



ST. SEBASTIAN PARISH SCHOOL'S

# BRICK LOT *Bulletin*

May 2022

## From the Principal's Office



As I write this, Holy Week is upon us with Easter Break to follow. I hope all our families will take advantage of this time to pray, to renew your faith, to enjoy time with family and friends, and to pause and give thanks to Our Lord for His many blessings, including this fantastic school community.

### St. Sebastian Spectacular

In February, our school community gathered at the St. Sebastian Spectacular to celebrate and support our school. Many thanks to our returning Spectacular co-chairs, Lori Krohn and Carrie Pozsgay, for their leadership of our largest annual school fundraiser. The school deeply appreciates the efforts of everyone – too many to name here – who contributed to the success of this wonderful event. Thank you for your support of our school and our students!

### More Appreciation

Many thanks to the teachers, staff and parents who spend countless hours during and after school to lead our extracurricular activities, raise money and build up our community. This includes our Socials Committee (end-of-the-quarter teacher/staff appreciation, All-School Movie Social), Jennifer Bradley, Autumn Gaskins, and Jennifer Smee (St. Sebastian Scrawlers Club), Debra Landis and Megan Sanford (Genius Project), Maggi Blischak and Sally Weakland (Power of the Pen), Scott Mason (band), Jeff Beshore (music program), Allyn Rose (Drone Club), Robert Dedinsky and Cassie Laube (Soap Box Derby Club), Robert Dedinsky, Debra Landis, and Megan Sanford (MathCounts), Booster Club and coaches (CYO sports), and HASA (Father/Daughter Dance, field trip expenses). I would like to give special thanks to

HASA for providing major funding for field trips. Costs for busing have increased, and by covering the majority of those costs, HASA is providing a huge cost-savings for our families.

### Strengthening Our Catholic Identity

One of the goals our school established during our last accreditation review was to strengthen our Catholic identity. Our staff chose a school-wide theme for 2021-22 of "Strength with Christ Through Kindness and Love." Earlier this year our teachers engaged in a retreat about Catholic social teachings. The school theme and this retreat, along with our Friendly units, have helped our community keep our focus on the principle of "the life and dignity of the human person," which is one of seven principles of Catholic social teachings from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. This principle holds the central belief that every person is a gift from God who has inherent dignity that is to be respected. As Pope Francis writes, "Loving life means always taking care of the other, wanting the best for him, cultivating and respecting her transcendent dignity." As a Catholic school community that believes in Christ's life, death, and resurrection, we have a special call to ensure that every person's life and dignity is respected. We have challenged our students to live out and respond to this call. We asked students to reflect on the life and dignity of the human person and what this principle means them. Here are some responses:

*Charlie Kinney (1st grade): "We are all different because God did not want us to be the same."*

*Logan Schnurr (2nd grade): "Don't judge by appearances, but by the inside."*

*Angela Marino (3rd grade): "Every kind thing counts--even a smile! It's the best thing to do even if you don't have anything else to say. It is just good to make someone else feel good!"*

*Alexander Frank (4th grade): "You can't judge people by how they look or where they live, or if they aren't born yet. Everyone can see the good in you. Help those who need help. Love those who need love. Everyone is special."*

*Maddie Sellers (5th grade) and her classmates read Bible passages related to human dignity. Maddie selected John 15:17: "This I command you: love one another," as her favorite "because we should follow God's rules and love one another."*

*Daphne Kindbom (6th grade): "People can not be left out. Even if you don't like the person you should still choose the right option and be nice to them. Everyone is worthy of being who they want to be. Even if they make a mistake they should still be respected and appreciated."*

*Peter Zografakis (7th grade) wrote a poem: "Equal we are all born, together we can not be torn. As equal as the sun and the moon are to the earth, we've all been connected since birth. All connected like a puzzle piece, we will all make a masterpiece. Peace is what we want, love is what we need. The end of all will start with greed. Lies come at a cost. So yes, we've lost. But together we will rebuild, and the emptiness will be filled."*

*James Brewer (8th grade): "It means being valued and respected for what you are, what you believe in, and how you live your life."*

As a community, please continue to reflect on how we can live out this call. Please know that, as a school, we will continue to center everything we do on the message that we are all created by God to be different and unique, that ALL life is sacred, and that we are called to treat all of our brothers and sisters with dignity.

Yours in Christ,

Anthony Rohr  
Principal

# From the STEM Coordinators

## Grades K-3, by Susan Vernon

Holidays are always a great time for creative graphing in the primary grades, and Valentine's Day and St. Patrick's Day were no exceptions! Our young students enjoyed making edible graphs with candy hearts and Lucky Charms marshmallow bits. Skittles rainbows were also exciting! Our 3rd-graders used fraction tiles to visualize parts of a whole. They also made birthday cakes to practice writing fractions. Cakes for a 1-year-old, themselves, and a relative, displayed ages written as fractions. The children loved sharing these designs with their families!



Adding ART/READING to STEM equals STEAM, and the students shared some inspiring activities in these fields. The 2nd-graders presented "Readers Theater" scripts of familiar stories celebrating Dr. Seuss' birthday on March 3. Creativity, costume design, and cooperation were evident as 3rd-graders transformed folktales into plays. "Martina the Beautiful Cockroach" plays were then presented to the class. The students' hard work and great acting skills were Broadway-worthy!

Finally, the 2nd-graders welcomed visitors from the Imagine Engineering Program who talked about engineering careers and offered a contest for innovative ideas. We are waiting for the winners to be announced!



## Grades 4-6, by Jennifer Slegus

The 4th-grade students were busy with many STEM-based activities during the third quarter. While learning about weathering and erosion in science class, the students learned a song and a dance that helped them learn the processes and performed this dance on stage in Z-Hall. While learning about catastrophic events on our land, students built and erupted volcanoes, learning about chemical reactions in the process. Students also used toothpicks and clay to design a building that could withstand a simulated earthquake.

During a cross-curricular unit on the American Revolution, students learned about historical events, songs, famous people, and documents through reading, writing, and performing. This culminated in an "escape room" activity focusing on the causes of the American Revolution. Students solved ciphers,

cryptograms, and various other clues and puzzles. They solved the final clue using math problem-solving skills, reading comprehension, and primary sources.

The 5th-grade class created a working traffic light using paper circuits and brass tape during their unit on electricity. They needed to make a switch and identify if it was a parallel or series circuit. The fifth grade also began building their mini Soap Box Derby cars by working



through several STEM lessons, including testing, comparing data, and conducting test runs. They learned about weight placement and how it can be manipulated to increase speed.

During the third quarter, our 6th-graders completed a Civil Rights unit in reading class. The students read the books "Brown Girl Dreaming" by Jacqueline Woodson and "Hidden Figures" by Margot Lee Shetterly.

Then they studied the history of the assembly line, and they used this information and the study of aeronautics to create their own rockets. They launched these rockets and calculated the average distance the rockets traveled per group and for the class. Finally, they attempted to reach Neptune with the rockets! While not all rockets made it, it was a success overall!

## Grades 7-8, by Megan Sanford

Our junior high students once again performed well at the University of Akron District Science Fair in March. Congratulations to the six students who participated (see page 3 for a list), all of whom earned an excellent rating or higher, with Julia Rea earning a perfect score! Also in March, our junior high students enjoyed celebrating "Pi Day" on March 14 (or 3.14). Students learned all about the irrational number pi through hands-on learning activities as well as pi-themed treats.

Our 7th-grade students spent the third quarter learning about weather and climate. Students worked on a project dealing with the coffee industry sustaining people in several developing countries and how climate change is affecting the industry. Students also studied the Earth, moon and sun system. They completed a hands-on lab on the phases of the moon and spent a few days exploring the solar system and exoplanets using a NASA Exploration website. In math, the 7th-graders spent the quarter learning about rational numbers, linear and two-step equations, and inequalities and then applying everything they learned to real-life situations. The 7th-graders also worked with their 3rd-grade buddies to build and test "bobsleds" and "skiers" using five common items.



Our 8th-grade class enjoyed a visit from members of the STVM NASA Student Launch Educational Outreach program, who gave a presentation to our students about designing, building, and launching rockets. Our students then constructed and launched their own paper rockets. In science classes, 8th-graders studied the laws of heredity and genetics and made their own genetic children using a given set of alleles. Laura Mason, a graduate student in this field, talked to the 8th-graders about DNA and assisted them with their own strawberry DNA extraction. Students also completed a variety of hands-on activities demonstrating the laws of natural selection and adaptations.



# Students in the News

## Power of the Pen Team Excels

At the district tournament in January, our 7th-grade Power of the Pen team placed third, and our 8th-grade team took first place! The team includes 7th-graders Lydia Chivers, Marcus Chuba, Louisa Dennée, Charlotte Gilbert, Jane Porter, Allison Raita, and Julia Rea, along with 8th-graders Steven Bitecofer, Catie Bordenkircher, Suzana Borges, Sophia Burgoyne, Bella Incorvia, Quinn Slota, and Susie Thomas. Several students won individual awards: Julia Rea (first place), Suzana Borges (first place and a Best of Round award), Lydia Chivers (second place and a Best of Round award), Susie Thomas (second place), Quinn Slota (fifth place), and Sophia Burgoyne (11th place).



At the regional tournament, our 8th-grade team took first place out of 35 schools, and our team captured the coveted "Sweepstakes Trophy," which is awarded to the school with the most points from the district and regional tournaments! Individual awards were won by Susie Thomas (second place and a Best of Round award), Suzana Borges (fourth place, a Best of Round award, and the Director's Choice award), and Julia Rea (10th place). Special congratulations to Suzana Borges, who was awarded a Commendation Letter from Kent State University. Congratulations to the team and many thanks to our great coaches, Maggi Blischak and Sally Weakland. Good luck to the following students who qualified for the May 13 Power of the Pen state tournament: Catie Bordenkircher, Suzana Borges, Sophia Burgoyne, Julia Rea and Susie Thomas.

## Science Fair Excellence

Six of our students submitted their science fair projects for the University of Akron District 5 Science Day competition. Five of them earned Excellent ratings: Sebastian Blaser, Isabella Incorvia, Susie Thomas, Timothy Sullivan and Isaac Sullivan. Julia Rea earned an impressive Superior Rating and will attend state competition. One important element to highlight is that Julia (pictured here) scored a rare 40 out of 40 perfect score! Congratulations to all of these students for representing St. Sebastian Parish School so well!



## "Good American" Essay Winner

Congratulations to Bella Incorvia for advancing to the district competition with her winning essay on the topic of "How I Can be a Good American." The essay contest was for students in grades 6-8 sponsored by Veterans of Foreign Wars. Bella read her essay at the District 8 awards banquet and received a trophy, pin and a scholarship award. Way to go, Bella!

## Spelling Bee Champs

At the Feb. 1 school spelling bee, the competition for grades 1-3 went an impressive 25 rounds. First place went to Liam Merzweiler, second place to Nate Pirie and third place to David Dunn. In grades 4-6, first place went to Sebastian Bitecofer, second place to Evan Rea and third place to Hunter Jopperi. In grades 7-8, the winners (pictured here) were Jude Rothkopf (first place), Julia Rea (second place), and Sebastian Blaser (third place). Congratulations to our super St. Sebastian spellers!



## All-Saints Model UN Takes First Place

Congratulations to the following 7th- and 8th-graders who are members of the STVM All-Saints Model United Nations team that took first place at the Model UN conference hosted by Cleveland Council of World Affairs in downtown Cleveland on April 5-6. Every one of St. Sebastian's students who competed won an award! Three students won the highest award, which is called the "Gavel Award": Alex Krohn, Louisa Dennée, and Owen Zieman. Peter Zografakis won a Superior Delegation



award, and Owen Schlueter won an Excellent Delegation award. Will Tober and Sophia Burgoyne earned Honorable Mention awards.

## Congratulations to Our Scholarship Winners for 2022-23

### Scholarships Funded Through the St. Sebastian Parish Foundation

Mary Ley Burke Scholarship: Luca Hall, Maximillian Hickey, Frances Knauer, Connor Whitney

Christopher James Consilio Memorial Scholarship: Jackson Chapin, Madelyn Kastelic, Rowan Kelly, Zoey Zachardy

Dayspring Opportunity Scholarship: Trisha Dakhore, Mateo Neugebauer

Denise Maroon Finley Memorial Scholarship: Sophia Burgoyne

Gerstenmaier Family Scholarship: Suzana Borges, Max Sinsley

GOAL Scholarship (Graves O'Neill Academic Leaders): Simon Borges, Lydia Chivers, Aubrey Coates, Thomas Myers, Nick Paxton, Charlotte Ryan, Ryan Senko, Adeline Trenor

Hanlon Family Scholarship: Parker Chapin, Zoe Obringer

Frances L. Sharp Scholarship: Sophia Brdarski, Gabriella Deagan

John A. Trecaso Scholarship: Jackson Chapin, Jude Rothkopf

### Scholarships Funded Through Parish School/Parish-Related Groups

HASA Youth Christian Service Scholarship: Sebastian Blaser and Isabella Incorvia

Knights of Columbus Council #14255 Reverend Terry Peacock Scholarship: Sophia Burgoyne and Timothy Sullivan

Sanctuary Society Service Scholarship: Sophia Burgoyne

St. Irene Principal's Scholarship: Susie Thomas and Sadie Borges

# News and Notes

## Weller Update

Weller has earned his first American Kennel Club medal for completing the STAR (Socialization, Training, Activity and Responsibility) Puppy Program. He is now finishing up his second class, "Good Dog I," as he continues training to become a therapy dog. Weller has been enjoying coming to school with Principal Rohr once or twice a week and visiting students in classrooms and during after-school activities. He also really



enjoyed tagging along with the 3rd-graders on their March field trip to see how maple syrup is made at Sweet Fire Sugar Bush farm in Glenmont, Ohio. Weller was also featured at this year's Spectacular, which included four "An Afternoon with Weller" auction packages for lucky students to spend an afternoon (during school time!) playing with Weller to help him develop his socialization skills.

## Angel Scholarship Fund

**Scholarship Donors:** Ohioans can now receive a 100% Ohio tax credit of up to \$750 for cash donations to the Angel Scholarship Fund. You can specify that your donation goes directly to St. Sebastian Parish School, which will use it for student scholarships. If you make a donation in 2022, you can claim the tax credit on your 2022 Ohio taxes by including your receipt from your contribution to the Angel Scholarship Fund for a 100% tax credit up to \$750 (\$1,500 if married filing jointly). Please visit [www.catholiccommunity.org/angel](http://www.catholiccommunity.org/angel) to learn more about this program or to make a donation. (\*Always consult with your tax professional for information on the impact of any charitable donations.)



**Scholarship Applicants:** The Angel Fund scholarships are offered through the Cleveland Diocese. The process for applying for an Angel Scholarship will be the same as for Diocesan Tuition Assistance, in which completing the FACTS application also makes the applicant eligible for an Angel Scholarship. Please visit [www.catholiccommunity.org/angel](http://www.catholiccommunity.org/angel) to learn more.



## Drone Club

Students in our Drone Club have been learning all about drones and how to operate them. During Drone Club, these 7th-grade students engage in hands-on flying of these unmanned aerial vehicles. Students are learning how to make these vehicles swoop, dive, flip, turn, and maneuver, providing real-life experiential learning of many STEM concepts. Thanks to 8th-grade teacher Allyn Rose for moderating this group!

## 4th-Grade Sign Language Performance

Aubrey Coates, a 4th-grader, just started learning sign language this year, but she inspired and impressed our whole school when she signed the song "You're a Grand Old Flag" during the 4th-grade's spring performance. Aubrey became interested in signing after seeing a music video of a girl signing a song for the hearing impaired and after seeing a news segment showing a sign language interpreter assisting an airplane passenger. Aubrey, who taught herself how to sign using YouTube videos, says she would love to be able to help people in the same way. She is working on learning the sign language for the "Star Spangled Banner" and "What a Wonderful World." Aubrey is pictured here showing the sign for "flag." Keep up the great work, Aubrey!



## Catholic Schools Week

Thank you to everyone who helped with our Catholic Schools Week activities. Even though Catholic Schools Week was interrupted by a snow day, it was still a fantastic celebration! Special thanks to Jennifer Bradley and Jennifer Smee for coordinating the Spelling Bee, to Autumn Gaskins for coordinating Terrier Trivia, to the St. Sebastian Parish Foundation for providing doughnuts for our students and staff, to Michelle Huber and the student ambassadors for facilitating our Catholic Schools Week Open House, and HASA for providing a delicious lunch for our faculty and staff.

One of the highlights of the week was Monday's Living Rosary, which was led by our talented Terriers and streamed online by student operators so that our school community could join in virtually. We are thankful to the Camp Damascus missionaries, Joshua and Amara, who provided our students with faith-filled, energetic prayer sessions. Thank you also to everyone who contributed to our collection of items for the homeless.

Pictured here, student council members load up some of the donated items to deliver to the Akron Snow Angels program.



# St. Sebastian Spectacular Rolls Out the Red Carpet

Guests at the 18th annual St. Sebastian Spectacular were welcomed to the red carpet for "A Night in Hollywood." The Feb. 26 event was a wonderful evening of food, fun and fellowship in support of our students and our school. With 175 people in attendance, it was clear that our school community was happy to gather in person again this year after switching to an online event in 2021.

The Spectacular, which is the largest annual fundraiser for the school, raised close to \$130,000 this year, thanks to the tremendous generosity of our community. Of this amount, over \$53,000 was raised during the paddle raise portion of the evening. The paddle raise total will be combined with the money raised during the November 2021 #weGiveCatholic campaign to fully fund the "Lights, Camera, Action" effort to upgrade the audio, video and lighting systems in Zwisler Hall.

Proceeds from the event will also support all our families by reducing tuition for all students, investing and maintaining our technology, and supporting our school's endowment to help secure the future of our parish school.

This year's event featured a delicious sit-down dinner provided by Trattoria Vaccaro, which is owned by current St. Sebastian parent Rafael Vaccaro. Zwisler Hall looked glamorous with red and black decorations, including gorgeous floral centerpieces created by Pink Petals Florist. Pink Petals is owned by parishioner and alumni parent Gina Milan, who generously donated many of the flowers.

Those in attendance had fun bidding on a wide variety of great auction packages, including everything from date night packages to an opportunity for students to spend an afternoon socializing with Mr. Rohr's puppy, Weller!



Guests had fun taking pictures with movie star props in the photo booth. They also enjoyed sampling the event's featured "confetti champagne" cocktail and dancing at the end of the evening to music provided by a DJ. Congratulations to our tuition raffle winners, the Ryan Family, and our bourbon basket winner, Dan Blanke.

Thank you to everyone who supported this year's Spectacular! Whether you purchased a coupon book, sent in a gift card for "Giftcardpalooza," contributed an auction item or sponsorship, volunteered or attended the event, your support made a huge difference. Special thanks to Lori Krohn and Carrie Pozsgay for chairing the event again this year. Thanks also to our art teacher Ashley Mullen and parent Natalie Griffin-Kinney for coordinating the creative and always-popular student art items.

Next year's event will be on Saturday, Feb. 11, with co-chairs Colleen Tate and Erica Gerstenmaier. The team has already begun planning and hopes to announce the theme and sponsorship opportunities in early summer. Stay tuned!



## Camp Invention June 6-10

Camp Invention returns to St. Sebastian this summer. This is a nationally acclaimed program for students in K-6. This year's "Explore" program includes hands-on activities designed to launch the imagination of young innovators and get their confidence soaring as they explore STEM fun. St. Sebastian 4th-grade teacher Jennifer Smee is director of our school's program, which is coordinated in partnership with the National Inventors Hall of Fame. This is a one-week (M-F, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.) camp with enrollment limited to students from St. Sebastian Parish School. Visit [www.invent.org/camp](http://www.invent.org/camp) for registration information.



creative dramatics, and improv. In the afternoon, they will utilize those skills to rehearse scenes from classic books, plays and films, culminating in a final performance on the last day. The "Great Big Acting Camp" is for ages 8-14 and runs from 9 a.m.-4 p.m., with drop-off as early as 8 a.m. and pick-up as late as 5 p.m. An orientation meeting will be held June 12 from 10 a.m.-12 p.m. More information at [www.magicaltheatre.org](http://www.magicaltheatre.org).

## Vacation Bible School July 25-29

Please mark your calendars for Vacation Bible School this summer at St. Sebastian! It runs from 9 a.m. to noon, Monday-Friday for children ages 4 through entering 5th grade. The theme is "A Radical Ride on the Wings of Prayer." Attendees will learn about saints, Eucharistic miracles, prayer and more through skits, games, and other activities. The cost is \$10 for the first child and \$5 for each additional child. There is no charge for children whose parents volunteer the whole week, and on-site babysitting is available for free for children of volunteers. Registration materials will soon be available on the parish website. Questions? Contact Hannah Kasper at 330-396-1798 or [stsebastianvbs@gmail.com](mailto:stsebastianvbs@gmail.com).



## Drama Camp June 13-17

Magical Theatre Company will take up residence in Zwisler Hall and present a fabulous week of creative excitement! Students will build their great big acting skills with high-energy morning sessions focusing on character, movement, voice,

# SCHOOL CALENDAR AND IMPORTANT DATES

### SAVE THE DATE

Junior High Summer Camp ~ Dates TBD  
 New Family Picnic ~ August 18  
 Welcome Back Open House ~ August 21  
 First Day of School 2022-23 ~ August 23  
 Celebrity Night Social ~ September 8  
 New Location: Akronym  
 Ladies Luncheon Social ~ November 13  
 Christmas Break ~ Dec. 21-Jan. 3  
 (classes resume Jan. 4)  
 St. Sebastian Spectacular ~ February 11  
 Easter Break ~ April 7-14  
 Last Day of School 2022-23 ~ June 1

### MAY

8th-Grade Trip	May 4-6 (Wednesday-Friday)
First Communion	May 7 (Saturday)
May Crowning Mass	May 12 (Thursday)
1st- & 3rd-Grade Parent/Adult Social	May 12 (Thursday), HiHO Brewery
Kindergarten Class Carnival Social	May 14 (Saturday)
6th-Grade Family Social	May 21 (Saturday)
2nd-Grade Family Social	May 22 (Sunday)
Pass It On Mass	May 26 (Thursday)
Last Day of Preschool	May 27 (Friday)
No School, Memorial Day	May 30 (Monday)

### JUNE/JULY

Last All-School Mass	June 1 (Wednesday)
Last Day of School	June 2 (Thursday)

**CLAP OUT FOR 8TH-GRADERS @ 11 a.m.**

**END-OF-THE-YEAR PICNIC for students and families, 12 p.m.-1:30 p.m.**

8th-Grade Graduation	June 2 (Thursday), 7 p.m.
Camp Invention	June 6-10 (Monday-Friday)
Magical Theatre Drama Camp	June 13-17 (Monday-Friday)
Brick Street Jazz & Wine Festival	July 14 (Thursday)
7th-Grade (2022-23 year) Family Swim Social	July 23 (Saturday)
Vacation Bible School	July 25-29 (Monday-Friday)
Summer Festival, hosted by Sanctuary Society	July 30 (Saturday)

### Questions or Suggestions?

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