St. Sebastian School Band and the String Ensemble from St. Sebastian's Academy of Culture and Arts. Students Abigail Coleman, Sydney Borges and Francis Knauer also played the piano for a portion of the evening. Further thanks to Scott Mason and Sarah Husak for all their hard work in preparing our students for their performances.

## Five Days of Christmas

The Socials Committee spread a great deal of Christmas cheer during their "Five Days of Christmas" effort, during which they showered our entire faculty and staff with gifts during the last five days of school before Christmas break. Gifts included a beautiful, hand-painted cookie, a stocking filled with Swensons coins, and a delicious catered lunch. The Socials Committee also stocked the faculty room with large amounts of coffee pods, ground coffee, granola bars, cookies, pretzels, and popcorn. On the fifth day, each faculty and staff member received a handwritten card of thanks along with a generous cash gift.



## Santa Shop

During the second week of December, our students enjoyed shopping at the annual Santa Shop, sponsored by our HASA. As always, Santa Shop really brings the Christmas spirit alive at school as students pick out special gifts for their loved ones. Thank you so much to Ashley Woodford-Lawson and all her helper elves who volunteered major amounts of time to purchase all the wonderful items and to help our students pick out their gifts! Santa Shop never disappoints, even in the face of all the craziness and unpredictability of the pandemic!



## World Kindness Day

In November, our 5th-grade students read about World Kindness Day (Nov. 13) and then completed a project that incorporated their social studies lessons about economics and productive resources. For the project, the teachers "hired" the students as "Kindness Krew" members and gave them the task of creating "kind clips" with resources provided to them. Their finished products were magnetic memo clips with kind messages on them. The students presented them to each of our teachers, spreading a little kindness and joy around our school!



# St. Sebastian Spectacular: February 26

It's time to turn in your RSVPs and get ready to celebrate "A Night in Hollywood" at the St. Sebastian Spectacular on Feb. 26, 2022! This year marks the 18th year of the school's largest annual fundraiser, which raises money to benefit our parish school and each and every one of its students.

The committee, chaired by Carrie Pozsgay and Lori Krohn, is very excited to share all the plans they have for hosting an evening of great fun, filled with exciting live and silent auction items, raffles and a few other surprises. Your \$90 ticket will include delicious appetizers, an open bar, and a sit down dinner, along with music and auctions. There are also exciting sponsorship opportunities, including a VIP pre-party just for our event sponsors.



## "A NIGHT IN HOLLYWOOD" EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

**TUITION RAFFLE:** One lucky family will win free tuition for the 2022-23 year (value: \$4,350) for day school or preschool.

**BOURBON BASKET RAFFLE:** Don't miss your chance to win a big basket full of premium, hard-to-get bourbons.

**SILENT AUCTION:** Many fun and unique items will be up for bid, including one-of-a-kind classroom art projects that our school's art teacher, Ashley Mullen, is coordinating.

**LIVE AUCTION:** The live auction will include fabulous vacation homes, cherished priest dinners, coveted parking spots, exclusive front row pews, and a few other fantastic surprises!

As in past years, the event will be raising money for tuition reduction for all our students as well as for investments in technology and funding for our school's endowment. This year's paddle raise will focus on improvements to the audio, video and lighting equipment in Zwisler Hall, a space that gets used by so many and welcomes us all.

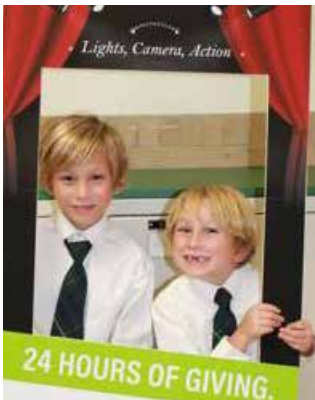
If you are interested in making a donation, becoming a sponsor, or volunteering for this year's Spectacular, please contact Lori Krohn at (330-690-7467, [lori@fclpnt.com](mailto:lori@fclpnt.com)) or Carrie Pozsgay at (330-289-4093, [carriepozsgay@me.com](mailto:carriepozsgay@me.com)).

Information is also available on the school website at [www.stsebastian.org/school/st-sebastian-spectacular](http://www.stsebastian.org/school/st-sebastian-spectacular).

## #weGiveCatholic 2021

Thank you to everyone who supported the 2021 #weGiveCatholic effort on Giving Tuesday (Nov. 30, 2021). This year, the donations were directed to the school's "Lights, Camera, Action" effort to fund improvements to the audio, visual and lighting systems in Zwisler Hall. Thanks to the generosity of more than 100 donors, the school surpassed its \$20,000 goal for #weGiveCatholic by about \$1,000!

Upgrading the audio, visual and lighting systems in Zwisler Hall is very costly, which is why the school decided to focus both the #weGiveCatholic effort and the 2022 St. Sebastian Spectacular paddle raise on the "Lights, Camera, Action" project. The #weGiveCatholic donations got us off to a great start, and we encourage everyone to help the school cross the finish line for this project by supporting the paddle raise at the St. Sebastian Spectacular.



As part of the promotional effort for #weGiveCatholic, our students paired up with their grade-level buddies on Giving Tuesday to build community by doing fun activities together, including performing skits and plays. Pictured here, 4th-graders perform "mismatched" fairy tales for their preschool buddies on the stage at Zwisler Hall.





# New Furniture Provides More Spaces for Learning

In November the school was able to create comfortable, collaborative spaces on each floor of the school with the purchase of modular furniture, including upholstered chairs and benches, small workstation table tops, and larger tables.

The new furniture was placed in hallways to create spaces where students can work

independently or collaboratively while maintaining physical distancing. The new furniture is durable, but not heavy, so it can be moved around to adjust for different learning needs. Funding for these purchases was provided by the U.S. government through a coronavirus relief program called EANS (Emergency Assistance to Non-Public Schools).



## SCHOOL CALENDAR AND IMPORTANT DATES

### SAVE THE DATE

- First Communion Retreat Day ~ April 2
- Easter Break ~ April 15-22
- 8th-Grade Trip ~ May 4-6
- First Communion ~ May 7
- May Crowning Mass ~ May 12
- Pass It On Mass ~ May 26
- Last Day of Preschool ~ May 27
- No School, Memorial Day ~ May 30
- Last All School Mass ~ June 1
- Last Day of School/Graduation ~ June 2
- Camp Invention ~ June 6-10
- Vacation Bible School ~ July 25-29

### FEBRUARY

### ALL DATES SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Catholic Schools Week	January 30-February 5
HASA Meeting	February 3 (Thursday), 7 p.m.
Early Dismissal - Teacher Professional Development	February 10 (Thursday), 1 p.m.
Parent/Teacher Conferences	February 15, 17 (Tuesday, Thursday)
No School, Teacher Professional Day	February 18 (Friday)
No School, Presidents Day	February 21 (Monday)
Confirmation Retreat	February 18-19 (Friday-Saturday)
St. Sebastian Spectacular	February 26 (Saturday)
Confirmation Practice	February 28 (Monday), 7-8 p.m.

### MARCH

Ash Wednesday Mass	March 2 (Wednesday)
8th-Grade Confirmation	March 4 (Friday), 7 p.m.
Spring Music Program	March 10 (Thursday)
No School, Teacher Professional Day	March 18 (Friday)
No School	March 21 (Monday)
Foundation Scholarship Mass	March 24 (Thursday)
End of Third Quarter	March 25 (Friday)
Father/Daughter Dance	March 26 (Saturday)
First Communion Meeting (parents & students)	March 28 (Monday), 7-8 p.m.
Kindergarten Screening	March 28-29 (Monday, Tuesday)

### Questions or Suggestions?

Please email Anne Dennee, newsletter editor, at [Anne@DenneeFamily.com](mailto:Anne@DenneeFamily.com)